



## DAILY INFORMATION BULLETIN

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**Wednesday, December 25, 1996**

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Ten-year programme to improve NT degraded areas

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The Task Force Black Spots (TFB) of the Lands Department is committed to a 10-year programme to improve the environment of degraded areas in the New Territories.

Since its formation in August 1994, the TFB has successfully cleared a total of 342 sites with a total area of 19.4 hectares of government land, the Government Land Agent/TFB, Mr Allan Hay, said today (Wednesday).

"We work on an intensive action area basis and our continued efforts in cleaning up the environment can be seen at the first open storage action area in Shek Kong Valley along Kam Tin Road, Kam Sheung Road and Fan Kam Road," he said.

A scrap yard would always be a scrap yard, said Mr Hay, but by carrying out the environmental improvement works requested by the TFB, improvements could be made.

"Some 52 or about 20 per cent of the existing use undertakings have so far carried out the in situ environmental improvement works at their own expense upon our requests.

"We have also started work on a second open storage area in North District along Sha Tau Kok Road, Ping Che Road and Lau Shui Heung Road," he said.

Mr Hay also pointed out that with the introduction of a voluntary Code of Practice for container depots in the Ha Tsuen, Lau Fau Shan areas, there had been a reduction of nuisance off-site as well as to adjacent sensitive receivers.

"Stacking height is being confined to not exceeding eight containers. At the same time, access, parking and drainage have been improved, while landscaping and site paving have been carried out wherever possible," he said.

The TFB was set up by the Lands Department in August 1994 with a commitment to deal with the proliferation of conversion of agricultural land into open storage yards and other similar uses in the New Territories prior to 1990.

It reports to a Special Committee on Cleaning up the New Territories. Chaired by Legislative Councillor, Dr Samuel Wong, the Committee advises the Government on all matters relating to the environmental black spots and oversee the task force's work.

End

Sexual abuse featured in latest course

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Sexual abuse and sexual harassment will be featured in the Education Department's latest sex education course for secondary school teachers starting on December 27.

A new segment on sexual abuse and harassment has been inserted into the regular three-day sex education course for teachers in response to recent publicity by the Central Fight Crime Committee and the Secretary for Security in connection with the increase in cases of sexual assault and the need for preventive education.

The new segment is designed to enhance teachers' understanding of the issue and on how they may help pupils.

The three-day course, which is part of the Education Department's regular sex education effort, will accommodate 60 teachers of sex education who have been nominated by their schools.

The course will comprise talks and workshops. There will also be a forum on the sex education curriculum, teaching methodologies and strategies, the implementation of sex education in school and the role of teachers in helping pupils.

Speakers will include sex educators, a medical doctor, a social worker, a psychologist and teachers and principals experienced in sex education. The course will be conducted in Cantonese.

End

Water heater explosion probe completed

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Investigations into an electric water heater explosion which happened in a Kennedy Town domestic flat on October 23 this year have been completed.

The investigations were jointly conducted by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department and the Water Supplies Department.

A Government spokesman said today (Thursday) that the electric water heater involved was found to be one of the non-pressure free-outlet type.

Findings of the investigations revealed that the explosion was likely to be caused by the simultaneous occurrence of several factors, said the spokesman.

"The vent path of the heater was blocked by unauthorised installation of a valve at the combined hot and cold water outlet. This had caused accumulation of overheated steam and generated pressure inside the heater, which led to the explosion.

"In addition, the temperature control device of the heater was out of order and the heater was not switched off after use," he said.

The spokesman advised members of the public that although such accidents rarely happened, precautionary measures should be taken when using electric water heaters.

"Unauthorised installation of a stop valve at the combined cold and hot water outlet of a non-pressure free-outlet type is dangerous and contravenes the Waterworks Regulations.

"Licensed plumbers and registered electrical contractors and workers should be employed for plumbing and electrical works.

