

Yuen Long chicken farms convicted of illegal livestock waste discharge

The person-in-charge of a chicken farm in Ha Che Tsuen in Pat Heung, Yuen Long, was convicted of violating the Waste Disposal (Livestock Waste) Regulations by discharging untreated livestock waste into nearby watercourses and was fined \$10,000 by the Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (December 10).

Another chicken farm in Ha Che Tsuen in Pat Heung, Yuen Long, was convicted of the same offence and fined \$20,000 by the court last month.

A spokesman for the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) said that the department is very concerned about illegal sewage discharge from livestock farms along the Kam Tin River, which has seriously polluted the watercourse there. Besides strengthening daily inspections, a series of night ambush operations were arranged after examining public complaints and intelligence in April and June this year.

During the period, EPD officers successfully intercepted livestock waste being discharged from the drainage outlets of the two chicken farms into the river. Test results of the sewage samples confirmed that their five-day biochemical oxygen demand had respectively exceeded the legal discharge standards by 183 and 214 times, and suspended solid concentration by 113 and 152 times.

The EPD subsequently prosecuted the person-in-charge of the livestock farms in accordance with the Waste Disposal (Livestock Waste) Regulations and reported the cases to the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department accordingly for follow-up actions.

The spokesman reminded owners and staff members of livestock farms in the New Territories that discharging untreated livestock waste into nearby watercourses will lead to serious water pollution and odour nuisance. They should properly operate treatment facilities for wastewater generated from livestock waste and should not discharge untreated livestock waste into nearby watercourses. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and a daily fine of \$5,000 for a continuing offence. The department will continue to conduct surprise inspections at illegal discharge black spots to combat irregularities of livestock farms in various districts.

More information about the livestock waste control scheme is available on the EPD's website:

www.epd.gov.hk/epd/english/laws_regulations/enforcement/lwis.html.