

FEHD prosecutes fresh provision shop for providing unclean towel for shared use by customers

â€‹The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (October 19) that a fresh provision shop operator who provided an unclean towel for shared use by customers was prosecuted for contravening the relevant requirement under the Food Business Regulation (Cap.132X) (Regulation). This was the first time the FEHD instituted prosecution against offenders for the relevant situation.

A spokesman for the FEHD said that, according to the Regulation, every person who carries on any food business shall at all times cause all articles used or to be used in the course of such business to be kept clean and free from noxious matters. Provision of shared towels for customer use by market fish stalls or shops may increase the risk of transmission of COVID-19. The FEHD has stepped up inspections at its markets and fresh provision shops to ensure compliance with the relevant requirement under the Regulation. During inspections today, FEHD officers found that a licensed fresh provision shop selling fish at Mok Cheong Street, To Kwa Wan, provided an unclean towel for shared use by customers and the operator was thus prosecuted.

Under the Regulation, any person who fails to cause any article to be kept clean and free from noxious matters commits an offence and the maximum penalty is a fine of \$10,000 and imprisonment for three months.

The spokesman said, "To maintain personal hygiene, protect food safety and keep environmental hygiene, the FEHD urges market fish stalls and fresh provision shops not to provide shared towels, but consider substituting them with disposable tissues if needed. Moreover, operators should also advise their customers not to touch seafood and assist customers in choosing seafood as far as possible. The FEHD will continue to step up inspections and enforcement actions to ensure compliance with the Regulation."