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**32 Packaging Items Found in Mooncake Gift Set;
Study Shows 1 Mooncake Discarded per Person
Green Power Urges Producers and Citizens to Cut Waste**

Results of a survey conducted by environmental group Green Power on Mid-Autumn Festival celebrations revealed that people are showing more concern for the environment. Fewer families discard empty moon cake boxes and more prefer simpler packaging for moon cakes. The habits of disposing moon cakes and plastic lanterns, however, still need to be improved.

In total, 340 families were interviewed. Compared to a similar survey conducted in 2004, the number of families who said they discarded moon cake boxes fell from 34% in 2004 to 23% in 2007, saving 157 tonnes of iron worth an estimated HK\$500,000. On the other hand, simpler packaging attracted more people to buy, from 27% of the respondents in 2004 to 39% in 2007.

The results were announced this morning at “The 15th Clean Up the World in Hong Kong” held at Aberdeen Country Park. About 100 HK Electric volunteers took part in cleaning up the barbecue site where people celebrated Mid-Autumn Festival last night.

Permanent Secretary for the Environment and Director of Environmental Protection, Ms. Anissa Wong; Legislative Councillor Ms Audrey Eu; and General Manager (Projects) of HK Electric, Dr. Tso Che-wah, also supported the clean-up activity. In less than an hour, the team gathered 0.2kg of aluminium cans, 0.4kg of plastic bottles, 0.5kg of paper and 34.5kg of other refuse (35.6kg of wastes in total)–13 % less than last year. However, unconsumed barbecue food, moon cakes and lanterns in good conditions were also among the waste collected. “People just conveniently discarded food and lanterns, resulting in considerable waste,” said Ms. Wong and Ms. Eu. They suggested that people should carefully estimate their food consumption, and bring home unused items that are still in good condition for future use.

On packaging, Green Power found that a total of 440 packaging items were used for 29 types of moon cakes in a chain store, where one type alone had used 32 items.

Green Power’s Divisional Head of Scientific Research & Conservation Department, Dr. Cheng Luk-ki, called on manufacturers to refrain from excessive packaging.

The survey also showed a continuous increase in the number of discarded moon cakes. This year, an average of 0.97 moon cake per family was discarded, compared with 0.8 and 0.9 moon cake in 2004 and 2006 respectively.

Meanwhile, about 30% of families discarded more than one plastic lantern, while an average of 0.73 lantern was discarded per family, representing a 50% increase over 2006 (0.5 lantern), though lower than in 2004 (0.8 lantern). Dr Cheng suggested people should give their lanterns to those in need or choose smaller lanterns for easier storage and reuse.

“**Clean Up the World**” is an international clean-up activity organised by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). It mobilises more than 35 million volunteers from over 120 countries annually. From 2004, “Clean Up the World in Hong Kong” has focused on “**Reduce Waste and Enjoy Greener Festivals**” to highlight the festival waste problem and its environmental effects. Green Power has established a “Greener Festivals” website. For details, please visit www.greenpower.org.hk .

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