

GREEN HONG KONG

Environmental Blueprints for a Green Hong Kong



The Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing (left) sees for himself the facilities for handling wastes recycled at "Tai Po Environmental Protection Association - Ways for Plastics Recycling".



The Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing (right), learned about various products made from recyclables at the Kowloon Bay Material Transfer Centre.

Since I assumed office in July, I have made some district visits and exchanges that have deepened my understanding of the green pulse in society.

Public expectations for healthier air quality are on the rise. In addition, people increasingly commit that they should lead a green lifestyle by reducing waste at source, saving energy towards low-carbon living, and treasuring local nature conservation on land and in the sea. Correspondingly, the manifesto of the new-term Chief Executive on environmental protection looks ahead to low-carbon living, creating a green city, liveability and healthiness, food waste reduction, circular economy as well as a holistic approach of sustainable development.

In August this summer, I am working with the competent and dedicated colleagues of my bureau and relevant departments to plan for the future environmental blueprints of Hong Kong by formulating roadmaps and frameworks for the initiatives on air quality, solid waste management, energy conservation and carbon reduction, and nature conservation step by step. We will also engage relevant stakeholders for focused discussions at an appropriate stage.

We can still dedicate to greener living while the formulation of blueprints is in progress. Let's dress down in summer, adopt a simple and healthy lifestyle and protect the nature. We can all act now by saving energy and reducing waste to put green living into practice.



The Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing (right), paid a visit to the community garden at the Jordan Valley Park to learn about the afteruse of restored landfill.

GREEN ISSUE

Let's clean and freshen Hong Kong's air



To protect ourselves and our loved ones' health against pollution in the air we breathe, the Hong Kong Government (HKG) has vowed to improve local air quality by targeting several harmful pollutants.



Hong Kong's visibility has declined over the past years due to the regional smog problem. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government and the Guangdong Provincial Government are jointly implementing control measures to improve air quality in the region and alleviate the smog problem.

Air is something each of us must breathe 24 hours a day. Hong Kong is facing two air pollution issues, namely the roadside air pollution and regional smog problem. To alleviate these problems, the HKG has resolved to minimise the emission of pollutants from our local sources such as vehicles and power plants, and is collaborating with the Guangdong Provincial Government (GPG) to proactively improve air quality across the River Delta as a whole.

Minimising vehicles' emissions of black smoke and exhaust gases

Roadside air pollution is mainly caused by exhaust gases from diesel vehicles including trucks, buses and public light buses (PLBs) which emit large amount of nitrogen oxides and suspended particulates. To minimise such emissions, the Air Pollution Control Ordinance (APCO) imposes stringent requirements on permissible vehicle emission volumes, fuel standards and control devices, etc. To further reduce pollutants, the APCO and its subsidiary regulations also apply to factories and power plants.

Combating the regional air pollution crisis

The regional endemic smog problems are mainly caused by emissions from vehicles, factories and power plants in Hong Kong and the Pearl River Delta. The HKG and the GPG are working together to implement emission reduction measures that will enhance the quality of the air we all breathe. To this end, a special region wide air quality monitoring network is now assessing the effectiveness of emission reduction measures. Three of the network's 16 automatic air quality monitoring systems are located locally in Hong Kong.

Stressing the importance of indoor air quality

In addition to the quality of the air we breathe outdoors, the HKG is also focusing on enhancing indoor air quality (IAQ). Steps taken since 2000 include the implementation of an IAQ management plan that protects people's health in buildings and public places and also enhances public awareness. The plan is made up of a set of IAQ evaluation standards and a voluntary Certification Scheme which was launched in September 2003. Since the introduction of certification, the number of participating premises has risen steadily. In 2011, some 782 buildings were issued with certificates - a 36% increase over the 575 certificates issued in 2010. Ultimately, strong IAQ not only safeguards our health but also enhances Hong Kong's competitiveness against other major commercial hubs.

Fresh, clean air is every Hongkongers' basic right! Please join us in helping to minimise pollution and jointly improve our indoor and outdoor air quality by adopting simple to implement habits. Remember, whatever actions we take today will directly benefit the quality of our lives tomorrow!

Reducing Waste in the City

Minimise domestic waste by adopting a low-carbon lifestyle!



Officiating guests including the EEC's Vice-Chairman, Professor Wong Woon-chung (back row seventh from right), and Deputy Director of Environmental Protection, Mr. Benny Wong (middle of back row), officiated at WED 2012's opening ceremony.

World Environment day 2012- Green Home Action

In 1972, the United Nations designated June 5th as "World Environment Day" (WED). The ultimate aim was to raise public awareness of the importance of environmental protection and urge governments to focus on pollution and related issues. Each year, Hong Kong's Environmental Campaign Committee (ECC) marks WED by organising a variety of environmentally responsible activities and initiatives. The theme for 2012 was "Green Home Action".

