

## [Hong Kong Customs raids suspected illicit cigarette storage centre in Sham Shui Po \(with photos\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (September 11) conducted an anti-illicit cigarette operation in Sham Shui Po. A total of about 740 000 suspected illicit cigarettes and about 7 000 suspected alternative smoking products, with an estimated market value of about \$2.74 million, were seized and a suspected illicit cigarette storage centre was raided. The duty potential of the illicit cigarettes was about \$1.85 million.

Customs yesterday afternoon intercepted a woman on Cheung Sha Wan Road, and a small amount of suspected illicit cigarettes was seized inside a nylon bag carried by her. The 60-year-old woman was subsequently arrested and escorted to a unit in a building nearby for a further search. Customs officers seized about 730 000 suspected illicit cigarettes and about 7 000 suspected alternative smoking products therein, successfully smashing a suspected illicit cigarette storage centre. Later, about 10 000 suspected illicit cigarettes were also seized inside the woman's residential premises in Tseung Kwan O.

An initial investigation revealed that the illicit cigarette storage centre involved in the case was mainly used to supply illicit cigarettes to residents in the Sham Shui Po District.

The arrested woman, who claimed to be unemployed, has been released on bail pending further investigation. An investigation is ongoing. Customs will continue to trace the source and the flow of the illicit cigarettes. The likelihood of further arrests is not ruled out.

Customs will also continue its risk assessment and intelligence analysis for interception at source as well as through its multi-pronged enforcement strategy targeting storage, distribution and peddling to spare no effort in combating illicit cigarette activities.

Customs stresses that it is an offence to buy or sell illicit cigarettes. 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](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)) or online form ([eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/](http://eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/)).

