

New FEHD enforcement operation “CLEARSKY” tackles dripping air conditioners (with photos)

A spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (May 20) that the department has launched a pilot enforcement operation, codenamed "CLEARSKY", across various districts in the recent days. The operation has achieved significant results by proactively enhancing inspections to target buildings with dripping air conditioners, complemented by education and publicity efforts.

From May 3 to 16, the FEHD conducted a number of large-scale operations in the Eastern, Central and Western, Yau Tsim, Sham Shui Po, Tsuen Wan and Yuen Long Districts. The FEHD inspected a total of 64 private buildings and housing estates in these districts and issued 182 nuisance notices to owners or occupiers of premises with dripping air conditioners that caused environmental hygiene nuisances, requiring them to abate the nuisances within a specified period. During the operations, FEHD staff also distributed promotional leaflets to occupiers of 139 flats and reminded them to take proactive measures to prevent air conditioners from dripping.

The spokesman said, "Operation 'CLEARSKY' adopts a new enforcement mode. Rather than handling problems at individual flats, the FEHD identified buildings in districts with frequent dripping air conditioners according to past experience and records. Enhanced inspections are carried out proactively to the target buildings, and enforcement actions are taken on a number of flats with water dripping in the same building simultaneously. These efforts aim to enhance the effectiveness and mitigate the nuisance caused to the public."

The operation is planned before the onset of summer. The FEHD first conducted a territory-wide publicity and education work from April 26 to May 2. This included distributing promotional leaflets with property management agents and local community members, as well as displaying posters and banners to remind the public to properly address the issue of dripping air conditioners and not to cause nuisance to others. Enforcement actions were then launched on May 3.

The spokesman said, "The FEHD will later assess the effectiveness of the pilot enforcement operation, and consider extending the operation to other suitable districts and buildings with more serious dripping problems."

In accordance with the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap. 132), if a person allows his air conditioner to discharge water in such a manner as to be a hygiene nuisance to others, the FEHD may issue a Nuisance Notice to require him to abate the nuisance within a specified period. A person who fails to comply shall be guilty of an offence and may be prosecuted. Upon conviction, offenders are liable to a maximum penalty of a

fine of \$10,000, as well as a daily fine of \$200 as long as the nuisance continues.

The spokesman calls on members of the public to check their air conditioners regularly. If water dripping is detected, they should expeditiously repair them and not cause nuisance to others, or affect public health and environmental hygiene. For more information, please refer to the leaflet on the FEHD website

(www.fehd.gov.hk/english/pleasant_environment/library/aircon/CheckMaintainAC.pdf).