A better quality of life is one of the most obvious benefits of enhanced eco-friendliness. To encourage Hongkongers to switch to a more low-carbon lifestyle, this year saw the ECC urge people to create their own "Green Home". Response was very encouraging, with over 300 housing estates joining the "Green Home Action" initiative. In spreading the environmental protection message, participating estates organised environmental protection activities such as exchanging gifts and holding green living workshops for residents. They also created green corners which displayed useful information about how people could start protecting the environment in their homes.

To maximise awareness, the ECC also mounted a roadshow which promoted waste reduction at major shopping malls during all four weekends in June. Channels used to drive home waste reduction's 3R (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) principles in an impactful way included display panels, game booths and a thematic photo-taking area.



Visitors to the exhibition learned how to reduce waste by adopting greener living habits.

Voice of the People



"I agree that green living should start at home. We should all begin by switching to small environmentally beneficial habits in our daily routines."

Teacher,
Mr. Lee

"I try to set a good example for my kids by sorting out our household waste and placing it in our building's recycling bins."

Housewife,
Ms. Choi



A Better Environment

Switching off idling engines is simple and easy Law enforcement and public education go hand in hand

The most effective way to improve street-level air quality is to adopt a two-pronged approach involving law enforcement and educational publicity. To this end, local drivers are now being encouraged to acquire more eco-responsible driving habits by always switching off idling engines.



Environmental Protection Inspector and Traffic Wardens have enhanced the promotion of the Ordinance around to remind drivers that when they aren't driving they must switch off the engines.

With the advent of summer, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) began stepping up publicity and enforcement of the Motor

Vehicle Idling (Fixed Penalty) Ordinance (MVIFP). On the law enforcement front, Traffic Wardens were instructed to take action against any drivers they found contravening MVIFP during their daily patrols. On the publicity front, EPD Inspectors have conducted around 220 awareness campaigns at idling vehicle black spots since MVIFP came into effect.

In May, June and July this year, the EPD also hosted a roadshow aimed at enhancing public awareness of the MVIFP and the need to

turn off idling engines. The delivering of leaflets to drivers was just one of several channels used to encourage greener driving habits.

The EPD will continue to adopt this two-pronged approach to urge drivers to obey the MVIFP. The aim is to enhance air quality by reducing the nuisance caused by idling engines.

On December 15th, 2011, the HKG introduced a year-round Motor Vehicle Idling (Fixed Penalty) Ordinance (MVIFP) that prohibits drivers from idling their vehicle's engine for more than three minutes within any sixty minutes period. Those found contravening the MVIFP on any public or private road or car park are punished with a fixed fine of \$320.



Environmental Protection Department set up outdoor exhibitions in every district as awareness for citizens to switch off their engines whenever the car is parked.

Public Opinions



"Drivers need to be more proactive and take the initiative to protect our environment by switching off idling engines."

Professional driver,
Mr. Lin

"I think all Hongkongers support actions that will improve air quality by reducing vehicle emissions."

Shop assistant,
Ms. Wang



Putting Words into Action

An interview with Mr Bernard Chan



Chairman of the Council for
Sustainable Development



The Council for Sustainable Development (SDC) submitted its report on the public engagement on "Combating Climate Change: Energy Saving and Carbon Emission Reduction in Buildings" in March. The SDC Chairman, Mr Bernard Chan, said, "To be led by the Government, business sector and the general public should join hands to achieve the goal of combating climate change."

What is your opinion towards the relationship between energy saving and carbon emission reduction, and sustainable development?

Energy saving and carbon emission reduction is a very important sustainable development issue concerning the economic and social aspects. If our daily lifestyle and the economic model can achieve energy saving and carbon emission reduction, it is definitely helpful to sustainable development and combating climate change.

What are being done in promoting energy saving and carbon emission reduction in Hong Kong?

Hong Kong is a commercial city. To encourage business sector to bear the corporate social responsibility and invest in energy saving and carbon emission reduction, there must be some encouragement. Therefore, the Government will take the lead to launch a program in the coming years to conduct energy-cum-carbon audits in some 120 public buildings and facilities, with a view to encouraging the business sector to follow suit.

Moreover, in response to the SDC's recommendation, the two power companies are already providing more information in electricity bills to enable the public to better understand and manage their electricity consumption. Apart from the past consumption data for individual domestic customers (the Hongkong Electric Co. provides the monthly consumption of each domestic customer in the past 24 months while CLP provides the data of the past 14 billing cycles, i.e. 28 months), the power companies would also include information on the average electricity consumption per capita of their domestic customers, respectively, and the carbon dioxide emission per unit of electricity consumed. Such information would help the public benchmark their consumption level and the greenhouse gas emission attributed by their consumption.

