

Management company of Fu Heng Market in Tai Po convicted for illegal wastewater discharge

Fu Heng Market in Tai Po illegally discharged substandard wastewater. Bright Lamp Industrial Limited, which is responsible for management of the premises, was fined \$8,000 by Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (January 29) for contravening the Water Pollution Control Ordinance (WPCO).

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) received a complaint from a member of public last July about the discharge of wastewater from Fu Heng Market. After inspection, the EPD officers found that the wastewater discharged by one of the grease traps at Fu Heng Market was turbid and greasy, and suspected that the grease trap was not operating properly. The EPD officers then collected wastewater samples for analysis and the results showed that the concentration of oil and grease exceeded the upper limits of the relevant statutory discharge standards by nearly double. After evidence gathering, the EPD prosecuted the property management company of Fu Heng Market in accordance with the WPCO.

A spokesperson for the EPD reminded all property management companies that they should arrange regular inspection, repair and maintenance of the wastewater treatment facilities for premises under their management. They should also ensure the proper operation of these facilities and strictly adhere to the relevant discharge standards as stipulated in the licence to avoid polluting the river channel or blocking the public sewers downstream by oil and grease discharged, which may result in overflow of wastewater and adversely affect environmental hygiene.

Under the WPCO, anyone who discharges substandard commercial or industrial wastewater into communal sewers or communal storm drainage system commits an offence. First-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment. A maximum fine of \$400,000 and six months' imprisonment may be imposed on second or subsequent convictions.