

Latest arrangements for handling tree waste after typhoon

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) announced today (November 8) that the temporary wood waste collection area in the Kai Tak Development Area will stop receiving tree waste after 6pm on November 10 (Saturday).

An EPD spokesman explained that the collection area was only set up for temporary stockpiling as a result of the huge number of fallen trees and broken branches collected after super typhoon Mangkhut, and that the site is not suitable for long-term reception or storage of tree waste. In the past few weeks, the quantity of tree waste received at the collection area has substantially reduced. In addition, the area has to be vacated for the long term development purposes. Consequently, since early November, the EPD has started to close the collection area in phases to facilitate the handling of the remaining tree waste there.

Currently, various government departments and their contractors are delivering the collected tree waste to the West New Territories (WENT) Landfill or the North East New Territories Landfill directly, while the collection area will be closed for receiving tree waste after 6pm on November 10.

To encourage waste reduction, reuse and resource recycling, the EPD earlier selected a portion of tree waste from the collection area and transferred it to the Community Green Stations (CGSs) in Eastern District, Kwun Tong, Sham Shui Po, Sha Tin, Yuen Long and Tuen Mun, for collection by members of the public or groups for onward reuse or upcycling. Interested parties can visit the CGSs to collect the tree waste for free before December 31, and they can call the CGSs to enquire about arrangements and to make appointments in advance. The collection area has already been closed for public collection of wood since November 1. Before its closure, a total of 435 logs were collected by 85 members of the public.

The EPD has all along been encouraging government departments and the community to minimise yard waste in accordance with the principle of reduction, reuse and recycling. To speed up the handling of a large quantity of tree waste and facilitate onward recycling, the EPD has procured an industrial grade wood shredder, which will be placed in the open space near T·PARK, and it is estimated that about 100 tonnes of tree waste can be shredded every day. The shredded wood will be utilised as far as possible to conduct various treatment trials, such as using them as a bulking agent in the composting process at the Organic Resources Recovery Centre; turning the shredded wood and wood pellets into solid fuel for boilers or cement manufacturing; or turning them into soil cover for use at landfills. To minimise the possible impact caused by the storage of a large quantity of logs or shredded wood in the open space near T·PARK, and taking into consideration the fact that the quantity of tree waste which can be recycled

through the above channels is limited, logs or shredded wood which cannot be utilised for the time being will be delivered to the WENT Landfill for disposal.

In the long run, the EPD will introduce more diverse proposals for treating yard waste. In addition to the aforementioned feasible treatment plans, which are subject to the outcome of trials, the EPD will work with other departments to explore further means to facilitate the recycling and reuse of yard waste.

In addition, a large amount of waste was generated by the super typhoon, causing a serious overload at refuse transfer stations (RTSs). In order to cope with the possible scenarios caused by the passage of typhoons in the future, the EPD will review the experience gained in handling the aftermath of typhoon Mangkhut and identify areas for improvement, with a view to formulating contingency plans to cope with any similar situations after the passage of typhoons in the future. The EPD will also proactively communicate with all stakeholders to co-ordinate the management of waste, so as to maintain the smooth operation of such work. Looking ahead, the Government will need to build new refuse transfer facilities and increase the capacity of existing RTSs.

During the passage of super typhoon Mangkhut, extensive damage was caused in Hong Kong and large number of trees were damaged or fell, resulting in huge quantities of tree waste produced. To help speed up the clearance of tree waste by various sectors of the community, the EPD set up a temporary wood waste collection area in the Kai Tak Development Area on September 21 so that the public could deliver tree waste to the collection area for temporary stockpiling. Apart from providing the public with a convenient location to speed up the clearance of fallen trees and broken branches, the temporary measure also helped to divert the delivery of tree waste to the collection area instead of the RTSs, thus effectively reducing the burden on RTSs and shortening the queuing time of refuse collection vehicles at the RTSs. As of today, around 8 000 truckloads of tree waste had been delivered to the collection area. Since September 28, relevant departments have been transferring the wood waste from the collection area to the WENT landfill by barges. As of today, over 15 000 tonnes of wood waste have already been cleared from the site and it is estimated that the clearance work at the collection area can be completed around the end of November.

[Hong Kong resident employer and two illegal workers jailed](#)

A Hong Kong resident employer and two Indian illegal workers were jailed at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (November 7).

During a joint operation conducted by the Immigration Department (ImmD) and the Hong Kong Police Force codenamed "Champion" on June 20, one male Bangladeshi illegal worker was arrested in Mong Kok. The Hong Kong resident employer of the illegal worker was also arrested.

The illegal worker was jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts earlier. The Hong Kong resident employer was charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday for being an employer of a person who was not lawfully employable as he did not take all practicable steps to ascertain whether the applicant was lawfully employable prior to employment. After trial, he was sentenced to four weeks' imprisonment.

In addition, during a joint operation conducted by the ImmD, the Hong Kong Police Force and the Labour Department codenamed "Sahara" on April 23, enforcement officers raided a restaurant in Tsim Sha Tsui. Two male Indian illegal workers, aged 23 and 29, were arrested. When intercepted, they were working as odd-job workers. Upon identity checking, they produced for inspection recognisance forms issued by the ImmD, which prohibit them from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that they were non-refoulement claimants. An employer suspected of employing the illegal workers was also arrested and the investigation is ongoing.

