

Fluorescent Lamp Recycling Programme Main Content

At night the entire city of Hong Kong lights up,
thanks to the hard work of light bulbs and fluorescent tubes.
But when they burned out,
many think the landfill is their only disposal outlet.
In fact, they can be recycled.

(Fluorescent Lamp Recycling Programme)

Oh? The compact fluorescent lamp has burned out.
No problem, I have a spare one.

(The man replaces the broken lamp with a new one)

Done!

(The man throws the broken lamp into the wastebasket.)

(The broken lamp shouts out.)

Ouch!

Here!

You shouldn't throw me away like this.
Don't just stare at me, pick me up!

You can't work anymore so I threw you away.

Though I am an energy saving lamp,
I also contain trace amount of mercury.
If you don't handle me properly, I will break and
the mercury inside my body will leak out.
This may affect the environment.
That's not desirable, isn't it?

If this is not the right way, tell me how then.

The best way is to recycle me.
The lighting trade, supported by
the Environmental Protection Department,
has organised a "Fluorescent Lamp Recycling Programme".
OK. Let's put me back into the packaging.
And take me to the lobby of your building.
Then I will tell you more.

Okay.

Hey, can you see the orange collection box ahead?
Just put me in there.
Thank you.
All housing estates participating in this programme
will have notices and posters posted up
in their lobby management office,
or provide this orange collection box
to remind residents
that spent lamps and tubes can be recycled.

This programme recovers
all types of mercury-containing lamps generated from households.
Apart from compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) like myself,
it also recovers these fluorescent tubes,
and high intensity discharge (HID) lamps.

When the collection box is full
or when a resident hands over spent fluorescent tubes
to building caretakers,
they will put us carefully
into these storage containers.
Housing estates with larger quantities of used lamps and tubes
will keep us in this type of steel drum.

Other than housing estates,
there are many public collection points,
like these malls and retail outlets.

Some will have this poster posted up
or the orange collection bin in place.
Just hand us over to the storekeepers
or put us into the collection bin.

In addition, on Saturdays and Sundays,
the Environmental Protection Department's
waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) collection vehicle
will visit different districts in turn for collection.
(For details, please visit: www.wastereduction.gov.hk)

Each collection point can have us collected
through the contractor under the recycling programme
or licensed chemical waste collectors.

For safety sake,
workers must put on their protective gear
before they load us onto transporting vehicles.

We arrived safely.
This is the Tsing Yi Chemical Waste Treatment Centre.
First we will be stripped of our packaging and weighed.
Then our brothers - the fluorescent tubes
will be sent into a drying unit to undergo 3 to 4 hours of drying.

For CFLs like us, our bulbs will be separated from the ballasts.
Of course, when carrying out this process
workers need to put on their protective gear.

After some simple treatment,
our brothers - the fluorescent tubes, and ourselves
will be put inside the Compact Crush and Separation Unit
for crushing.
The purpose is to separate the glass fraction,
the metal parts and the phosphor powder.

These mercury containing wastes will be sorted
and put inside the distiller

for heating and purification
and to recover the toxic mercury.

This is the mercury extracted from my body
and hundreds of thousands of my brothers.
It will eventually be reused.

This completes the recycling process.

Through this, we prevent our environment from being polluted
and provide our generations to come
with a greener living environment.

(Website: www.wastereduction.gov.hk)

(EPD Hotline: 2838 3111)