

Hong Kong Customs conducts territory-wide spot checks on safety of folding tables and chairs (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs has conducted a special operation, starting on January 7 and concluding today (January 10), during which inspections of folding table and chair products were made at 80 retailing shops across the territory. Meetings with trade representatives were also held to ensure the sector's compliance with the Consumer Goods Safety Ordinance (CGSO).

The operation was conducted on two levels. On the retail level, Customs inspected a total of 80 retail spots in different districts that sell folding tables and chairs. The spots visited included chain and non-chain stores. Inspection officers made on-site checks on the availability of locking devices on tables and chairs and saw whether they worked properly. Initial inspection found no folding tables and chairs that were suspected of contravening the CGSO. Locking devices were also found to be functioning normally. Apart from carrying out on-site inspections, officers test-bought samples as well for safety tests.

Apart from conducting the retail inspection, officers also met with trade representatives to remind them that folding table and chair products must comply with the CGSO requirements. The representatives were also advised to provide clear and bilingual instructions and safety tips for customers' safe use. Both sides also discussed the possible refinement of locking device design.

Customs reminds members of the public to observe the following safety tips when purchasing and using folding table and chair products:

Three Dos

- Do purchase a product with a locking device;
- Do lock the product right after unfolding it. Check if the locking device operates normally and see in particular if there is any ageing or breakage; and
- Do stop using the product if the locking device is broken.

Three Don'ts

- Don't adjust the locking device arbitrarily for the sake of convenience, no matter whether the device is an automatic one or not;
- Don't allow children to play with the product; and
- Don't let children staying alone use the product.

Traders should pay attention to the CGSO, under which it is an offence to supply, manufacture or import into Hong Kong consumer goods unless the goods comply with the general safety requirements for consumer goods,

including the consideration on whether there are any reasonable means to make the consumer goods safer. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for one year on first conviction, and \$500,000 and imprisonment for two years on subsequent conviction.

Customs has been combating consistently the sale of products that fall short of the CGS0. Law enforcement action will be taken immediately if any violation of the CGS0 is detected.

A total of 557 safety inspections on folding tables and chairs were conducted in the past three years and no case of CGS0 violation was found.

The spot-check operations are ongoing.

Members of the public with information relating to unsafe consumer goods may make a report via Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

