

Social Welfare Department Environmental Report 2022

Introduction

This Environmental Report sets out the green management measures taken by the Social Welfare Department (“the Department”) in 2022.

Key Responsibilities

2. The Department is responsible for implementing the Government’s policies on social welfare and for developing and co-ordinating social welfare services. These include social security, services for the elderly, family and child welfare services, medical social services, group and community work, services for young people, rehabilitation services for people with disabilities, as well as services for offenders.
3. As at 31 December 2022, the Department had an establishment of 6,526 posts and the staff were accommodated in 230 office locations throughout the territory.

Environmental Goal

4. The Department is committed to supporting Government’s policies on environmental protection and sustainable development. To this end, our objectives are to promote a green culture among staff of the Department and our working partners and to endeavour to adopt green management and practices in our workplace.

Green Measures Taken in 2022

5. During the year, the Department has made continuous efforts in cultivating and fostering awareness among our staff members for the care of the environment. While most of our operation units are office-based, we have endeavoured to adopt good office practices aiming at reducing the use of, reusing as well as recycling valuable resource and conserving energy. Details of the environmental measures taken are as follows –

(a) **Minimising Paper Consumption**

Despite the establishment of new teams and implementation of new initiatives in 2022 resulting in a greater demand for paper, the Department managed to control paper consumption to 76,284 reams, representing a drop of 24.3% comparing to the consumption in 2021, in which 100% of paper consumed in 2022 was recycled paper.

Dissemination by electronic means

- Reducing the consumption of photocopying paper through wider use of electronic communication;
- Reducing the production of printed publications and encouraging staff members to upload publications onto the Department's homepage for public access;
- Uploading documents for internal circulation onto the departmental intranet portal for viewing by staff; and
- Advising staff members to collect and submit returns in electronic format through the portal.

Economy use of paper

- Requesting minimal numbers of hard copies of government newsletters/publications;
- Keeping the numbers of copies of paper publications to the minimum;
- Reducing our office stationery needs by printing on both sides of paper;
- Using printers and photocopiers with double-sided copying functions;
- Setting double-sided printing and printing in grayscale as default modes for all network printers and photocopiers;
- Using the blank side of used paper for drafting, printing and photocopying;
- Minimising the numbers of photocopies, and using both sides of paper if printing/photocopying is unavoidable;
- Encouraging staff members to use electronic greeting cards in replacement of printed cards on festive occasions; and
- Minimising the usage of envelopes for dispatching unclassified and unrestricted documents.

(b) **Waste Recovery**

- In 2022, the Department had collected a total of 4,827 kg of waste paper for recycling.
- Using recycled paper in all offices;
- Reusing envelopes and file jackets that are in good condition;
- Placing green trays near photocopiers or network printers to facilitate printing with paper that has been used on one side;

- Providing recycle bins for recycling waste paper, cans and plastic bottles;
- Transferring surplus furniture and equipment to other bureaux/departments for further use; and
- Selling surplus furniture to contractors for recycling.

(c) **Energy Conservation**

- Maintaining room temperature at 25.5°C during summer months.
- Turning off air-conditioners, computers and other office equipment when they are not in use;
- Installing motion sensors for lighting control in both office and common areas;
- Using LED Tube Lighting for illumination in office and common areas;
- Setting all photocopiers to automatic energy saving mode;
- Installing timed taps and dual-flush flushing cisterns in some of our toilets in order to reduce water usage and reduce sewage generation;
- Ensuring proper maintenance of office equipment and departmental vehicles to conserve energy and reduce consumption; and
- Practising car pooling and task combination as far as practicable to achieve multiple objectives in one journey instead of arranging separate trips.

(d) **Green Purchasing**

- Procuring plain paper fax machine and other energy efficient office equipment and electrical appliances;
- Trading in office equipment, such as photocopiers, in procurement;
- Providing refillable ball pens and clutch pencils for usage; and
- Requiring cleansing contractors to use biodegradable garbage bags for waste disposal.

(e) **Publicity/Education**

- Disseminating guidelines on saving electricity through economic use of lighting, air-conditioning, photocopiers and computer equipment to all offices; and
- Displaying posters/stickers with messages to raise the awareness of the energy conservation among the staff members in office areas.

(f) **Green and Healthy Working Environment**

- Maintaining a non-smoking environment in office premises;
- Arranging regular cleaning for air ventilation systems to improve air quality;

- Cleaning and maintaining office facilities, including furniture and equipment, carpet and distilled water dispensers, regularly; and
- Participating in indoor air quality inspection.

(g) **Promotion of green message/practice to Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs)**

- Promulgating circulars and documents relevant to NGOs through the Department's homepage;
- Promoting the use of electronic communication with NGOs; and
- Establishing green practice of filing returns in electronic format.

(h) **Tuen Mun Children and Juvenile Home (“the Home”)**

- Committed to mitigating climate change through energy saving;
- Implementing the following energy management opportunities and housekeeping measures, with a view to reducing additional 6% electricity consumption over five years from 2020/21 to 2024/25, using 2018/19 as the baseline. Relevant energy saving measures include-
 - Arranging staff training in energy conservation
 - Forming energy management committee
 - Putting up energy conservation signs
 - Using split type air-conditioning units with energy saving labeling
 - Upgrading Mechanical Ventilation and Air-conditioning System
 - Switching off external lightings during daytime
 - Installing Solar Heat Collection Hot Water System
- Conducting annual carbon audit at the Home for the period from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022. This exercise serves to monitor the greenhouse gas emission.

Total No. of Major Buildings at the Home:	5
Total Floor Area:	11,976 m ²
Total No. of Employees:	207
Category of Building(s):	Office type, Schools and Educational, and Residential Home
Total Greenhouse Gas Emissions:	1,606.52 Tonnes of CO _{2-e}

(i) **Other Measures**

- Encouraging staff members to use their own cups and drinking glasses instead of disposable paper cups;

- Providing guidelines on green office practices for reference by all offices; and
- Uploading a wealth of Green Tips on our intranet to raise staff awareness on and encourage office participation in waste minimisation, waste recovery and energy conservation.

Way Forward

6. We will continue to devote efforts in green management. We will continue to explore new green initiatives and enhance environmental awareness among our staff by promoting the 3Rs principle of “Reduce, Re-use and Recycle” in office management.

Enquiries

7. We welcome any enquiries or suggestions on this Environmental Report. Please contact this Department by the following means –

Email	:	admenq@swd.gov.hk
Phone	:	2892 5601
Fax	:	2838 0125
Post	:	Social Welfare Department 9/F, Wu Chung House 213 Queen’s Road East Wan Chai Hong Kong