

Property owner fined over \$50,000 for not complying with removal order

A property owner was fined \$56,200 for failing to comply with a removal order under the Buildings Ordinance (Cap 123) (BO) at Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts last month.

The order involved illegal structures erected over the rear yard on every floor from ground floor to the top floor of a four-storey domestic building at Battery Street, Yau Ma Tei, in Kowloon. The aggregate size of the unauthorised building works (UBWs) is around 75 square metres and the height is around 15 metres. As the UBWs were erected without prior approval from the Buildings Department (BD), contravening the BO, a removal order was served on the owner under section 24(1) of the BO.

As the owner failed to remove the UBWs upon the expiry of the removal order, he was prosecuted by the BD. The owner was convicted in Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts on June 12.

"UBWs may adversely affect the structural and fire safety of a building, leading to serious consequences. Owners should seek professional advice before carrying out any building works in their premises," a spokesman for the BD said today (July 6).

Pursuant to section 40(1BA) of the BO, any person who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with an order served on him under section 24(1) of the BO, commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine of \$200,000 and to imprisonment for one year, as well as a further fine of \$20,000 for each day that the offence has continued.