

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

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**Subcommittee on Building (Refuse Storage and Material Recovery Chambers  
and Refuse Chutes) (Amendment) Regulation 2008**

**Background Brief**

**Purpose**

This paper sets out the background to the territory-wide programme of source separation of domestic waste and the proposal to make the provision of refuse storage and material recovery room on every floor a mandatory requirement for new domestic buildings and the domestic part of new composite buildings. It also summarizes the discussions by the Panel on Environment Affairs (the EA Panel) on the related matters.

**Background**

2. To develop a range of new initiatives that would work together to bring about a major reduction in the volume of waste requiring disposal, the Administration commissioned the Waste Reduction Study in 1994 and consulted the public on recommendations of the Study in mid-1997. On the basis of the public response, as well as taking into account latest policy developments and technological renovation, the Administration issued the Waste Reduction Framework Plan in 1998.
3. In view of the pressing waste problem, this has been a major item for discussion at meetings of the Council and the EA Panel.
4. At the meeting of the Council on 23 February 2005, Members passed a motion urging the Administration to implement as early as possible a sustainable development plan that adheres to the waste disposal strategy premised on the reduction, recovery and reuse of wastes.
5. The management of municipal solid waste (MSW) is high on the agenda of the EA Panel which has held various meetings to discuss the subject and has invited relevant deputations to express their views where appropriate. In general, the Panel supports the "3R" principle (i.e. reduce, reuse and recycle) in managing MSW, and the

development of the three inter-related components in a coordinate fashion. Hence, it welcomes the Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014) published by the Administration in December 2005 which sets out a comprehensive strategy consisting of a series of tried and proven policy tools and measures to tackle the waste problem ahead and to achieve the following targets –

- Target 1: Waste avoidance and minimization - to reduce the amount of MSW generated in Hong Kong by 1% per annum up to the year 2014.
- Target 2: Reuse, recovery and recycling - to increase the overall recovery rate of MSW to 45% by 2009 and 50% by 2014.
- Target 3: Bulk reduction and disposal of unavoidable waste - to reduce the total MSW disposed of in landfills to less than 25% by 2014.

#### Waste avoidance and minimization

6. While acknowledging that the target of reducing the amount of MSW generated in Hong Kong by 1% per annum up to the year 2014 has taken into account the annual growth rate of 3% for MSW generated in Hong Kong (i.e. the reduction target represents a total gross reduction of 4% of MSW per annum), the EA Panel holds the view that the target is too conservative. It points out that a drastic reduction in waste generation could be achieved once a proper waste reduction policy is put in place as in the case of Taiwan where the waste reduction rate has increased from 2.4% to 50% following the implementation of waste reduction measures.

#### Reuse, recovery and recycling

7. Various waste recovery systems have been tested to identify the most cost-effective and suitable mode to develop a habit among the public to separate waste from recyclables at the point of disposal and not to discard recyclables as waste. These include the three-coloured separation bin scheme and the Wet/dry Waste Separation Pilot Programme (the Programme). At present, there are 28 000 three-coloured waste separation bins placed at some 9 300 points throughout the territory. In 2004, 140 000 tonnes of waste were collected for recycling through this scheme. The 16-month Programme was carried out in four housing estates from April 2003 to July 2004. Participating households separated wastes into wet and dry wastes which were then gathered at Refuse Collection Points of the estates by cleansing workers. Contractors of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department then delivered the wastes to Island East Refuse Transfer Station for sorting. The sorted dry wastes were sold to recyclers. Revenue generated was used to offset the sorting cost. While the Programme in tandem with the three-coloured bin scheme in the four participating estates recovered 12% more recyclables than the three-coloured bin scheme alone in non-participating estates, it is considered not sustainable as the processing cost is high.

8. With the experience gained in the Programme, a 12-month pilot programme on Source Separation of Waste was launched in August 2004 in 13 housing estates in the

Eastern District covering about 37 000 households and a population of about 120 000. The pilot programme aims to make it more convenient for residents to separate domestic waste at source by encouraging and assisting property management companies to provide waste separation facilities on each floor of the building. It also aims to expand the types of recyclables to be collected to include all plastics, all metals and other types of recyclables such as old clothing and waste electrical products. Under the pilot programme, recyclables are separated within each estate and sold to recyclers direct without having to be transported to a central location for additional sorting, which makes the operation more cost-effective. Initial results of the pilot scheme show that the volume of recovered recyclables has increased significantly. In view of the encouraging results, the Administration rolled out a territory-wide campaign in January 2005 to promote separation of domestic waste at source.

