

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

FHB(FE)016

(Question Serial No. 0111)

Head: (49) Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Subhead (No. & title): (-) Not specified

Programme: (2) Environmental Hygiene and Related Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Food and Environmental Hygiene (Ms Irene YOUNG)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for Food and Health

Question:

In this Programme, it is stated that the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department will abate environmental nuisances relating to dripping air-conditioners and water seepage and clean up illegal refuse deposit blackspots. In this connection, please advise this Committee of:

- a) the effectiveness of the work to abate environmental nuisances relating to dripping air-conditioners and water seepage over the past year, and the number of cases received;
- b) the current number and locations of illegal refuse deposit blackspots; and
- c) the specific plan for the relevant work in the coming year, the estimated number of blackspots to be eliminated, the preparation work, resources and manpower required as well as the expected results to be achieved.

Asked by: Hon CHAN Kin-por (LegCo internal reference no.: 9)

Reply:

- a) The statistics on handling of dripping from air-conditioners by the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) in 2021 are as follows:

| Item | Number |
|--|---------------|
| Complaints received | 30 806 |
| Nuisance Notices issued under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap.132) | 3 728 |
| Cases with prosecution instituted | 61 |

For most of the complaint cases, the flat owners or occupants concerned would take action to rectify the problem of water dripping from air-conditioners upon issuance of verbal warnings or advisory letters by FEHD staff or coordination with the building management offices. Issuance of Nuisance Notice or prosecution action by FEHD was not required.

Statistics on handling of water seepage in buildings by the Joint Office (JO) set up by the Buildings Department and FEHD and the relevant investigation results in 2021 are as follows:

| Item | Number |
|---|---------------|
| Cases received | 43 233 |
| Total number of cases handled ¹ | 36 262 |
| (a) Cases screened out ^{1,2} | 21 813 |
| (b) Total number of cases with investigation concluded ¹ | 14 449 |
| (i) Cases with source of water seepage identified | 6 000 |
| (ii) Cases with source of water seepage not identified and investigation terminated | 4 467 |
| (iii) Cases with seepage ceased during investigation | 3 982 |
| Nuisance Notices issued ¹ under the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Cap.132) | 5 281 |
| Nuisance Orders issued by the court ¹ | 100 |
| Cases with prosecution instituted ^{1, 3} | 216 |

Note1: The number of cases handled does not necessarily correspond to the number of cases received in the same year, some of which are cases received before that year.

Note2: JO has prescribed standards and requirements for the investigation of water seepage in buildings. Some cases will be screened out if the moisture reading is below 35%, the seepage originates from the property owned by the complainant, the nature of the case does not involve water seepage or the complainant has withdrawn the complaint.

Note3: Prosecution cases for non-compliance of Nuisance Notices and Nuisance Orders are included.

- b) Currently, there are about 300 illegal refuse deposit blackspots across the territory. FEHD has installed Internet Protocol (IP) cameras at these blackspots. The exact locations of these blackspots are set out at FEHD's website:
www.fehd.gov.hk/english/pleasant_environment/cleansing/list_of_ipcam.pdf
- c) The Financial Secretary announced in the 2022-23 Budget Speech that a total additional funding of \$500 million will be allocated within 2 years for FEHD to enhance environmental hygiene services, particularly strengthening refuse collection services in response to the epidemic, and step up inspections and enforcement actions to raise the community's awareness about hygiene. To effectively combat illegal deposit of refuse, FEHD will, apart from installing IP cameras at the blackspots of various districts, make effective use of additional resources to increase the number of dedicated enforcement teams (DETs) from 40 to 60 in this year so as to strengthen law enforcement. Besides, DETs will convey environmental hygiene messages in the community to educate the public about the proper ways for disposal of refuse. In addition, FEHD will, taking into account the situation of illegal deposit of refuse in various districts, deploy additional manpower to clean up refuse and waste as well as extend the opening hours of some refuse collection points to meet the demand at midnight or in the early morning. In 2022-23, there is an estimated increase of \$160 million in the expenditure for enhancing street cleansing and refuse collection services in response to the epidemic. FEHD will continue to adopt a multi-pronged strategy to step up enforcement action against illegal deposit of refuse, improve environmental hygiene and heighten the community's awareness about hygiene.

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