

Four pharmacies and one director convicted of supplying and possessing for sale surgical masks with false trade descriptions

Four pharmacies and the director of one of the pharmacies were convicted and fined \$4,500 to \$15,000 on June 7 and today (June 9) at West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts and Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts respectively for supplying and possessing for sale surgical masks with false trade descriptions applied, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TD0). Over 23 000 surgical masks involved in the case were also confiscated.

Hong Kong Customs received information in mid-last year alleging that a type of surgical mask being sold at a pharmacy was suspected to be bearing a false description of the distributor's address. A follow-up investigation confirmed that the description of the distributor's address was false. Customs took immediate action and seized the batch of surgical masks involved in the case at four pharmacies in Mong Kok and Tsuen Wan. Samples were also sent to a laboratory for examination. Test results revealed that the surgical masks failed to comply with the manufacturing standards as claimed and shown on the package boxes, in contravention of the TD0.

Customs reminds traders to comply with the requirements of the TD0 and consumers to purchase at reputable shops.

Under the TD0, any person who supplies goods with a false trade description in the course of trade or business, or is in possession of any goods for sale with a false trade description, commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected violations of the TD0 to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).