



PLK Fung Ching Memorial Primary School

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Greens pounce on no-switch-offs

Sophie Hui

More than 22 percent of external lighting on buildings in Mong Kok and along Victoria Harbour were not switched off at night, a green group has found.

Some companies which have signed the Charter on External Lighting – a pledge to switch off lights from 11pm or midnight to 7am – failed to keep the promise, Green Earth said, citing an example of H&M in Mong Kok.

The group conducted two field surveys on October 14 and last Wednesday on Sai Yeung Choi Street South, where it received the most complaints of light pollution.

Among the 375 sets of external lighting on Sai Yeung Choi Street South, only 163 sets were switched off after 11pm. About one-fourth of lights (26 percent) were still on after midnight, the group found.

Among the 63 sets of external lighting on buildings along the harbor from Tin Hau to Sheung Wan, only 40 percent of them were switched off after 11am, while 14 sets of lighting were still on after midnight.

The Environment Bureau launched the charter in April 2016 to invite building owners and responsible persons for external lighting installation to switch off the lighting for decorative, promotional or advertising purposes which affect the outdoor environment from 11pm or midnight to 7am.

Companies and organizations can take part voluntarily, and there is no penalty if they do not follow the charter.



Green Earth conducted field surveys in areas where it received complaints about light pollution.

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About 5,000 units including companies, schools and non-governmental organizations have signed the charter, and the government said 99 percent of them have kept their promise and switched off the lights on time.

But the group's director of environmental advocacy, Hahn Chu Hon-keung, said the government's number did not reflect reality as some commercial enterprises still did not switch off their lights.

The group also said the number of complaints about external lighting did not drop after the charter was launched. In 2016, the Environmental

Protection Department received 335 complaints, but the number has risen 42 percent to 477 complaints last year.

"The preset time of switching off has a guiding function, but it has to be mandatory or it will only be a toothless tiger," the group's project officer, Edmond Lau Shiu-long, said.

The department said the Working Group on the Promotion of the Charter on External Lighting is collecting public opinion on measures to manage external lighting and their future development.

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What is the news about? What do you think about the news?

This news is about light pollution in Mong Kok. Some external lighting on buildings ^{not} were switched off at night which caused light pollution. From two field surveys, it showed that people complained about it most. Green Earth found out that even some of the companies have signed the Charter on External Lighting, they still broke their promises. Although the government said 99 percents of ^{their offices} them followed the rules, it was not real. ~~Maybe the offices have switched off light but it can't reflect the reality.~~

I think light pollution is quite serious in Hong Kong. It wastes a lot of energy and also affects the quality of our sleep. There should be more companies to sign the Charter on External Lighting. They must keep their promises which ^{are} to switch off lights from 11pm or midnight to 7am. Then the problem can be improved or solved.

VERY GOOD
VERY GOOD
VERY GOOD

Check:

Did you write about the following?(✓)

Who	When	Where	What	How	Why

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Did you use past tense to tell the news?

Did you use present tense to tell your feeling and reason(s)?