

## **FEHD reminds shop operators not to extend business area illegally and causing obstructions to passageways (with photos/video)**

To tackle the illegal shop extension and obstruction problems, a spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (May 30) that the second phase of trial scheme will be extended to Eastern, Sham Shui Po and Yuen Long Districts in June.

Representatives from various government departments conducted public education and publicity activities in the three districts in recent days, including putting up banners broadcasting promotional audio clips at prominent locations and, together with representatives from relevant District Offices and the Police as well as local District Council/Area Committee members, distributing notices to shop operators, to remind shop operators and other stakeholders not to extend business areas illegally by placing goods or articles in public places or on carriageways and cause obstruction to pedestrian and vehicular flow. Otherwise, they may be liable to prosecution. The FEHD and the Police will also take action to remove those goods or articles and the shop operators concerned would be required to bear the expenses of such removal.

The FEHD and the Police launched a trial scheme in Kowloon City, Kwun Tong and Tsuen Wan Districts since late September last year by deploying a new enforcement strategy in mounting joint operations. Apart from stepping up prosecutions against offenders, the Police would exercise its statutory powers in removing obstructions, and the FEHD would arrange to remove the obstructions (including goods), which were placed on carriageways or in public places and the owner concerned had not followed the instructions of the Police to remove them within the specified time.

From late September last year to yesterday (May 29), the FEHD and the Police had mounted over 160 joint operations in Kowloon City, Kwun Tong and Tsuen Wan Districts with 631 fixed penalty notices or summonses issued against obstruction in public places and cleanliness offences. A total of 205 warning notices which required the owners of the articles to remove the obstruction within the specified time were also issued. Among these, 14 warning notices had yet to be complied with upon expiry of the specified time limits. The FEHD had hence removed about 7 tonnes goods or articles involved, of which most of them have been ordered by the court to be confiscated.

Positive feedback on the trial scheme has been received from District Councils, local stakeholders and the public, considering that the cityscape and environmental hygiene of targeted streets have been improved significantly. The FEHD and the Police has thus decided to extend the trial scheme to Eastern, Sham Shui Po and Yuen Long Districts in June.

The spokesman said, "Some shop operators have, for the sake of convenience, illegally placed goods that are delivered to shops directly on the roadsides and even to the carriageways, thus extending their business areas illegally. This practice has not only caused illegal occupation of public places and obstruction of passageways, but also jeopardised the safety of road users. The FEHD and the Police will take stringent enforcement action in these districts and offenders will be subject to legal action. Besides, if the offender fails to remove the obstructions within the time specified by the Police, the FEHD will then remove the obstructions."

