

Sino Estates Management Limited convicted for discharging substandard wastewater at Olympian City shopping mall

â€‹Olympian City 1 in West Kowloon discharged substandard wastewater into communal sewers and thereby violated the requirements of the wastewater discharge licence. Its management company, Sino Estates Management Limited, was fined \$20,000 by Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today (August 23) for contravening the Water Pollution Control Ordinance (WPCO).

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Environmental Protection Department (EPD) enforcement officers conducted an inspection at Olympian City 1 last February and found that the discharge from one of the grease traps of the shopping mall was turbid. It was suspected that the grease trap was not operating properly, resulting in the discharge of substandard wastewater into communal sewers downstream. The EPD officers then collected wastewater samples for analysis and the results showed that the concentrations of oil and grease exceeded the upper limits of the wastewater discharge licence by five times. After investigation and evidence gathering, the EPD initiated prosecution against the property management company of the shopping mall, Sino Estates Management Limited, in accordance with the WPCO. The management company has taken remedial measures, including cleaning the grease trap to ensure its proper operation.

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A spokesperson for the EPD reminded property management companies and wastewater discharge licensees that they should arrange regular cleaning and maintenance of the grease traps and wastewater treatment facilities for premises under their management. They should also ensure the proper operation of these facilities and strictly adhere to the discharge standards as stipulated in the licence to prevent blockage of public sewers downstream and overflow of wastewater, which will adversely affect environmental hygiene.

Under the WPCO, anyone who discharges commercial or industrial wastewater into communal sewers not in compliance with the standard of the discharge licence commits an offence. First-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment.