

Two more open recycling sites convicted of illegal storage of chemical waste

Win Sense (China) Limited operating a recycling site in Lin Ma Hang, North District and a person-in-charge of a recycling site in Tai Kong Po, Yuen Long were convicted and fined a total of \$21,500 at Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (July 30) for contravening the Waste Disposal (Chemical Waste) (General) Regulation as a result of illegally storing chemical waste at their recycling sites.

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has all along been striving to combat the illegal collection, storage and handling of regulated chemical waste at open recycling sites in the New Territories, and taking stringent law enforcement actions against non-compliant operations of recycling sites. During blitz operations at the end of last year and January this year, the EPD discovered that waste lead-acid batteries (LABs) and waste LCD monitors, which were classified as chemical waste, were illegally stored at the open recycling sites in Tai Kong Po, Yuen Long and Lin Ma Hang, North District. Some of the chemical waste was stored outdoors without order. A number of waste LABs and around 900 waste LCD monitors with an estimated export market value of \$140,000 were seized in the blitz operations. The EPD initiated prosecutions against the operating company and the person-in-charge of the recycling sites involved under the Waste Disposal (Chemical Waste) (General) Regulation after gathering evidence. Lately, EPD enforcement officers inspected the above-mentioned recycling sites and noticed that chemical waste was properly stored there. The EPD believes that a series of law enforcement actions taken by the department has strengthened the deterrent effect.

The spokesman stressed that waste LCD monitors and waste LABs are hazardous electronic waste (e-waste), containing heavy metals and other toxic substances. They are classified as chemical waste. Chemical waste is hazardous by nature and, if not properly handled and transported, will pollute the environment as well as pose a risk to the health of relevant trade practitioners and the general public. Offenders contravening the above regulation may be liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment on first conviction, and a maximum fine of \$500,000 and two years' imprisonment on a second or subsequent conviction.

For more information about the control of chemical waste, please visit the EPD's website:

www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/environmentinhk/waste/guide_ref/guide_cwc.html.