

## Taiwan Changhua District Prosecutors Office

### Press Release

The investigation into the case of environmental crime that 同 O company limited by shares (hereinafter called company) and three other large waste disposal organizations disposed more than 140 thousand tons of industrial waste without legal treatment in Da'an River area has concluded. The illegal profit was over 600 million NT dollars. The accused were indicated by Taiwan Changhua District Prosecutors Office.

In October, 2018, one of the organizations in our jurisdiction was reported that the massive unknown waste was piled up. The waste emanated stink and leaked wastewater. Local residents protested against the matter and reported to The Environmental Protection Administration (EPA). Consequently, Prosecutor Lee Hsiu-Lin was assigned to launch a task force to investigate this case.

The members in the task force handled this case in conformity with the investigative approach of "State Owned Investigation Platform". From October, 2018 to January, 2020, the Supervising Prosecutor Wang Ming-Jen and Wu Yi-Ying, along with Prosecutor Lee Hsiu-Ling, Shih Chiao-Wen and Chen Tsung-Yuan instructed police officers of The 7<sup>th</sup> Special Police Corps (2<sup>nd</sup> company, 3<sup>rd</sup> division), investigators of Taichung and Changhua Investigation Bureau, as well as prosecutor investigators to investigate the case. Meanwhile, the prosecutors cooperated with inspectors and agents of the Bureau of Environmental Inspection (North and Central Branches), Environmental Protection Bureau (Changhua County and Taichung City government), Taxation Administration, Ministry of Finance, and National Taxation Bureau of the Central Area, Ministry of Finance, etc. The prosecutors launched 6 massive researches in more than 22 locations in Changhua County, Taichung City, Nantou County, Taoyuan City, New Taipei City, Miaoli County and so forth, cooperating with more than 509 people including investigators, police officers, inspectors, agents and so on. The prosecutors accused 60 defendants and 15 organizations. Among the accused, the court has approved the prosecutor's request to detain 6 defendants (all of them are responsible persons of a company). The illicit interests of more than 250 million dollars, were seized at the same time.

冠 O company, 同 O company, and 長 O company are level B industrial waste disposal organizations commissioned by domestic renowned electronics, precision machinery, and plastic enterprises. The charge of the intermediate treatment of

industrial waste such as industrial ash and dust, inorganic sludge, and so forth is four to eight thousand NT dollars per ton. These organizations are obliged to comply with the requirement of the waste disposal permit issued by the competent authority. The waste should first undergo intermediate treatment. For instance, in this case, the disposal organizations mentioned above are supposed to implement a waste disposal method known as Encapsulation. Encapsulation involves filling containers with waste and adding immobilizing materials such as cement mortar, solidifying agent, or clay to alter the physical characteristic of the waste. The purpose of the treatment is to lower the probability of the dissolution of the heavy metal in the waste disposal.

When encapsulated matter resulting from encapsulation is disposed, the matter complying with compressive strength and specification requirements could be produced as artificial aggregates which can be sold to the downstream gravel manufacturers. Nevertheless, these organizations failed to abide by the waste disposal treatment in accordance with the permit. They forged false receipts and fabricated the source of materials. Additionally, they colluded with the illegal shipping agents and gravel manufacturers to landfill and backfill the waste which did not undergo proper intermediate treatment on the bank of Da'an River. Furthermore, these organizations even collaborated to forge a certificate of product destination to evade inspection by making false declarations to competent authorities. Aiming to lower the cost, these responsible organizations illegally disposed and arbitrarily placed 140 thousand tons of wastedirt on the riverbed, the agricultural land nearby, and the agriculture and household water source areas, thereby, causing severe environmental pollution.

The investigation into this case has concluded. Defendant Ms. Huang and 5 other people, 冠 O company, 同 O company, 長 O company and 5 other companies have been charged for violating the Waste Disposal Act. Those not indicated at the end of the investigation were ruled deferred prosecution by prosecutors.

By making a thorough investigation into the case, the task force has again demonstrated its resolution to crack down on environmental violations in multiple ways. In the case above, the task force made a painstaking investigation and successfully uncovered the suspects who illegally disposed and placed the waste. The illegal brokers, the upstream waste treatment organizations, and the enterprises that engaged in waste clearance or disposal were all charged. These organizations attempted to conceal their illegal acts with smoke and mirrors, but they failed

eventually.

Changhua Prosecutors Office appeals to the public for reporting to competent authorities when noticing any suspicious waste disposal. Our office will investigate the case to see whether it is illegal or not, and make sure the involved organizations treat the waste legally. We also inform the organizations not to violate laws or collude with illegal organizations. Any activity that may endanger the environment and hazard to the public health will be punished severely. In this case, the wastes were from the large enterprises. Our office will request related environmental protection authorities to enforce organizations to comply with the waste disposal regulations, to dispose the waste accordingly to the Waste Disposal Act, and not to destroy the environment again.