

Non-residential electricity accounts benefit from extension of electricity charges subsidy and residential electricity accounts receive both electricity charges relief and subsidy

A spokesman for the Environment Bureau (ENB) said today (April 21) that under the relief measures for electricity charges provided by the Government, nearly 90 per cent of the total eligible non-residential electricity bills obtained a 75 per cent subsidy for their billed electricity charges in March while about 40 per cent of the residential electricity accounts, representing about 1 million households, enjoyed zero electricity charges in the first quarter of this year.

Support enterprises

The Government announced last December some \$2.3 billion in provisions to provide an electricity charge subsidy to each eligible non-residential electricity account holder to cover 75 per cent of their monthly billed electricity charges based on their electricity consumption for four months, subject to a monthly cap of \$5,000. The Budget further provided \$2.9 billion to extend the subsidy period from four months to eight months.

According to the bills issued by the two power companies in March, about 360 000 non-residential bills obtained a 75 per cent subsidy. This is close to 90 per cent of the total eligible non-residential tariff bills.

Relieve people's burden

In addition, to balance the impact on people's livelihood of the recent transition to cleaner electricity generating systems in Hong Kong, the ENB implemented the electricity charges relief scheme in January 2019. A monthly electricity charge relief of \$50 has been granted to each eligible residential electricity account for a period of 60 months. The relief scheme involves a government expenditure of about \$8.7 billion. To help the public cope with the challenging economic environment, the Government has implemented a new round of one-off electricity charge subsidy schemes in January this year. A subsidy of \$160 will be credited to each residential electricity account from January to November this year, while \$240 will be credited in December this year. This one-off measure involves a government expenditure of about \$5.6 billion.

Starting from early this year, over 2.7 million of eligible households are benefiting from both the electricity charges relief measures and the electricity charges subsidy. The bills of the two power companies indicated that about 40 per cent of the residential electricity accounts, representing

about 1 million households, enjoyed zero electricity charges.

The ENB spokesman called on the community to, apart from focusing on supporting enterprise and relieving people's burden, cherish environmental resources including saving energy and electricity to mitigate climate change and improve air quality, with a view to protecting environment and public health.