

Hong Kong Customs special operation combats sale of counterfeit liquor before Mid-Autumn Festival (with photos)

Hong Kong Customs on August 27 mounted a special enforcement operation in Kwai Chung to combat the sale of counterfeit liquor. A total of about 1 300 bottles of suspected counterfeit liquor, with an estimated market value of about \$2.9 million, were seized. One person was arrested.

Customs earlier received information alleging that there were suppliers selling suspected counterfeit liquor. After an in-depth investigation and with the assistance of the trademark owners, Customs officers on that day took enforcement action and raided business premises and a storage facility in an industrial building in Kwai Chung. The batch of suspected counterfeit liquor was seized.

During the operation, a 70-year-old male proprietor was arrested.

The investigation is ongoing and the likelihood of further arrests is not ruled out. Also, samples of the suspected counterfeit liquor involved in the case were sent to the Government Laboratory for testing. Preliminary test results revealed that the samples did not contain methanol.

With the Mid-Autumn Festival approaching, Customs will continue to strengthen patrols and combat the counterfeiting activities of the sale of festive food and goods.

Customs reminds consumers to procure goods at reputable shops and to check with the trademark owners or their authorised agents if the authenticity of a product is in doubt. Traders should also be cautious and prudent in merchandising since selling counterfeit goods is a serious crime and offenders are liable to criminal sanctions.

Under the Trade Descriptions Ordinance, any person who sells or possesses for sale any goods with a forged trademark commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected counterfeiting activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/).

