

Waste statistics for 2019 published

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (December 21) published the report "Monitoring of Solid Waste in Hong Kong – Waste Statistics for 2019", presenting the 2019 statistics on disposal and recovery/recycling of solid waste generated in Hong Kong. The report includes municipal solid waste (MSW), comprising domestic waste, commercial and industrial waste as well as overall construction waste and special waste.

Waste disposal

Overall, the average daily quantity of solid waste disposed of at landfills was 15 637 tonnes in 2019, representing a decrease of 2.8 per cent as compared to 2018. Regarding MSW, the average daily quantity of disposal at landfills was 11 057 tonnes in 2019, representing a decline of 3.2 per cent from 2018. As far as the per capita MSW disposal rate per day is concerned, the 2019 figure was 1.47 kilograms, down from 1.53kg in 2018. The change was partly attributed to the local social unrest which had severe impacts on society and led to a contraction of the local economy in the second half of 2019.

Looking at the figures by waste type, food waste was the largest component of MSW in 2019, accounting for 30 per cent, followed by waste paper (24 per cent) and waste plastics (21 per cent). These amounts are comparable with those in 2018. With the operation of the Organic Resources Recovery Centre Phase 1 (O · PARK1) at Siu Ho Wan and the full implementation of the Producer Responsibility Scheme (PRS) on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE), disposal of food waste and WEEE dropped by 5.9 per cent and 12.0 per cent year-on-year respectively.

Regarding construction waste, the recovery rate of inert construction materials delivered to public fill reception facilities and other outlets in 2019 remained at a level of over 90 per cent, as in 2018. The disposal of overall construction waste at landfills registered a decrease of 3.3 per cent compared with 2018. This might be partly attributable to the increase in construction waste disposal charges effective from April 2017, strengthening the incentive for the trade to reduce and reuse construction and demolition materials and reduce disposal.

Resources recovery

Hong Kong has relatively limited capacity to utilise raw or recycled materials in local production under its economic structure. The value of and outlets for local recyclables have long been dictated by market conditions outside Hong Kong. The challenging condition of the market outside Hong Kong for recyclables that has persisted in recent years, together with stricter import controls imposed by nearby jurisdictions, have continued to affect the overall performance of the recycling industry. The MSW recovery rate was 29 per cent in 2019, down slightly by one percentage point compared with 2018. However, metal recyclables continued to have the highest recovery rate at 91

per cent among all recyclable types. The operation of O · PARK1 has also led to a 70 per cent increase in the recovery of food waste compared to 2018.

An EPD spokesman said that the Government would continue to launch various policies to promote the sustainable use of resources. Further to the progressive implementation of the PRS on glass beverage containers, the EPD is preparing for the implementation of the PRS on plastic beverage containers. The EPD will also continue to proactively work with the Legislative Council in respect of the scrutiny work of the MSW Charging Bill.

The report and "Hong Kong 2019 Municipal Solid Waste – At a Glance" are both available in an electronic format and can be obtained from the EPD website at www.wastereduction.gov.hk/en/assistancewizard/waste_red_sat.htm.