

KY Family Practice in Kwai Chung convicted for illegal disposal of clinical waste

KY Family Practice in Kwai Chung disposed of clinical waste that was mixed into general waste. The responsible doctor of the clinic was convicted and fined a total of \$10,000 at Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (April 2) for contravening the Waste Disposal (Clinical Waste) (General) Regulation.

During an ambush operation in October last year, staff of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) successfully intercepted staff of KY Family Practice in the corridor of the first floor of Kwai Chung Shopping Centre on Sheung Kok Street in Kwai Chung disposing of clinical waste, including 19 used syringes, which was mixed into general waste and to be moved to a refuse collection point for disposal. The EPD prosecuted the doctor who operates the clinic under the Waste Disposal (Clinical Waste) (General) Regulation after investigations and gathering evidence.

An EPD spokesman said that the department is very concerned about the improper disposal of clinical waste by individual medical institutions and continuously arranges for enforcement officers to carry out blitz inspections of different medical institutions, including Chinese or Western medical clinics, veterinary clinics, medical laboratories and nursing homes, so as to combat illegal disposal of clinical waste. The spokesman pointed out that some clinical waste, for instance needles or other sharp instruments, may carry infectious substances. Those objects may pose danger to cleaning staff and the public if they are mixed with general refuse.

According to the Waste Disposal (Clinical Waste) (General) Regulation, clinical waste must be collected by licensed clinical waste collectors or self-delivered by healthcare professionals to the Chemical Waste Treatment Centre in Tsing Yi for treatment. It is an offence to mix any clinical waste with general waste for disposal. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000. The EPD reminded all persons-in-charge and staff of medical institutions that they must handle and dispose of clinical waste properly in accordance with the requirements of the law. The public and property management companies may report any suspected illegal disposal of clinical waste to the EPD by calling the department's hotline at 2835 1055.