

Second round of FEHD anti-rodent operation in designated target areas concludes with fruitful results

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) concluded the second round of its anti-rodent operation in designated target areas in various districts on December 7. During the operation, the FEHD collected 1 006 dead rodents, caught 829 rodents in traps and took out 362 prosecutions. The operation effectively enhanced the rodent prevention and control work at the district level.

An FEHD spokesman said, "The FEHD launched a two-month anti-rodent operation in designated target areas on October 8, and adopted multi-pronged strategies including improving environmental hygiene, rodent disinfestation and enforcement action to carry out targeted anti-rodent work. In the past two months, the FEHD strengthened rodent disinfestation work at problematic spots such as rear lanes, refuse collection points, markets, hawker bazaars, cooked food markets and peripheral areas of construction sites. The department placed poisonous baits and traps at 12 328 and 14 016 locations respectively, and destroyed 460 rat holes, with 1 006 dead rodents collected and 829 rodents caught in traps.

"Apart from strengthening rodent elimination work, FEHD staff also enhanced street cleaning services and cleansing of public markets and hawker bazaars in the target areas, including sweeping and washing of streets and rear lanes, emptying and cleaning of litter containers, and clearance of miscellaneous articles and refuse on the streets, in public markets and at hawker bazaars, so as to keep the environment clean.

"In addition, the FEHD stepped up inspections of food premises, markets, hawker bazaars and cooked food markets. Enforcement actions against food premises causing poor environmental hygiene conditions, food preparation and scullery at rear lanes and improper handling and disposal of rubbish were strengthened. The FEHD conducted 16 136 inspections, issued 2 495 health advisories, 1 182 verbal warnings, 48 warning letters, one statutory notice and 652 fixed penalty notices, and took out 362 prosecutions."

Since the improper handling of food waste and remnants by food premises can give rise to rodent problems, the FEHD has started a five-week territory-wide special operation on December 10, just after the anti-rodent operation, to target irregularities of food premises such as food preparation, scullery, improper storage of articles, illegal disposal of refuse (including dumping of bagged refuse in small hours) at rear lanes, with a view to further enhancing the awareness of rodent prevention and control among the operators of food premises, by educating them to adopt measures to combat rodent problems and upkeep the hygiene condition of rear lanes as well as taking stringent enforcement action. The FEHD will also continue to step up

cleansing and rodent elimination work at rear lanes, as well as public education and publicity.

The spokesman said that cross sector co-operation is essential to sustaining effective rodent prevention and control. He called on the community to continue their support and participation in the anti-rodent work, and to eliminate the three fundamental survival conditions of rodents in their daily life, namely food, harbourage and passages, meaning the elimination of the food sources and hiding places of rodents as well as blockage of their dispersal routes.