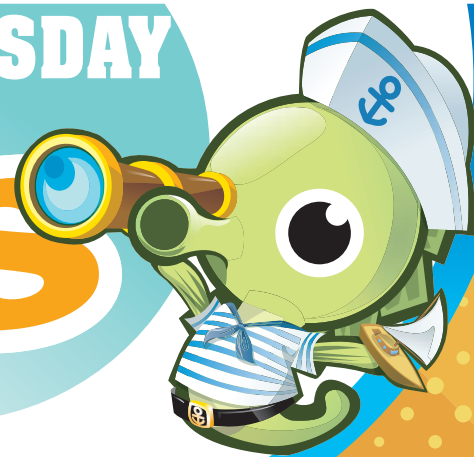


Goodies



Pay for your waste



In the next few years, all Hong Kong families will be charged for what they dump into the landfill. In fact, many countries have already set up waste charging schemes, successfully reducing the rubbish they create. Yet, Hong Kong still has a long way to go in cutting down on waste in the city.

Editor's Note

Hi! It has been so cold these last few days. Hong Kong is not used to this weather because our homes do not have carpets or a central heating system like they do in other places. When I was young though, I used to love winter because there was usually one morning when I would open the curtains and see a blanket of snow outside. Even better was that school would be cancelled because the roads were too slippery! Unfortunately, it will not snow in Hong Kong but the Middle East has seen snow so you never know. Turn to P03 to learn more.



Simon



They can't expect me to pay for all of this!

Then make sure you don't make so much waste in the first place!





Grace

The wasteful city

IN March last year, the government revealed how our municipal solid waste (MSW, 都市固體廢物) – rubbish from homes, offices, factories and restaurants – would be charged, and the scheme is expected to come into force in the second half of 2019. Similar to the plastic bag levy, this scheme hopes to reduce overall waste disposal and change our behaviour towards conserving nature.



Current situation in Hong Kong

WE are producing more and more waste. In the past 30 years, the amount of MSW has **soared** over 80 percent while the population has only grown 34 percent. Every year, we produce six million tons of MSW. Most of the waste goes straight to three almost-full landfills, and the remaining is recycled. Our recycling rate of 35 percent is far lower than in other countries. For example, it is 60 percent in Singapore (新加坡) and 99 percent in Sweden (瑞典).

In 2013, the government **outlined** long-term measures to combat the waste crisis. The plans included the MSW charging scheme, which aims at reducing household waste by 40 percent by 2022.

Managing the waste

THOUGH most of the rubbish dumped in the landfills come from households, the **upcoming** charging scheme will be applied to all **sectors** to lower the city's overall waste disposal. Hong Kong's MSW will be charged on a quantity-based method. The price per litre of MSW is HK\$0.11, meaning that the more waste we make, the more we pay. It is in line with the 'polluter pays' principle (污者自付原則). Citizens also need to buy nine different sizes of special rubbish bags to dispose of refuse. This will encourage people to stop making so much waste by making them pay to get rid of it.



Critical thinking

- Do you habitually recycle? Why or why not?
- What are the benefits and costs of waste charging schemes?
- How effective do you think the MSW charging scheme in 2019 will be in reducing waste?
- What are the other ways to promote waste reduction?

Less waste is more health and pocket money! It's a win-win situation!