The two illegal workers were charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday with taking employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration or while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. After trial, they were sentenced to 22 months and two weeks' imprisonment separately.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases.

The ImmD spokesman stressed that any person who contravenes a condition of stay in force in respect of him shall be guilty of an offence. A foreign domestic helper should only take up employment as such and reside at the contractual address as stipulated in the contract, as approved by the Director of Immigration. Offenders are liable to criminal prosecution and upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and imprisonment for two years. Aiders and abettors are also liable to prosecution.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an

immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening on vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threat and coercion in the recruitment phase and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent interference, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Thursday, November 8, 2018 is 105.5 (up 0.1 against yesterday's index).

Auction of personalised vehicle registration marks this Sunday

The Transport Department (TD) today (November 8) reminded the public that the 129th auction of personalised vehicle registration marks (PVRMs) will be held this Sunday (November 11) at Meeting Room S221, L2, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Wan Chai.

A list of 235 approved PVRMs put up for auction can be downloaded from

the department's website, www.td.gov.hk. The reserve price for all these marks is \$5,000. Applicants who have paid a deposit of \$5,000 are required to participate in the bidding (including the first bid at the reserve price). Otherwise, the PVRM concerned may be sold to another bidder at the reserve price.

Bidders are also reminded to bring the following documents with them for completion of registration and payment procedures immediately after the successful bidding:

- (i) The identity document of the successful bidder;
 - (ii) The identity document of the purchaser if it is different from the successful bidder;
 - (iii) A copy of the certificate of incorporation if the purchaser is a body corporate; and
 - (iv) A crossed cheque made payable to "The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region" or "The Government of the HKSAR". (For an auctioned mark paid for by cheque, the first three working days after the date of auction will be required for cheque clearance confirmation before processing of the application for mark assignment can be completed.)
- Successful bidders can also pay through the Easy Pay System (EPS). Payment by post-dated cheques, cash or other methods will not be accepted.

People who want to participate in the bidding at the auction should take note of the following important points:

- (i) The display of a PVRM on a motor vehicle should be in compliance with the requirements stipulated in Schedule 4 to the Road Traffic (Registration and Licensing of Vehicles) Regulations;
- (ii) Any change to the arrangement of letters, numerals and blank spaces of a PVRM, i.e. single and two rows as auctioned, will not be allowed;
- (iii) Purchasers must make payment of the purchase price through EPS or by crossed cheque and complete the Memorandum of Sale of PVRM immediately after the bidding for the PVRM concerned. Subsequent alteration of the particulars in the memorandum will not be permitted; and
- (iv) The purchaser shall, within 12 months after the date of auction, apply to the Commissioner for Transport for the PVRM to be assigned to a motor vehicle registered in the name of the purchaser. If the purchaser fails to assign the PVRM within 12 months, allocation of the PVRM will be cancelled and arranged for re-allocation in accordance with the statutory provision without prior notice to the purchaser.

"Upon completion of the Memorandum of Sale of PVRM, the purchaser will be issued a receipt and a Certificate of Allocation of Personalised Registration Mark. The Certificate of Allocation will serve to prove the holdership of the PVRM. Potential buyers of vehicles bearing a PVRM should check the Certificate of Allocation with the sellers and pay attention to the details therein. For transfer of vehicle ownership, this certificate together with other required documents should be produced to the Transport Department for processing," the spokesman said.

For other auction details, please refer to the Guidance Notes – Auction of PVRM, which is available at the department's licensing offices or can be downloaded from its website, www.td.gov.hk.

Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum to hold fun day this Sunday

The Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum will hold a fun day this Sunday (November 11). Offering a wide array of activities, the event aims to commemorate Dr Sun Yat-sen's birth as well as to enhance public understanding of this great historical figure and the history of the early Republic period. Members of the public are invited to participate and admission is free.

Various programmes are lined up for public enjoyment including "Mark of the Orders: Henna Body Painting", "Famous Quotes: The Making of Small Candle Holder" and the "Music Atlas of Hong Kong" Concert Series by the Windpipe Chinese Music Ensemble. Queen's College has been invited to provide virtual reality games and to present the mini exhibition "Virtual Reality: Dr Sun Yat-sen and Central School", allowing visitors to learn more about Dr Sun's school life in Hong Kong.

In addition, a cultural tour entitled "In-depth Tour: Learn all about Dr Sun Yat-sen Historical Trail" will be held. Advance registration is required as places are limited. If the number of applicants exceeds the quota, places will be allocated by ballot.

Visitors can also take the opportunity to visit the museum's permanent exhibition and the special exhibition "The Beiyang Warlords: War and Politics". Exhibits include precious historical artefacts, historical documents and a wide range of audiovisual programmes, enabling visitors to learn more about the life and career of Dr Sun as well as the history of the Beiyang warlords.

The Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum is located at 7 Castle Road, Mid-Levels, Central. Presented by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department and organised by the Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum, the fun day will be held from 10am to 7pm. For details, please visit the museum's website at hk.dr.sunyatsen.museum or call 3580 6780.