

Owner of repair garage in Tai Kok Tsui convicted and fined for illegal handling of spent lubricating oil

â€‹The owner of Era Auto Service Company on Ka Shin Street in Tai Kok Tsui illegally handled spent lubricating oil and was fined \$19,500 by Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today (December 6) for contravening the Waste Disposal (Chemical Waste) (General) Regulation.

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) conducted a blitz operation in May this year and detected that Era Auto Service Company arbitrarily placed spent lubricating oil inside the garage after carrying out oil changing service for its customers. The spent lubricating oil, which is classified as chemical waste, was not labelled or stored in a proper leakproof device as stipulated by the law. Upon investigation, the EPD also confirmed that the owner of the repair garage did not register with the department as a chemical waste producer. After evidence gathering, the EPD initiated prosecution against the owner concerned for contravening the Regulation.

An EPD spokesman explained that spent lubricating oil generated from repair garages is classified as chemical waste and contains various toxic chemicals. Improper handling of such waste will cause the spent lubricating oil to leak into nearby drains and soil, which pollutes the environment and causes harm to public health.

The spokesman reminded all repair garage operators and workers engaged in the vehicle repair business that they should register as chemical waste producers with the EPD in accordance with the above Regulation. Chemical waste must be properly packaged, labelled and stored, and has to be collected by licensed chemical waste collectors for delivery to licensed chemical waste disposal facilities for treatment. In addition, for replacement of lubricating oil or batteries, vehicle owners should engage the services of vehicle repair garages or companies that have registered with the EPD.

Under the Regulation, first-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment.

Members of the public may visit the EPD's website for more information about the control of chemical waste: www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/waste/guide_ref/guide_cwc.html.