

FEHD cracks down on suspected illegal private columbarium in Yau Ma Tei

The Private Columbaria Affairs Office (PCAO) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) cracked down on a suspected illegal private columbarium in Yau Ma Tei this afternoon (May 23).

The operator in this case was suspected of operating a private columbarium at the premises without a licence under the Private Columbaria Ordinance.

The Courts issued search warrants to PCAO officers to authorise them to search the premises. During the operation, PCAO officers seized a number of exhibits and arrested one male and one female. Investigation is ongoing.

Under the Ordinance any person who operates, keeps, manages or in any other way has control of a columbarium otherwise than under a licence commits an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of \$2 million and imprisonment for three years, or on conviction on indictment to a fine of \$5 million and imprisonment for seven years.

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "This department will continue to take stringent enforcement action against illegally operated private columbaria. Members of the public should not buy or rent niches from any unlicensed private columbaria.

"If members of the public detect any activities of illegally operating a private columbarium, they should immediately make a report to the FEHD by calling the hotline 2868 0000."