

Sales network and bulk order arrangement for designated bags and designated labels announced

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (January 15) announced that, in order to facilitate the public to purchase designated bags and labels for the implementation of municipal solid waste (MSW) charging on 1 April this year, the EPD has been setting up a territory-wide retail network, covering approximately 3 000 retail points including supermarkets, convenience stores, pharmacies and online platforms.

The EPD has signed contracts with major chain retailers. Starting from the second half of January to February, designated bags and labels of different sizes will be available for sale at the retail locations and online platforms. Details of the retail points have been uploaded to the dedicated website on MSW charging (www.mswcharging.gov.hk) today and will be updated as appropriate.

A spokesperson for the EPD said: "To promote waste reduction and reuse, we encourage retailers selling designated bags to place some single designated bags at the checkout counter to replace plastic shopping bags, with a view to achieving the effect of 'one bag for two uses'. Retailers providing this service will be listed on the dedicated website. Shoppers can choose to bring their own shopping bags, buy a plastic shopping bag for at least one dollar, or designated bags to contain goods at the statutory sale price."

In addition to chain retailers, the EPD is processing applications from hundreds of pharmacies for being authorised retailers, and will complete the approval process and update the list of authorised retailers as soon as possible.

To facilitate residential residents' organisations, owners' corporations, property management companies or cleaning companies, as well as other industrial and commercial organisations to purchase designated bags and designated labels in bulk order, the EPD has been accepting bulk purchase applications from late 2023. As of mid-January, the department has received about 6 300 applications. Applicants mainly include property management companies (about 60 per cent) and residential residents' organisations or owners' corporations (about 10 per cent); cleaning companies, catering premises, hotels, social service organisations, schools, etc, each of which accounts for two to three per cent. The vetting of application is about to complete. The department will open online accounts for the relevant organisations progressively, so that they can make bulk order of designated bags and labels directly via EPD's online platform to meet their daily operational needs.

An EPD spokesman said, "Organisation interested in applying to open a

bulk order account can download the application form the MSW charging dedicated website (www.mswcharging.gov.hk). The EPD will process its application as soon as possible to get it prepared for the implementation of MSW charging. Moreover, as the number of bulk order accounts is expected to increase gradually, organisations with bulk order accounts are advised to place order of designated bags and labels as soon as possible."