

Waste collector convicted of illegally disposing of chemical waste

A licensed chemical waste collector, Wing Tat Transportation Company, was convicted and fined \$90,000 at Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (June 9) for contravening the Waste Disposal Ordinance (WDO) as a result of breaching the conditions of the relevant Chemical Waste Collection Licence, including illegally disposing of chemical waste.

In October last year, enforcement officers of the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) carried out a blitz operation according to intelligence received to combat waste collectors illegally transporting or disposing of waste. During the operation, enforcement officers discovered that the above-mentioned chemical waste collector was transporting waste, including waste lubricating oil and flammable organic solvents, to a landfill for disposal, rather than transporting them to the Chemical Waste Treatment Centre for disposal in accordance with the conditions of the relevant Chemical Waste Collection Licence. In addition, the goods vehicles involved were not equipped with chemical spill kits. One of the vehicles was not operated by sufficient personnel. The above situations were in breach of the conditions of the relevant Chemical Waste Collection Licence. The EPD then prosecuted Wing Tat Transportation Company under the WDO.

A spokesperson for the EPD said chemical waste must be transported by compliant vehicles to suitable facilities for disposal. Otherwise, chemical waste may pose dangers to personnel or road users. Moreover, waste, including mineral oil illegally discarded at landfills, will cause environmental pollution. The EPD will continue to rigorously combat the illegal collection and disposal of chemical waste to protect the environment.

Anyone illegally collecting, storing or handling chemical waste will be prosecuted. First-time offenders may be liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment. A maximum fine of \$500,000 and two years' imprisonment may be imposed on a 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.