

EPD awards contract for pilot scheme to collect plastic beverage containers by reverse vending machines

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) announced today (August 24) that the contract for the one-year Pilot Scheme on the Application of Reverse Vending Machines (RVMs) for collection of plastic beverage containers has been awarded through open tender to A.S. Watson Group (HK) Limited (the contractor).

The EPD has conducted an open tendering exercise earlier to invite a service provider to install 60 RVMs under a pilot scheme at locations such as public places or government facilities with higher foot traffic with a view to facilitating the return of used beverage containers by the public, paving the way for the introduction of a producer responsibility scheme on plastic beverage containers (PPRS).

An EPD spokesman said, "The Government is planning to introduce a new PPRS and will consider providing a rebate to encourage the return of used plastic beverage containers for proper recycling. Experience in other places suggests that the use of RVMs to collect plastic beverage containers can enhance the operational efficiency of the PPRS as well as the quality of beverage containers collected. The pilot scheme will test the application of RVMs in a local context."

Under the contract of the pilot scheme, the contractor is required to advise the EPD on the operational arrangements for the 60 RVMs. It also has to provide a cash rebate to members of the public who return plastic beverage containers through the RVMs. All the plastic containers collected will be delivered to suitable recyclers for proper treatment and recycling locally.

The spokesman added, "On commencement of the contract on August 24, 2020, the contractor will have a preparatory period of about three months to set up the first batch of RVMs, including their operating and cash rebate systems, as well as the collection services for the plastic beverage containers. The contractor is also required to provide an ambassador service to promote the scheme and assist the public in proper use of the RVMs, and a hotline for the public to make enquiries or reports."

US Dollar Liquidity Facility tender

notice

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

US Dollar Liquidity Facility tender notice:

Tender date : August 26 (Wednesday)
Tender submission time : 9am to noon
Settlement date : August 27 (Thursday)
Repayment date : September 3 (Thursday)
Tenor : seven Days
Amount on offer : US\$10,000 Million

Note: Licensed Banks interested in participating in the tender for the first time are encouraged to provide US dollar settlement instructions by email (settlementsection@hkma.gov.hk) to the Hong Kong Monetary Authority's Settlement Team in advance, preferably two days prior to the tender. Required information includes name of corresponding bank, name of final beneficiary (must be the Licensed Bank participating in the tender), and account or CHIPS number of a US dollar bank account to be settled in the US. Such information needs to be provided once only, unless there is further change.

Firing practice for September 2020

Firing practice will take place at two military sites, namely the San Wai/Tai Ling Firing Range and the Tsing Shan Firing Range, next month (September).

Red flags or red lamps will be hoisted at the firing areas before and during firing practice. For their safety, people are advised not to enter the firing area.

Following are the dates and times for the firing practice sessions in September 2020:

San Wai/Tai Ling Firing Range

Date	Time
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September 1 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 2 (Wednesday)	8am-9pm
September 3 (Thursday)	8am-9pm
September 4 (Friday)	8am-9pm
September 7 (Monday)	8am-9pm
September 8 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 9 (Wednesday)	8am-9pm
September 10 (Thursday)	8am-9pm
September 11 (Friday)	8am-9pm
September 14 (Monday)	8am-9pm
September 15 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 16 (Wednesday)	8am-9pm
September 17 (Thursday)	8am-9pm
September 18 (Friday)	8am-9pm
September 21 (Monday)	8am-9pm
September 22 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 23 (Wednesday)	8am-9pm
September 24 (Thursday)	8am-9pm
September 25 (Friday)	8am-9pm
September 28 (Monday)	8am-9pm
September 29 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 30 Wednesday)	8am-9pm

Tsing Shan Firing Range

Date	Time
September 1 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 2 (Wednesday)	8am-9pm
September 3 (Thursday)	8am-9pm
September 4 (Friday)	8am-9pm
September 7 (Monday)	8am-9pm
September 8 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 9 (Wednesday)	8am-9pm
September 10 (Thursday)	8am-9pm
September 11 (Friday)	8am-9pm
September 14 (Monday)	8am-9pm
September 15 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 16 (Wednesday)	8am-9pm
September 17 (Thursday)	8am-9pm
September 18 (Friday)	8am-9pm
September 21 (Monday)	8am-9pm
September 22 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 23 (Wednesday)	8am-9pm
September 24 (Thursday)	8am-9pm
September 25 (Friday)	8am-9pm
September 28 (Monday)	8am-9pm
September 29 (Tuesday)	8am-9pm
September 30 (Wednesday)	8am-9pm

2020 Guangdong-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme opens for applications

The Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) is inviting applications for the 2020 Guangdong-Hong Kong Technology Cooperation Funding Scheme from today (August 24) until October 23.

