

Yau Sang Galvanizing (Hot-Dip) Company Limited convicted again for illegal wastewater discharge

The factory of Yau Sang Galvanizing (Hot-Dip) Company Limited at Yuen Long Industrial Estate was caught again for illegal discharge of industrial wastewater. It was fined \$40,000 by Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (August 14) for contravening the Water Pollution Control Ordinance (WPCO). The factory committed the same contravention earlier and was convicted and fined \$15,000 this June.

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) received a complaint last December about illegal discharge of wastewater by the above factory. EPD staff conducted a blitz inspection in the same month and found that the factory did not deliver wastewater to its sewage treatment facility for proper treatment. Instead, the industrial wastewater was being directly discharged into the communal sewer, which violated the requirements of the WPCO licence. The EPD subsequently prosecuted the factory in accordance with the law followed by conviction of the factory.

In January this year, the EPD conducted a surprise inspection at the factory again and found that the factory did not improve its operation. Industrial wastewater containing zinc and iron was being discharged into storm drains, polluting nearby rivers and waters. After investigation and evidence gathering, the EPD subsequently prosecuted Yau Sang Galvanizing (Hot-Dip) Company Limited under the WPCO. The EPD will closely monitor the operation of the factory and enforcement action will be taken whenever any irregularity is found to deter repeated violations.

The wastewater generated from industrial operations is regulated under the WPCO. An EPD spokesman reminded members of the trade to take appropriate measures to prevent any untreated wastewater from being discharged into storm drains to protect the environment. Under the WPCO, it is an offence for anyone to discharge wastewater into storm drains. First-time offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and six months' imprisonment. A maximum fine of \$400,000 and six months' imprisonment may be imposed on second or subsequent convictions.