

Ombudsman probes illegal disposal problem and “HoHoSkips” recycling service for construction waste (with photo)

The following is issued on behalf of the Office of The Ombudsman:

The Ombudsman, Mr Jack Chan, today (26 November) announced the launch of a direct investigation operation to examine the Government's recycling service for construction waste and enforcement against illegal disposal of construction waste.

Renovation works for domestic, commercial, catering and office premises generate significant amounts of construction waste. According to the report "Monitoring of Solid Waste in Hong Kong" for 2022 published by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD), the daily quantity of construction waste generated that year was around 50,000 tonnes. The Government encourages construction waste producers, such as building contractors, renovation contractors, renovation workers or persons-in-charge, to reduce waste or carry out sorting for reuse or recycling, thereby saving costs and minimising the intake at landfills. Under the Construction Waste Disposal Charging Scheme implemented since 2005, construction waste producers are required to pay for waste disposal and have a duty to dispose of waste properly.

To facilitate the proper disposal of construction waste generated from small-scale renovation works by the public and small-to medium-sized renovators, the EPD launched a pilot scheme in February 2021 for the collection and recycling of construction waste at the district level. Subsidised by the Recycling Fund, the pilot scheme enables the public and the trade to make bookings via the mobile application "HoHoSkips" for the waste disposal service provided by recyclers.

Nevertheless, there have been media reports and public complaints from time to time about illegal disposal of construction waste in public places, especially on the roadside. This not only causes inconvenience and safety hazards for the public and road users but also affects environmental hygiene and requires additional public resources for disposal. The Office of The Ombudsman also notes that data suggests that the "HoHoSkips" service might have been underused.

Mr Chan said, "While the Construction Waste Disposal Charging Scheme has been implemented for nearly 20 years and the 'HoHoSkips' service for more than three years, illegally disposed construction waste is still frequently found on the roadside, causing environmental hygiene nuisance. Through this direct investigation operation, I aim to seriously examine whether there is any room for improvement in the management strategy for the recovery and

reuse of construction waste, with a view to providing a clean and comfortable living environment for the public. It is incumbent upon the EPD to formulate practical measures to enable the public and the trade to dispose of construction waste legally and appropriately, and to increase recovery, reuse and recycling rates of construction waste. Therefore, I have decided to launch this direct investigation operation to scrutinise the existing management of construction waste, including the EPD's control and preventive measures against illegal disposal of construction waste, specific details and operating situations of the 'HoHoSkips' service, how its effectiveness is monitored, and relevant promotion and publicity initiatives. Where necessary, pertinent recommendations will be made for improvement."

The Ombudsman welcomes views from members of the public on this topic. Written submissions should reach the Office of The Ombudsman by December 27, 2024:

Address: 30/F, China Merchants Tower, Shun Tak Centre
168-200 Connaught Road Central, Hong Kong

Fax: 2882 8149

Email: complaints@ombudsman.hk

Furthermore, the Office of The Ombudsman notes the community is concerned about roadside skips, which not only cause obstruction and affect the safety of road users but also impact the environment and hygiene. The Office will collect information on this topic. Where necessary, the Office will conduct a preliminary inquiry to consider any need for a direct investigation operation, thereby examining this issue in detail and making proper recommendations for improvement.



[Extension of e-Appointment services to](#)

self-bankruptcy petitions and probate applications in High Court

The following is issued on behalf of the Judiciary:

The Judiciary today (November 26) announced that the existing e-Appointment services will be extended to self-bankruptcy petitions and probate applications in the High Court on Friday (November 29).

Self-bankruptcy petitions in High Court Registry

Unrepresented court users can make online appointments via www.judiciary.hk/en/court_services_facilities/brci_index.html for attending the High Court Registry to file petitions for their own bankruptcy (self-bankruptcy petitions). Those who are registered users of "iAM Smart" may use the auto form-filling function of "iAM Smart" to provide relevant personal data for making online appointments. This will be a newly introduced function in e-Appointment services. It will gradually be included in other e-Appointment services in light of operational experience.

Applications for grant in Probate Registry

The Probate Registry e-Appointment service for applications for grant will be extended to cover probate applications. Unrepresented litigants can make online appointments via www.judiciary.hk/en/court_services_facilities/pres_index.html for submitting applications for a grant with a will.

The Guidance Notes with details of the above new e-Appointment services are available on the corresponding dedicated webpages above.

The e-Appointment services introduced earlier in other registries and offices, namely the Apostille Service Office of the High Court Registry, the Appeals Registry at the Clerk of Court's Office of the High Court, the Family Court Registry, the Integrated Mediation Office, the Labour Tribunal Registry, and the Lands Tribunal Registry, have generally been well received so far. The services have saved court users' time by reducing the need to queue. Details are available at www.judiciary.hk/en/court_services_facilities/es_index.html.

Missing man in Tuen Mun located

A man who went missing in Tuen Mun has been located.

Wong Man-ting, aged 79, went missing after he left his residence in Shan King Estate on November 24 afternoon. His family then made a report to Police.

The man was located in Shan King Estate last night (November 25). He sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

Labour Department to hold online briefing for employers of foreign domestic helpers

The Labour Department (LD) will hold an online briefing about the employment of foreign domestic helpers (FDHs) on December 12 (Thursday), at 7pm. Enrolment is now open.

The briefing will provide an overview of the employment rights and obligations of employers of FDHs and the points to note when using the service of employment agencies. Employers of FDHs, especially first-time employers, are welcome to attend.

The online briefing will be conducted in Cantonese via Zoom and admission is free. Interested parties may register online at the LD's dedicated FDH Portal (www.fdh.labour.gov.hk/en/home.html), or download the enrolment form and submit it by email (fdh-enquiry@labour.gov.hk) or by fax (3101 0604). The deadline for enrolment is December 10 (Tuesday). The quota will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. For enquiries, please contact the LD at 3582 8995.

Red flag hoisted at Big Wave Bay Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (November 26) that due to big waves, the red flag has been hoisted at Big Wave Bay Beach in Southern District, Hong Kong Island. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at the beach.