

Two plastic recycling workshops convicted for contravening noise and air pollution control

Two plastic recycling workshops, one in Shan Ha Tsuen, Yuen Long, and another in Ping Che, North District, were prosecuted for contravening the Noise Control Ordinance (NCO) and the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (APCO), as they emitted excessive noise and odour respectively during their production processes, causing nuisances to residents nearby. The two companies were convicted at Fanling Magistrates' Courts on March 19 and today (March 26) respectively and fined a total of \$16,000.

Following complaints from members of the public, the investigations and assessments conducted by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) confirmed that the noise generated by the recycling workshop in Shan Ha Tsuen, Yuen Long during the daytime exceeded the statutory limit, while the recycling workshop in Ping Che caused odour nuisances. The EPD therefore issued a noise abatement notice and an air pollution abatement notice to the operators of the recycling workshops – Hankang Recycling Limited and Wai Shun Hong respectively, requesting for improvements. During follow-up inspections, EPD's enforcement officers found that the noise generated by the recycling workshop in Shan Ha Tsuen still reached 66 decibels (dB), which exceeded the statutory limit by 6 dB. The recycling workshop in Ping Che failed to install air pollution control equipment by the deadline and continued to emit objectionable odour, which violated the requirements of the statutory notice. The EPD instigated prosecutions against the operators of the two recycling workshops in accordance with the law.

The EPD spokesman reminded operators of plastic recycling and processing workshops that they must properly design their workshops, and install suitable and effective noise and air pollution control equipment, for instance, adopting fully enclosed production lines, installing effective noise barriers as well as ventilation and air purifying systems for the production lines and the workshops to reduce noise and air pollutant emissions. They must also arrange for experienced technicians to carry out regular inspections and maintenance, so as to avoid causing noise and air pollution nuisances to residents nearby.

According to the NCO and APCO, anyone failing to comply with any requirement of an abatement notice commits an offence. First-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000. A maximum fine of \$200,000 may be imposed on second or subsequent convictions.