

Hong Kong Customs detects largest illicit cigarette storage case in past two decades (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs today (June 29) smashed a suspected illicit cigarette storehouse in Sheung Shui and seized about 22 million suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$59 million and a duty potential of about \$42 million. This is the largest illicit cigarette storage case detected by Customs in town in the past two decades.

During an anti-illicit cigarette operation conducted at Ying Pun Ha Tsuen in Sheung Shui today, Customs officers seized the batch of suspected illicit cigarettes from two trucks and a metal shed. A 29-year-old man, who claimed that his occupation is a driver, suspected to be in connection with the case was arrested.

Investigation is ongoing.

Customs will continue to combat illicit cigarette activities at all fronts through a multi-pronged approach.

Under the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance, anyone involved in dealing with, possession of, selling or buying illicit cigarettes commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$1 million and imprisonment for two years.

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

