

Three restaurants in Western district convicted for emitting excessive cooking fumes

Three restaurants, Chrisly Inn located at Queen's Road West, St Barts located at High Street and Bistro Du Vin located at Davis Street, violated the requirements of the statutory notices issued by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) by failing to reduce excessive cooking fume emissions. The restaurants were convicted on September 3, September 10 and today (September 17) respectively by Eastern Magistrates' Courts and fined a total of \$40,000 for contravening the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (APCO).

EPD officers conducted investigations into the three restaurants from April to November last year and found that all restaurants concerned failed to install proper cooking fume control equipment. The EPD then issued statutory notices under the APCO requiring the restaurants to install proper equipment to reduce their emissions by the deadline. After the specified date, it was found that the three restaurants had failed to comply with this requirement and continued to emit visible cooking fumes, which violated the requirement of the statutory notice. The EPD subsequently prosecuted the restaurants and continued to follow up on the cases. The emission levels of the three restaurants concerned had been improved noticeably this month.

According to the APCO, restaurant operators should adopt effective measures to reduce cooking fumes emission within a specified time limit upon receipt of a statutory notice. First-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000. A maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment may be imposed on second or subsequent convictions.

An EPD spokesman reminded members of the food business that the EPD would take enforcement actions against restaurants for cooking fume emissions according to the APCO. The responsible person of the restaurant should properly design and install appropriate and effective air pollution control equipment in the kitchens of food premises. They should also arrange for experienced technicians to clean, check and repair the equipment regularly to ensure no visible fumes or odours are emitted, so as to avoid causing air pollution and nuisance to the public.