

Producer Responsibility Scheme on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment runs generally smoothly in the first two days

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) said today (August 2) the Producer Responsibility Scheme on Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), or in short WPRS, ran generally smoothly in the first two days of implementation. The WPRS covers air-conditioners, refrigerators, washing machines, televisions, computers, printers, scanners and monitors (collectively referred to as regulated electrical equipment, or REE).

A spokesman for EPD said, "The new scheme runs generally smoothly in the first two days of implementation. The EPD has been closely monitoring the operation of the operator of the Government's WEEE Treatment and Recycling Facility (WEEE€PARK). To prepare for the implementation of the scheme, the operator has fully geared up and put in additional manpower to attain its performance pledge for collecting the used equipment from consumers three working days after receipt of the service request from the sellers. After reviewing the booking position of the operator for the coming days, we believe the operator has the capacity to fulfil this pledge. On this basis, consumers should be able to ask the sellers to arrange delivery of the new product and removal of a used equipment on the same day without the need to pay an extra fee to the sellers."

"For members of the public who do not purchase a new REE but have to dispose of a used REE, please call the recycling hotline 2676 8888 to make an appointment with the WEEE€PARK operator for free collection. In this regard, the operator will make full use of its additional manpower to meet the service demand. Based on the current booking position, the operator is able to arrange collection of the used items in about a week after receipt of the collection request through the hotline," the spokesman added.

The EPD also appeals to members of the public to make full use of the free statutory removal service under the WPRS or the free collection service through the recycling hotline, and not to throw away any used REE at the refuse collection points. In case used REE are found at the refuse collection points, the EPD has worked with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to ensure proper handling and recycling of those items, which will not be delivered to the landfills or the refuse transfer stations.

Meanwhile, with the commencement of the legislation, the EPD has commenced its enforcement efforts including inspections at shops suspected of breaching the law and which have not submitted applications. As at 4pm today, the EPD has conducted inspection at over 90 points of sales and the overall compliance situation is satisfactory.

Among others, in following up a complaint received from a member of the public, the EPD has found a suspected case of non-compliance. The seller concerned is suspected of distributing REE to a consumer in the absence of a removal service plan (RSP) that has been endorsed by the EPD. The EPD is conducting investigation and will take enforcement actions as necessary. According to the law, any person who contravenes this requirement is liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000 on conviction.

A supplier of REE must also register with the EPD before distributing REE. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000 on conviction.

As at July 31, 2018 immediately before the commencement of the law, the EPD had received 2 562 applications for endorsement of RSP by REE sellers and 219 applications for registration as suppliers. As of today, the EPD has approved 1 843 and 183 applications respectively. Those cases that are still being processed were received in the week preceding the commencement of the law, including 38 RSP endorsement and 4 supplier registration applications received yesterday. The EPD will complete processing these applications as soon as possible.

A set of questions and answers about the operation of the WPRS is at Annex. Members of the public can call the EPD's dedicated hotline 2310 0223 if they have any questions or complaints on the implementation arrangement of the WPRS.