

Unlicensed collector convicted second time for illegal collection of waste vehicle batteries

An unlicensed collector again illegally collected waste vehicle batteries, which are classified as chemical waste. He was fined \$20,000 at Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts today (May 17) for contravening the Waste Disposal Ordinance (WDO) and the Waste Disposal (Chemical Waste) (General) Regulation. This collector was convicted last November for illegal collection of waste vehicle batteries last May and fined \$8,000.

During an enforcement operation in October last year, staff of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) intercepted a light goods vehicle at Shun Ning Road in Cheung Sha Wan and found some 20 waste vehicle batteries on the vehicle. After investigation, the EPD prosecuted the collector under the WDO and the Regulation.

An EPD spokesman said, "The defendant collected waste lead-acid batteries (WLABs) which were classified as chemical waste, from nearby vehicle maintenance workshops and violated the WDO." The spokesman reminded those who provide vehicle battery replacement or vehicle repair services that they should hire a licensed chemical waste collector to properly collect and handle WLABs and waste lubricating oil, etc, which are classified as chemical waste.

The EPD spokesman said that WLABs contain sulphuric acid and lead metal, while waste lubricating oil contains mineral oil, which are classified as chemical waste. Improper handling or disposal will pollute the environment and pose risk to public health. Vehicle maintenance workshop operators should follow the statutory requirement to properly label and store their chemical waste and hire a licensed collector for delivery to licensed chemical waste disposal facilities for disposal. Under the WDO, first-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment. For subsequent offences, offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$500,000 and two years' imprisonment.

Members of the public may visit the EPD's website for more information about the control of chemical waste:

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