9. Given that the 28 000 three-coloured waste separation bins are only able to collect about 140 000 tonnes of waste in 2004, which is equivalent to the amount of waste produced in Hong Kong in one and a half day, question is raised on the effectiveness of the three-coloured bin scheme. Some Panel members also opine that segregation of domestic waste at source might not be practicable given the space constraints of most households in Hong Kong. They therefore suggest that financial assistance should be provided to encourage more innovative recycling initiatives, such as incorporation of new features in building design to facilitate waste segregation. Consideration should also be given to introducing legislation to require the provision of waste segregation facilities in new buildings.

Building (Refuse Storage and Material Recovery Chambers and Refuse Chutes) (Amendment) Regulation 2008

10. This Amendment Regulation amends the Building (Refuse Storage and Material Recovery Chambers and Refuse Chutes) Regulations (Cap. 123 sub. leg. H) (the Principal Regulations). The main purpose of the Amendment Regulations is to add a new regulation 3A to the Principal Regulations. The new regulation 3A imposes a mandatory requirement that, where a plan relating to a domestic building or the domestic part of a composite building is submitted to the Building Authority for approval under section 14 of the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123), the plan must show provision for a refuse storage and material recovery room on every floor of the domestic building or of the domestic part of the composite building.

11. Multi-floor units (i.e. domestic units which occupy space on two or more consecutive floors) shall be provided with refuse storage and material recovery room in common area on at least one of the floors concerned.

12. Refuse storage and material recovery room is not required on any floor that is not designed for habitation or on any floor where a refuse storage and material recovery chamber or material recovery chamber is provided.

13. The mandatory requirement for the provision of refuse storage and material recovery room on every floor also does not apply to

(a) any part of a building that is designed for use as a hotel, guest-house, boarding-house, hostel or dormitory; and

(b) small developments, for example villa type developments.

#### Consultation with Environmental Affairs Panel

14. The proposal to require the provision of refuse storage and material recovery room on every floor of new domestic buildings and the domestic part of composite buildings was discussed by the EA Panel at its meeting on 25 February 2008. Members generally supported the proposal which aimed at facilitating waste separation. They however emphasized the need for the Administration to ensure that the space allocated for refuse storage and material recovery facilities would be used for the stated purpose and not other purposes for the benefit of developers. Members also stated that there was a need for the owners' corporations and/or management companies to encourage residents to make better use of the segregation bins for separation of waste.

#### **Reference**

15 A list of relevant papers is set out in **Appendix**.

Council Business Division 1  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
29 May 2008

## List of relevant papers

Meeting date	Committee	Papers/Items
25.2.2008	Environmental Affairs Panel (EA)	<p>Administration's paper on update on the progress of the key initiatives in the "Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014)"</p> <p><a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/ea/papers/ea0225cb1-844-3-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/ea/papers/ea0225cb1-844-3-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Paper on management of municipal solid waste in Hong Kong prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat (Background brief)</p> <p><a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/ea/papers/ea0225cb1-844-4-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/ea/papers/ea0225cb1-844-4-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Minutes of meeting</p> <p><a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/ea/minutes/ea080225.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr07-08/english/panels/ea/minutes/ea080225.pdf</a></p>
26.3.2007	EA	<p>Administration's paper on Update on the progress of the key initiatives in the "Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014)"</p> <p><a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/ea/papers/ea0326cb1-1182-6-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/ea/papers/ea0326cb1-1182-6-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Follow-up paper - Supplementary information paper on "Policy Framework for the Management of Municipal Solid Waste (2005-2014)" provided by the Administration</p> <p><a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/ea/papers/ea0326cb1-2210-1-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/ea/papers/ea0326cb1-2210-1-e.pdf</a></p> <p>Minutes of meeting</p> <p><a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/ea/minutes/ea070326.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/ea/minutes/ea070326.pdf</a></p>

<b>Meeting date</b>	<b>Committee</b>	<b>Papers/Items</b>
	EA	Report of the Delegation to Study Overseas Experience in Air Quality Control, Management of Municipal Solid Waste, Renewable Energy and Total Water Management  <a href="http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/ea/papers/ea0226cb1-972-6-e.pdf">http://www.legco.gov.hk/yr06-07/english/panels/ea/papers/ea0226cb1-972-6-e.pdf</a>