

CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY

ENB034

(Question Serial No. 1147)

Head: (39) Drainage Services Department

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

Programme: (2) Sewage Services

Controlling Officer: Director of Drainage Services (TONG Ka Hung, Edwin)

Director of Bureau: Secretary for the Environment

Question:

One of the causes for the emission of stench from the seawater in Hung Hom is that the foul water pipes of some private buildings in the district have been misconnected to the stormwater drainage system ("foul water pipe misconnection"). In this connection, please advise this Committee:

1. of the number of foul water pipe misconnection cases in the territory over the past 3 years; and
2. given that the consultancy study on Hung Hom will not be completed until early 2018, whether the Government will, prior to the implementation of the measures to be proposed by the consultancy study, step up inspections and efforts in combating illegal discharge of wastewater and sewage, and enhance the initiatives to rectify foul water pipe misconnection, so as to demonstrate the determination of the Government to enhance the quality of coastal waters and develop a water-friendly culture? How much does the Government plan to earmark to deal with the incidents?

Asked by: Hon LEUNG Mei-fun, Priscilla (Member Question No. 9)

Reply:

Unauthorised alteration to the drainage systems within private buildings with foul water discharging into the buildings' stormwater pipes contravenes the Buildings Ordinance (Cap. 123) and may be subject to enforcement actions by the Buildings Department (BD) including the issue of statutory removal orders under section 24 of the Ordinance. The rectification works within the private buildings are to be carried out by the owners in question. Over the past 3 years, the Drainage Services Department (DSD) received a total of 37 cases related to the misconnection of foul water pipes to the stormwater drainage system ("foul water pipe misconnection") within private buildings referred by the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) and BD.

EPD is undertaking the consultancy study on "Further Enhancing Quality of Coastal Waters of Victoria Harbour". During investigation, if pollution problems, such as existing pipe misconnection, are found, EPD and BD will at once take measures jointly under the Water Pollution Control Ordinance and Buildings Ordinance to tackle the illegal connection and discharge cases, and will not wait for the completion of the whole consultancy study.

The rectification of expedient connections between the sewage terminal manholes outside the private buildings and the public stormwater drainage manholes is an integral part of general maintenance operation of DSD and no separate cost account is kept for expenses specifically on these rectification works.

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