

Four metal recycling sites in Yuen Long convicted of causing environmental nuisance

Four metal scrap recycling sites located in the vicinity of Kai Pak Ling Road, Yuen Long, all operated by the Champion Union Holdings Limited, failed to comply with the statutory notices of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) and causing environmental nuisances to nearby residents. The recycling sites today (September 13) were convicted at the Fanling Magistrates' Court of six offences under the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (APCO) and fined a total of \$48,000.

During several inspections conducted by enforcement officers of the EPD last year, they found that the four metal scrap recycling sites mentioned above had not properly covered or enclosed the metal stock to prevent dust emissions and failed to prevent dust, grit or particles emissions when operating the plant or equipment, causing environmental nuisances to nearby residents and pedestrians. Statutory notices were issued under the APCO requesting the four recycling sites to take remedial measures. Upon six inspections after the deadline as stipulated in the statutory notices, the department found that the recycling site failed to adopt improvement measures and thus violated the requirement of the notice. The EPD then initiated prosecutions against the recycling sites.

Recent inspections conducted by officers revealed that two of the recycling sites had been closed and emptied.

An EPD spokesman reminded operators of metal recycling sites to properly cover or enclose metal material storage piles, and take effective measures such as well-equipped automatic sprinkler systems to prevent dust emissions. Upon receipt of a statutory notice issued by the EPD, operators must comply with the notice requirements to carry out relevant improvement works within the specified time.

According to the APCO, anyone who fails to comply with the statutory notice requirements commits an offence. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000 on first conviction. A maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment may be imposed on subsequent convictions.