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Time to be more environmentally friendly - Act now

Our home is under attack by different environmental issues. Have you ever thought about who set off this battle between us and our environment? Have you ever wondered why our city has become the enemy of the environment? Indeed, we all are the culprit. We are treating our earth in the worst way ever. We pollute the air and water so badly that it is beyond our imagination. We have not addressed these issues seriously so far and that is why the environmental condition of our planet is deteriorating. However, no one can save our home unless we start making changes.

Water pollution is the first enemy that we have created. Do you know how much plastic is produced or disposed of every day, every month and every year? In fact, we use a lot of plastic without realizing it. We leave rubbish at beaches. As wind blows by or the sea water runs up to the coast, the rubbish is washed into the ocean. It pollutes the sea and harms marine life. The species in the ocean will eat the rubbish which is fatal to their lives. There are several international research institutes which study the death rate of sea turtles. It has been found that between 50% and 80% of sea turtles have ingested marine litter. On the other hand, some rubbish will be blown to reservoirs by winds. This will pollute our drinking water. As a matter of fact, marine life and drinking water resources are being destroyed in an alarming way.

Why don't we strengthen our effort to promote recycling and a more environmentally-friendly way for waste reduction?

Another worrying issue is air pollution in Hong Kong. A lot of greenhouse gases are emitted from vehicles and industrial factories. Some of them are harmful to people and may cause respiratory diseases. Although we have implemented the policy of 'First Registration Tax' for vehicles, it is still not effective enough to stop the increase in the number of private cars. Compared with China, Hong Kong's environmental policy is far from adequate. Take China's 13th Five-Year Plan as an example. It focuses on reducing air pollutants, improving energy efficiency and expanding clean energy. As a result, the coal consumption in China decreases and carbon dioxide emission is reduced by 2.5 million tons. Apparently, this is an attempt to improve air quality. How about us? As the air quality is deteriorating, shouldn't we help alleviate the problem of polluted air by using more public transport instead of private cars?

In terms of the use of renewable energy, Hong Kong is obviously falling behind when compared with other Asian cities. In Hong Kong, electricity is mainly generated from coal, crude oil and natural gas while renewable energy sources such as solar energy, wind energy, hydroelectric power and biofuel are used to generate electricity for

consumption. It is therefore crucial for us to change the way we generate electricity.

The above explains why there is an urgent need for Hong Kong to strengthen its effort to build up itself to be a more environmentally friendly city. It is for the sake of public health, the enhancement of air quality and the sustainability of our city. By making our city greener, people will be less susceptible to respiratory diseases and the health of the general public will be strengthened too. As global citizens, we can also help to minimize the impact of climate change. Do you want to protect our home against our environmental enemies? Act now before it is too late.