What are the SDC's recommendations in the report on the public engagement on "Combating Climate Change: Energy Saving and Carbon Emission Reduction in Buildings"?

The highest carbon emission is originated from commercial buildings energy consumption. Therefore, we discussed with stakeholders from various sectors, collected their opinion and having referred to some international experience, put forward 30 recommendations to the Government. The Energy Saving Charter launched in early June was a Government response to one of them. Shopping malls participated in the Charter pledged to maintain an average indoor temperature of between 24 and 26 degrees Celsius during June to September this year to jointly support energy saving and carbon emission reduction by actions. The Charter initially attracted almost 90 shopping malls, and more are joining. We now have more than 100 malls on the list. Given that air-conditioning accounts for about one-third of the total electricity consumption of Hong Kong each year, costing some \$10 billion in electricity bill, and that air-conditioning in commercial premises including shopping malls is a particularly significant energy consumption area, the initiative should help bring about substantial energy saving.

Do you have any personal tips on energy saving and carbon emission reduction?

In my opinion, energy saving and carbon emission reduction should begin with our daily lives. My company is now adopting LED lights and T5 fluorescent tubes. Besides, I also encourage my staff to turn off the office equipments which are not in use, or set them in standby mode. At home, my family uses fans to reduce the energy consumption for air conditioners.

Environmental Facts

Know More, Do Better

and Figures

The Environmental Protection Department Air Quality Monitoring Network (AQMN) consists of 11 general air quality monitoring stations and 3 roadside air quality monitoring stations to monitor continuously Hong Kong's air quality. General air quality monitoring stations are located on the roof of buildings around 4-6 floors high, reflecting the air quality people are exposed to most of the time and the roadside air quality monitoring stations are located in urban areas with heavy vehicular and pedestrian traffic. We make use of the real time air pollutant concentrations measured in our AQMN to calculate the Air Pollution Index (API) which are updated and announced every one hour. We also announce API forecast for the next 24 hours at 4 p.m. every day.

Green Living



Never run air conditioners at temperatures of lower than 25.5° Celsius



Always switch off unnecessary electrical appliances



Always choose energy efficiency labeled electrical appliances



Always switch off the engine when your vehicle is idling

We can live a greener life through many easy and practical ways, beginning with the small, easy-to-follow habits shown here to help improve air quality, reduce pollution and maximise energy efficiency at both home and work, for the benefits of a better environment and enhancing our health.



Never smoke indoors



Try to conserve energy (and stay in shape!) by using the stairs as much as possible



Try to keep windows open as often as possible to optimise indoor ventilation



Always walk short distances

Green Activities

Effective June 1st, 2012 all new vehicles must meet HKG emission standards



Euro V-powered diesel light vehicles are making a major contribution to improving roadside pollution and cleaning the air we breathe.

Effective June 1st, 2012, all newly registered vehicles with the exception of diesel light goods vehicles weighing 3.5 tonnes or less must meet new emission standards in order to improve air quality. All other types of vehicles must comply with the new emission standards by December 31st, 2012.

Compared with Euro IV vehicles, Euro V petrol or LPG vehicles emit about 30% less nitrogen oxides and Euro V heavy diesel vehicles of design weight more than 3.5 tonnes emit about 40% less nitrogen oxides. As for Euro V light diesel vehicles, they emit about 80% and 30% less respirable suspended particulates and nitrogen oxides respectively.

How Hong Kong and Guangdong are working together to resolve climate change issues



Representatives of many Guangdong and Hong Kong government departments attended the meeting and discussed co-operative measures combating climate change.

The first meeting of the Hong Kong/Guangdong Joint Liaison Group on Combating Climate Change" (JLG) jointly organised by the Guangdong Development and Reform Commission (GDRC) and the Environment Bureau was held in Guangzhou on May 21st, 2012. The meeting discussed JLG's modus operandi and terms of reference, and endorsed a work plan on combating climate change for 2012-13.

Both parties agreed at the meeting to establish two working groups for taking forward co-operation initiatives and exchanges on adaptation to climate change impacts and mitigation measures

respectively; including the setting up of an information exchange mechanism on severe climate events and exchanges on climate projection techniques development. Such collaboration will be in furtherance of monitoring and research on climate change at Guangdong and Hong Kong.

The two sides have also agreed to jointly organise a technical seminar on renewable energy and electric vehicles. In doing so, the two places will explore development and application co-operation opportunities, as well as promote the exchange of information about technologies and comparative edges of the two places.

The JLG was established in August 2011 and is tasked to take forward co-operation on combating climate change, co-ordinate associated measures and programmes, as well as to advance related scientific researches and technological developments.