

Hong Kong Customs seizes over 8 800 items of suspected law-breaking shower gels and household cleaning products from chain retailing group (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (April 8) seized a total of 8 805 items of 14 models of suspected law-breaking shower gels, household cleaning detergents and clothing bleach from various premises of a chain retailing group. The product information marked on the packages of the products involved failed to bear Chinese and English bilingual warnings or cautions, suspected to be in contravention of the Consumer Goods Safety Regulation (CGSR), a subsidiary legislation of the Consumer Goods Safety Ordinance. The estimated market value of the products seized was about \$400,000 in total. One person was arrested.

Customs earlier received information alleging the sale of suspected law-breaking household cleaning detergents at Tsuen Wan and Shatin shops of a chain retailing group. Customs officers immediately conducted an investigation and test-purchased 14 models of products concerned from six retailing shops in Admiralty, Quarry Bay, Mong Kok, Tsuen Wan and Shatin.

Upon investigation, Customs found that those products lacked warnings or cautions in Chinese language in respect of their safe keeping, use, consumption or disposal. Twelve models bore only warnings or cautions in Thai language, while two models bore warnings or cautions in Thai and English languages.

Customs officers yesterday conducted an operation and seized products connected with the case from 25 retail shops of the chain retailing group concerned in Admiralty, Quarry Bay, Mong Kok, Sham Shui Po, Wong Tai Sin, Diamond Hill, Kowloon City, Ngau Tau Kok, Tsing Yi, Tsuen Wan, Shatin, Ma On Shan, Tseung Kwan O, Tai Po, Fanling, Tuen Mun and Yuen Long as well as a storehouse in Tsuen Wan. The retailing price of the products ranged between \$6 and \$95.

A 33-year-old male director of the chain retailing group was arrested. He has been released on bail pending further investigation.

An investigation is ongoing and the likelihood of further arrests is not excluded.

An initial investigation revealed that the products concerned were imported by the chain retailing group from Thailand into Hong Kong. Customs will arrange further safety tests to ascertain whether the products concerned are in compliance with relevant safety standards.

Apart from the chain retailing group connected with the case, Customs also checked multiple retail spots in various districts and no such products have been found for sale so far.

Under the CGSR, where consumer goods or their packages are marked with warnings or cautions with respect to their safe keeping, use, consumption or disposal, such warnings or cautions shall be in both English and Chinese languages. Moreover, the warning or caution phrases must be legibly and conspicuously shown on the goods, any package of the goods, a label securely affixed to the package or a document enclosed in the package. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$100,000 and imprisonment for one year on first conviction, and \$500,000 and imprisonment for two years on subsequent convictions.

Members of the public with information relating to unsafe or law-breaking consumer goods may make a report via Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



[Six persons arrested during anti-illegal worker operations \(with photo\)](#)

The Immigration Department (ImmD) mounted territory-wide anti-illegal worker operations codenamed "Twilight" on April 7 and yesterday (April 8). A total of five suspected illegal workers and a suspected employer were arrested.

During the "Twilight" operations, ImmD Task Force officers raided 20 target locations including factories, garbage collection depots, massage parlours, restaurants and warehouses. The suspected illegal workers comprised three men and two women, aged 26 to 43. Among them, three men and a woman were holders of recognisance forms, which prohibit them from taking any employment. Meanwhile, a woman, aged 50, was suspected of employing the illegal workers.

"Any person who contravenes a condition of stay in force in respect of

him shall be guilty of an offence. Also, visitors are not allowed to take employment in Hong Kong, whether paid or unpaid, without the permission of the Director of Immigration. Offenders are liable to prosecution and upon conviction face a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to two years' imprisonment. Aiders and abettors are also liable to prosecution and penalties," an ImmD spokesman said.

The spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening of vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threats and coercion in the recruitment phase and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent intervention, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.



[FEHD orders Jordan light refreshment restaurant to suspend business for 14 days](#)

The Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene has ordered a light refreshment restaurant in Jordan to suspend business for 14 days as the operator repeatedly breached the Food Business Regulation (FBR) by storing and preparing food in an open space.

The premises, located on the ground floor, 4 Nanking Street, Jordan, was ordered to suspend business from today (April 9) to April 22.

"In November last year and January this year, two convictions for the above-mentioned breach were recorded against the shop. A total fine of \$5,000 was levied by the court and 15 demerit points were registered against the licensee under the department's demerit points system. The contraventions resulted in the 14-day licence suspension," a spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) said.

The licensee of the shop had a record of two convictions for extending the business area illegally and storing and preparing food in an open space in April 2019 and August last year. A total fine of \$6,500 was levied and 15 demerit points were also registered. The breaches led to a licence suspension for seven days last October.

The spokesman reminded the licensees of food premises to comply with the FBR or their licences could be suspended or cancelled.

Licensed food premises are required to exhibit a sign, at a conspicuous place near the main entrance, indicating that the premises have been licensed. A list of licensed food premises is available on the FEHD's website

(www.fehd.gov.hk/english/licensing/index.html).

EMSD announces test results of LPG quality in March 2021

The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) today (April 9) announced that the department collected 12 liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) samples from auto-LPG filling stations and LPG terminals on a random basis in March 2021 for laboratory tests. The results show that the LPG quality of all these samples complied with auto-LPG specifications.

The detailed test results are available on the EMSD's website (www.emsd.gov.hk/en/rl/lpg_sample_analysis_simple). Enquiries can also be made to the EMSD's hotline on 2333 3762.

In addition, the EMSD has been vetting independent third-party test reports submitted by LPG supply companies for each shipment to ensure that the quality of imported LPG complies with the specified requirements.

Disciplinary action against registered escalator contractor

The Lifts and Escalators Ordinance Disciplinary Board (Board) has completed hearings for 22 charges of disciplinary offences brought against Otis Elevator Company (H.K.) Limited (Otis) and decided that all the charges are established and the company should be disciplined.

Disciplinary charges against Otis include four charges related to convictions in court for improper escalator maintenance at Langham Place in Mong Kok that contravene the Lifts and Escalators Ordinance (Ordinance), and 18 charges involving professional misconduct or negligence. The Board ordered that Otis be reprimanded for the four charges against the Ordinance, and be fined \$960,000 in total as well as pay the expenses incurred in the proceedings of around \$590,000. The Board's decision and orders were gazetted today (April 9). Details are available on the website www.gld.gov.hk/egazette/pdf/20212514/egn202125142027.pdf.

The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) welcomes the decision and will continue to strictly enforce the Ordinance to ensure the

safety and reliability of lift and escalator services, with a view to safeguarding public safety.

On March 25, 2017, an ascending escalator at Langham Place stopped suddenly and reversed its operating direction, causing 18 injuries. The EMSD conducted a criminal investigation on the incident and found that Otis, being the registered escalator contractor that undertook maintenance of the escalator concerned, had failed to ensure proper periodic maintenance of the escalator. The EMSD therefore instituted prosecution for Otis' contravention of the Ordinance. Otis was convicted by the court on March 9, 2018.

Having considered the convictions of Otis in court, and the multiple injuries resulting from the incident, the Director of Electrical and Mechanical Services (DEMS), pursuant to Section 109(1) of the Ordinance, referred the disciplinary offences concerned to the Board for disciplinary proceedings. At the same time, the DEMS also referred another 18 disciplinary charges of professional misconduct or negligence against Otis to the Board for consideration, of which 11 charges involved Otis' failing to submit notices to the DEMS for carrying out major alterations to escalators between 2015 and 2017, and seven charges involved Otis' failing to enter information and particulars of escalator maintenance works into the log book in 2017.