

# Thai restaurant in Kwun Tong convicted for illegal wastewater discharge into storm drain

Lemon Grass Thai & BBQ, a Thai restaurant on Luen On Street in Kwun Tong, illegally discharged wastewater into a storm drain at the roadside. It was fined \$12,000 by Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today (January 16) for contravening the Water Pollution Control Ordinance (WPCO).

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) conducted a surprise inspection in May last year and revealed that the restaurant concerned instructed its staff members to discharge untreated wastewater into a storm drain at the roadside. EPD staff took a wastewater sample for analysis and the result showed that the concentration of oil and grease was 18,000 milligrams per litre, far exceeding the statutory standard by 600 times. An EPD spokesman explained that wastewater with a high concentration of oil and grease will obstruct drains, cause bad odours and pollute coastal waters downstream. Upon evidence gathering, the EPD initiated prosecution against the operator of the restaurant, HapiLand Limited, in accordance with the WPCO.

The spokesman reminded all responsible persons of restaurants that they must install and use appropriate wastewater treatment facilities, such as grease traps, to properly treat and discharge wastewater generated by the restaurants to avoid causing environmental pollution. Under the WPCO, it is an offence for anyone to discharge wastewater into the communal drainage system. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment. A maximum fine of \$400,000 and six months' imprisonment may be imposed on second or subsequent convictions.