

Property owner fined over \$100,000 for not complying with removal order

A property owner was convicted and fined over \$100,000 at the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts early this month for failing to comply with a removal order issued under the Buildings Ordinance (BO) (Cap. 123).

The order involved several unauthorised structures of about 75 square metres in total at the external walls, ground floor, flat roof and main roof of a house at Lok Chui Street, Tuen Mun. As the unauthorised building works (UBWs) were constructed without prior approval and consent from the Buildings Department (BD), a removal order was served on the owner under section 24(1) of the BO.

Failing to comply with the removal order, the owner was prosecuted by the BD and was fined \$105,600 upon conviction at the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts on September 9.

A spokesman for the BD said today (September 20), "UBWs may adversely affect the structural and fire safety of a building, leading to serious consequences. Owners must comply with the removal orders without delay. The BD will continue to take enforcement action against owners who have failed to comply with the removal orders, including instigation of prosecution, so as to ensure building safety."

Failure to comply with a removal order without reasonable excuse is a serious offence under the BO. The maximum penalty upon conviction is one year's imprisonment and a fine of \$200,000, and a further fine of \$20,000 for each day that the offence continues.