

Environmental Report 2000 - 2001

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Introduction

This Environmental Report sets out the Housing Bureau's environmental policy and environmental protection measures taken from July 2000 to December 2001.

Our housing policy objective is to achieve better housing for all, through an adequate supply of affordable housing for ownership or rent. Our aims in pursuing this policy objective are to reduce the number of inadequately housed people, to help all households gain access to affordable housing, and to encourage home ownership in the community.

We achieve this goal by formulating policies for housing in both the public and the private sectors, and monitoring their implementation by the Hong Kong Housing Authority, the Hong Kong Housing Society and private developers.

The expenditure of the Housing Bureau in 2000-2001 was \$40.4 million. The Bureau had 10 directorate officers and 49 non-directorate staff as at 31 December 2001.

Environmental policy

The Housing Bureau is committed to achieving the housing policy objective and to conducting its own internal operations in an environmentally responsible manner.

The Housing Bureau has adopted the following practices to achieve its environmental goal -

(i) Compliance

We collaborate with relevant Bureaux and departments to vet and monitor housing-related infrastructure projects to ascertain whether they comply with environmental legislation, standards and regulations.

(ii) Promotion of Environmental Quality

We implement measures to maintain and improve the environmental quality of our activities, and to reduce and control environmental pollution arising from our day-to-day working practices.

(iii) Minimization of Consumption

We exercise the 3-R principles of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle in our consumption of materials and electricity. We aim to promote the efficacious and efficient use of natural resources and energy.

(iv) Communication

Action has been taken to make staff aware of the Green Management Policy. We promote environmental protection by effective communication among our business partners.

(v) Training

We foster the environmental responsibility of our staff and a sense of participation in environmental protection through training of staff at the appropriate level.

(vi) Management Review

The management regularly reviews and seeks improvements to the Housing Bureau's environmental protection measures.

Environmental Protection Measures

A) Under our policy area

(i) Waste reduction in construction sites for public housing

Housing Department (HD) has incorporated the use of pulverised fuel ash, a waste product of coal-fired power stations, as partial replacement of cement in building foundation works. About 22,000 tonnes of cement were saved in 2000-2001.

HD has required contractors to separate inert and non-inert materials from construction waste for reclamation and site formation use.

With the use of precast facades, large panel metal formwork, precast staircases and metal hoardings in construction sites, about 33,000 tonnes of timber were saved in 2000-2001.

(ii) Waste reduction in public housing estates

HD has provided about 3,900 bins for collection of recyclable materials in public housing estates to encourage waste recycling. Every rental housing block is now equipped with at least one set of the 3-bin system for separate collection. About 26,800 tonnes of waste paper, aluminum cans and plastic bottles were collected in 2000-2001 and this amount was 19% more than that in 1999-2000.

(iii) Energy conservation and energy efficiency in public housing estates

HD has incorporated energy saving measures in the design and management of housing estates. With the use of energy saving lamps, energy-efficient floodlights, automatic timer control systems, higher lighting output fluorescent lamps, a saving of about \$36 million in electricity consumption in public housing estates was achieved in 2000-2001.

(iv) Greening in public housing estates

HD has enhanced the living environment of its estates through extensive planting. In 2000-2001, a total of 397,500 plants and shrubs were planted in

34 existing housing estates and the performance target of planting one tree for every 15 flats in new estates was exceeded.

B) Within the office

(i) Air quality

- The Government's Smoke-free Workplace Policy has been implemented.
- Drivers have been reminded to switch off their car engines while waiting.

(ii) Waste

- 2,450 reams of A4 papers have been used, against 2,560 reams of papers used in the last reporting period.
- About 3,330 kilograms of paper waste have been collected for recycling, against 2,800 kilograms of paper waste collected in the last reporting period.
- 46 numbers of recycled printer toner cartridges, amounting to 65% of total cartridges used, have been consumed, against 17 cartridges, amounting to 16% of total cartridges used in the last reporting period.
- 29 numbers of recycled fax machine toner cartridges, amounting to 40% of total cartridges used, have been consumed. In the last reporting period, all cartridges used were not recyclable.
- 98 numbers of used printer toner cartridges have been collected for recycling, against 9 cartridges collected for recycling in the last reporting period.
- Collection of used fax machine toner cartridges for recycling has started and 26 numbers of used cartridges have been collected.

(iii) Purchasing

- We have purchased and maintained wide use of environmental friendly products, e.g. recycled photocopying papers, durable utensils and alkaline batteries.

(iv) Saving energy

- We have requested staff to switch off lights and air-conditioners whenever their offices are not in use.

(v) Communication

- We have from time to time reminded staff to adopt green management practices including double side copying, use of “scrap” paper, wider use of e-mail and internet mail, and reuse of envelopes and loose minute file jackets.

(vi) Confidential Mail System

- We have set up a Confidential Mail System to despatch and receive confidential documents by electronic means.

Environmental action requiring special attention

The Housing Bureau will continue its efforts to enhance green management practices by –

- reducing paper consumption;
- using recycled paper whenever possible;
- using recycled toner cartridges in all laser printers and fax machines;
- collecting waste paper for recycling;
- collecting all exhausted toner cartridges for recycling;
- increasing the use of refillable stationery;
- using durable utensils instead of disposable products;
- encouraging the wider use of information technology to retrieve and store information and documents; and
- promoting staff's awareness of the environmental responsibility and participation in green management.

Views and suggestions

Comments and suggestions are welcome. You may call or write to the Green Manager of the Housing Bureau, Mrs Lilian Leung (telephone 2509 0296, fax 2509 9988, internet e-mail address hbenq@hb.gcn.gov.hk)