"Routine inspection and maintenance of the heaters should be carried out by experienced workers, and power supply should always be switched off after use," he said.

On a related safety issue, the spokesman said that a new legislation to control the safety of household electrical products was being considered by the Legislative Council.

"The proposed legislation, expected to be enacted in early 1997, will require all electrical products designed for household use to comply with certain prescribed safety requirements and be issued with certificates of safety compliance to protect users from possible hazards," he said.

End

More views on TDS Review and Town Planning White Bill sought

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Members of the public were today (Thursday) reminded to express their views on the Territorial Development Strategy (TDS) Review 1996 and the Town Planning White Bill before the public consultations end on December 31, 1996.

Views on the TDS Review and the Town Planning White Bill should be sent in writing before end of this month to the Planning Department, 16th floor, Murray Building, Garden Road, Hong Kong (Fax: 2877 0389 or E-mail: [orta@pland.gcn.gov.hk](mailto:orta@pland.gcn.gov.hk)).

The TDS Review and the White Bill were released separately in July this year for public comments.

The TDS Review aims at creating a broad land use-transport-environmental framework within the context of existing policies and standards, so as to provide a basis for the preparation of more detailed plans and programmes to meet the development needs of Hong Kong up to 2011.

The Town Planning White Bill, on the other hand, seeks to make the statutory planning process more open and accountable to the public, to streamline procedures and enhance efficiency. It gives more emphasis on environmental and urban design considerations, add certainty to the planning system and enhance effectiveness in planning control.

"All views and comments will be carefully considered and analysed before we finalise the TDS Review and proposals on the White Bill," said a spokesman for the Planning Department.

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Stringent measures to deter use of illicit fuel

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The Customs & Excise Department is taking two stringent measures to deter drivers and car owners from using illicit fuel in view of the continuing rampant situation of such use and its impact on Government revenues.

"The first measure has been put into force since December 1996 which stipulates that a vehicle, if found to have used illicit fuel on a second time, will be impounded and subjected to forfeiture," said a spokesman for the Customs & Excise today (Thursday).

The second measure would put into force on January 1, 1997, the spokesman added.

"Under such circumstances, when a driver or owner of a vehicle who commits an offence of using illicit fuel will be fingerprinted by the Police and will therefore have a criminal record upon conviction," he said.

In sentencing an offender, the court may draw reference to his previous convictions. The criminal record might affect the offender's future.

The spokesman urged vehicle owners and drivers not to use illicit fuel since the new measures would directly affect themselves.

"Instead of the small savings from using illicit fuel, they are facing the risk of having their vehicles forfeited and the charge of criminal offences which may carry a maximum penalty of two years imprisonment and a fine of \$1 million," he warned.

He reminded that the criminal record would also tarnish their status as good citizen.

The Customs & Excise Department had arrested 1,193 persons and intercepted 890 vehicles in relation to the use of illicit fuel in 1995.

In 1996, the number of arrests is 1,932 and vehicles intercepted is 1,509, including those which had their structures altered for illicit fuel smuggling.

End

Civic Education Exhibition on stage again

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Parents and children are welcome to visit the Civic Education Exhibition '96 starting tomorrow (Friday) to get to know more about the concepts of human rights and equal opportunities, and the Basic Law.

The exhibition, organised by the Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education (CPCE), will be held from 10 am to 8 pm for three days until Sunday (December 29) at the Home World in Wonderful Worlds of Whampoa, Whampoa Garden, Hung Hom.

Among the exhibits will be the full text of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Basic Law, as well as presentations on the general concept of the protection of privacy in relation to personal data.

An introduction to the work of the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Sex Discrimination and Disability Discrimination Ordinances, both of which have just come into full force, will also be displayed at the venue which is designed in an ancient Greek architectural style.

Two short publicity films on the importance of the rights of the individual and equal opportunities together with a TV series, "Know more about Basic Law", will also be screened during the exhibition.