Launched in 2004, the Scheme provides funding for applied research and development projects in Guangdong and Hong Kong to enhance collaboration between universities, research institutes and technology enterprises of the two places, and to upgrade the technological level of the industries in the Greater Pearl River Delta region. The Shenzhen Municipal Government joined the Scheme in the following year.

There are three categories of projects under the Scheme. The first category is funded by the Innovation and Technology Fund (ITF) of Hong Kong and open to Hong Kong institutions. The second category is funded by the relevant Mainland authorities and open to Mainland institutions. The third category is jointly funded by the Guangdong and Hong Kong governments or the Shenzhen and Hong Kong governments. Hong Kong and Mainland institutions can submit applications to the ITC and the relevant Mainland authorities respectively.

"There are 37 specific themes or topics in different technology areas under the third category this year. The areas are relevant to the needs of the industry and will enhance economic development in the Greater Pearl River Delta region," a spokesman for the ITC said.

Further information is available on the ITF website (www.itf.gov.hk/l-eng/TCFS.asp). For enquiries, please contact the ITF Secretariat (Tel: 3655 5678; email: enquiry@itf.gov.hk).

Employers and employees should take precautions against heat stroke

As the Hong Kong Observatory has issued the Very Hot Weather Warning, the Labour Department (LD) reminds employers and employees to take appropriate precautions to prevent heat stroke when working in a hot or humid environment.

Heat stroke could occur if an employee works in a hot or humid environment for prolonged periods of time, as the body may fail to regulate its temperature by effective heat dissipation through sweating.

The symptoms of heat-related illnesses include feeling thirsty, fatigue, nausea, vomiting, headache, dizziness, muscle spasm or even mental confusion, and loss of consciousness or convulsion in severe cases.

Construction workers, cleaning workers, kitchen workers and porters, for example, are more prone to heat stroke as they may be working for long hours in such an environment, especially if appropriate preventive measures have not been taken.

The LD reminds employers to arrange for a suitable assessment of the risk of heat stress in the work environment and take appropriate preventive measures. The LD has produced two leaflets entitled "Checklist for Heat Stress Assessment at Construction Sites" and "Checklist for Heat Stress Assessment at Outdoor Cleansing Workplaces" respectively. Employers engaged in construction or outdoor cleaning work are advised to refer to these checklists in assessing the risk of heat stress at their workplaces. As for heat stress assessment at a workplace in general, employers can refer to a booklet entitled "Risk Assessment for the Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work" produced by the LD.

The LD also reminds employers and employees to take the following precautions to prevent heat stroke:

Employers

- (1) Take heed of the weather report and adopt shift work arrangements for employees to reduce their exposure to the hot environment, or arrange appropriate rest breaks for them during very hot periods;
- (2) Avoid working under direct sunlight and set up temporary sunshade wherever possible;
- (3) Provide cool potable water for employees at all times during work. If necessary, provide drinks containing electrolytes for employees to replenish loss of salt during profuse sweating;
- (4) Minimise physical demands by using tools or mechanical aids at work;
- (5) Increase air flow by enhancing ventilation or air-conditioning as appropriate;
- (6) Isolate heat-generating facilities at the workplace and use insulating materials to minimise heat dissipation to the other work areas; and
- (7) Provide relevant information and training for employees on heat stroke such as preventive measures and first aid treatment.

Employees

- (1) Wear clothing made of suitable materials (for example, cotton) that is loose-fitting and light-coloured to help heat dissipation, minimise heat absorption and allow sweat evaporation;
- (2) Wear a wide-brimmed hat when working outdoors;

- (3) Drink plenty of water or other appropriate beverages with electrolytes to replenish the fluids and salt lost through sweating; and
- (4) Whenever there are any symptoms of heat-related illnesses, rest in a cool or shady place and drink water, and inform supervisors to take appropriate action immediately.

The LD also urges employers to provide for employees as far as practicable covered space with good ventilation for rest and meals. Furthermore, some employees may have difficulty in adapting to a hot working environment owing to their own health conditions. Employers should take this into account and consider the recommendations of their doctors when assigning work to these employees.

In addition to the publications on risk assessment, the LD has produced a leaflet entitled "Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work in a Hot Environment" for the public. The publications can be obtained free of charge from the offices of the Occupational Health Service of the LD, or downloaded from the department's webpage at www.labour.gov.hk/eng/public/content2_9.htm.

In view of the latest situation of COVID-19, occupational health talks on the prevention of heat stroke at work in a hot environment scheduled to be held in August have been temporarily cancelled until further notice.