

Owners of two repair garages in Tai Kok Tsui convicted and fined for illegal handling of spent lubricating oil which is classified as chemical waste

The owners of Speedy Motor Service on Ka Shin Street and Lee Tak Motors Repairer on Lok Kwan Street in Tai Kok Tsui illegally handled spent lubricating oil and were fined a total of \$49,000 by Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today (November 29) for contravening the Waste Disposal (Chemical Waste) (General) Regulation.

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) conducted a blitz inspection in May this year and found that Speedy Motor Service and Lee Tak Motors Repairer arbitrarily placed the spent lubricating oil, which is classified as chemical waste, inside their garages after replacing lubricating oil for their customers. The spent lubricating oil was not labelled or stored in a proper leakproof device as stipulated by the law. Upon investigation, the EPD confirmed that the aforementioned owners of the repair garages did not register with the department as chemical waste producers. After evidence gathering, the EPD initiated prosecution against the two owners concerned for contravening the Regulation.

An EPD spokesman explained that spent lubricating oil generated from vehicle maintenance 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.