Another attraction will be a garden-like setting where life-size models of a four-member family - the "Human Rights Family" - together with the sunflowers which featured prominently in the two publicity films will be put on display.

Leaflets on CPCE, souvenirs, as well as pamphlets on sexual orientation will be distributed to visitors.

The exhibition, mounted previously at the Cityplaza in Taikoo Shing in November, drew more than 7,000 visitors. It will move to Sunshine City Plaza in Ma On Shan, Sha Tin next February.

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### 52 organisations to hold flag days in 1997

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A total of 52 organisations will hold flag days to raise funds on Saturdays next year, starting from January 4, a spokesman for the Social Welfare Department said today (Thursday).

Members of the public can call the Department's hotline 2343 2255 or SWD headquarters on 2892 5315 for enquiries.

The spokesman appealed to organisers to take precautions against any possible fraud.

"Sellers should display the permit in permanent counters or carry copies of the permit for inspection upon request," he said.

The spokesman also advised them to prepare guidelines for sellers, setting out the places and time for selling and the collection points for bags.

Organisers should inform the Police in case of loss of property, and seek their help when fraudulent acts, such as tampering of collection bags or making unauthorised selling, are found.

"The last flag day this year will be held on December 28 (Saturday)," he added.

The flag days for 1997 are as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Organisation</u>
January 4	World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong
January 11	Oxfam Hong Kong
January 18	Hong Kong Renal Centre Ltd.
January 25	Chai Wan Baptist Church
February 1	Pok Oi Hospital
February 8	Tuen Mun Hospital

February 15	The Methodist Church, Hong Kong (Methodist Epworth Village Community Centre)
February 22	Yan Chai Hospital
March 1	Wu Oi Christian Centre Ltd.
March 8	Hong Kong PHAB Association
March 15	Hong Kong Blind Union
March 22	Breakthrough Ltd.
March 29	The Lutheran Church - Hong Kong Synod
April 5	The Road Safety Association Ltd.
April 12	Hong Kong AIDS Foundation
April 19	The Lok Sin Tong Benevolent Society, Kowloon
April 26	Christian Family Service Centre
May 3	Parents Association of the Mentally Handicapped Ltd.
May 10	Society for the Promotion of Hospice Care Ltd.
May 17	Baptist Oi Kwan Social Service
May 24	The Mong Kok Kai-fong Association Ltd.
May 31	The Chinese Rhenish Church Hong Kong Synod
June 7	Hong Kong and Macau Lutheran Church
June 14	Pentecostal Church of Hong Kong
June 21	The Neighbourhood Advice-Action Council
June 28	New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association
July 5	Mental Health Association of Hong Kong

July 12	The Boys' & Girls' Club Association of Hong Kong
July 19	Hong Kong Workers' Health Centre
July 26	Tsuen Wan Ecumenical Social Service Centre
August 2	The Salvation Army
August 9	The Hong Kong Tuberculosis, Chest and Heart Diseases Association
August 16	The Matilda Child Development Centre
August 23	Po Leung Kuk
August 30	The St. John Council for Hong Kong
September 6	Christian Concern for the Homeless Association
September 13	The Warehouse Teenage Club Ltd.
September 20	Hong Kong Playground Association
September 27	Steward's Co (Hong Kong) Ltd.
October 4	Tung Wah Group of Hospitals
October 11	The Society of Homes for the Handicapped
October 18	Evangel Hospital
October 25	Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service
November 1	Hong Kong Federation of Handicapped Youth
November 8	The Royal British Legion (Hong Kong & China Branch)
November 15	Haven of Hope Christian Service
November 22	The Community Chest of Hong Kong

- November 29      The Society for the Relief of Disabled Children (The Duchess of  
Kent Children's Hospital)
- December 6        The Hong Kong Association for the Mentally Handicapped
- December 13      Hong Kong Kidney Foundation Ltd.
- December 20      Hong Kong Childhealth Foundation
- December 27      Yan Oi Tong

End