

Disbursement of subsidies under Anti-epidemic Subsidy Scheme for the Laundry Trade in progress

The Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, said today (June 18) that the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has received over 1 400 applications for the Anti-epidemic Subsidy Scheme for the Laundry Trade under the Anti-epidemic Fund launched by the Government. Vetting of applications is underway and the first batch of subsidies has been disbursed to applicants by cheque today.

Mr Wong today visited a laundry workshop and a laundry shop, which are beneficiaries of the Scheme. He said, "The laundry trade provides downstream support and has been adversely affected by the epidemic and economic downturn. We hope that the Scheme will provide timely relief, along with other measures of the Government, to support enterprises and safeguard jobs to meet the imminent needs of the laundry trade.

"The full support of the Laundry Association of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Laundry Services Association, by reflecting the industry's operating situation and views, and serving as the communication channel between operators and us, has contributed to the swift implementation of the Scheme," Mr Wong added.

By positively joining energy efficiency and carbon reduction initiatives, the laundry workshop and laundry shop Mr Wong visited have both stepped up environmental efforts in energy saving and hence reduced daily operation costs. They participated in the Electrical Equipment Upgrade Scheme (EEUS) of a power company and were subsidised to procure equipment with higher energy efficiencies, while the laundry shop also carried out an energy audit to identify energy saving potential. The two shops also supported Hong Kong's renewable energy development efforts by purchasing local renewable energy certificates. Mr Wong thanked their multi-pronged green and carbon reduction efforts, which set a model for the trade. Mr Wong also urged members of the industry, regardless of their scale, to learn more about the latest opportunities brought by various subsidy programmes such as the EEUS, with a view to supporting a green recovery. Not only will members save costs for the companies in general, but such efforts would also realise multiple benefits including contributing to the circular economy and mitigating climate change.

The Scheme provides a one-off subsidy to help the laundry and dry cleaning services industry meet its operational costs. Depending on the size of operation, each eligible laundry shop or workshop will receive a subsidy ranging from \$10,000 to \$150,000. To take care of the livelihood of elderly employees, the applicants are required to undertake not to reduce the total number of employees aged 65 or above for three months upon receipt of the subsidies.

The application period for the Scheme ended on June 12. The laundry trade can call 3107 8403 or send an email to laundry_subsidy@epd.gov.hk to check the status regarding the processing of their applications.