

Government's operations against shop front extensions achieve initial results (with photos)

A spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said today (October 17) that the FEHD and the Hong Kong Police Force have conducted a series of stringent enforcement actions since October 3 in various districts against shop operators and other stakeholders illegally placing goods or articles in public places or on carriageways, thereby causing an obstruction to pedestrian and vehicular flow. The joint enforcement mode has achieved initial results in combating shop front extensions effectively.

The spokesman said that shop front extensions may reoccur after enforcement actions, the FEHD and the Police will continue adopting such enforcement mode in various districts to combat shop front extensions on an ongoing basis.

To sum up the past week (October 11 to 16), the FEHD and the Police have conducted joint enforcement operations in Tuen Mun, Sha Tin, Tai Po, Southern and Wong Tai Sin Districts. During the operations, the FEHD issued 56 Fixed Penalty Notices and nine summonses against the shops for causing obstructions and cleanliness offences in public places in the above-mentioned districts, and removed about 4.66 tonnes of waste. Furthermore, two persons were arrested during the operation for illegal hawking and causing obstruction in public place by the related shops, and about 108 kilograms of related commodities were seized. Besides, a total of 35 warning notices, which require the owners of the articles to remove the obstructions within a specified time, were issued by the Police. Among these, 10 warning notices had yet to be complied with and the FEHD had hence removed about 771 kg of goods or articles involved.

In addition, licensed food premises including fresh provision shops (FPS) extending the business area without permission at or from any place beyond the confines of the food premises as delineated on the plan approved in respect of the licence may be charged for contravention of the relevant Food Business Regulation (Cap. 132X). Upon conviction, demerit points will be registered under demerit points system. If certain demerit points are registered within a specified period of time, the licence could be suspended or even cancelled. During past week's joint operation, the FEHD has taken out summon action against a licensed FPS for contravention of the relevant Food Business Regulation.

The main focus of the second month of the Government Programme on Tackling Hygiene Black Spots is to combat hygiene black spots with illegal shop front extensions leading to street obstructions. Under the joint enforcement mode, if obstructions in a public place or carriageways were caused by articles illegally extending from shops, the offenders concerned

would be prosecuted. Apart from that, the Police would issue warning notice under section 32(1) of the Summary Offences Ordinance (Cap. 228) specifying the time limit for removal of the obstructions (including goods). If the offenders failed to remove the obstructions within the time limit as specified by the Police, the FEHD would then remove the items for temporary storage.

The spokesman appeals to shop operators and other stakeholders not to extend business areas illegally by placing goods or articles in public places or on carriageways causing an obstruction to pedestrian and vehicular flow. The FEHD and the Police will continue to closely monitor and take stringent enforcement actions to tackle the shop front extension problem.



