

Press Release. 23 October 2021.

LCSD and FEHD urged to upgrade their water dispensers to reduce plastic bottle waste
Water Dispenser Survey shows that LCSD and FEHD continue to suspend water dispensers indefinitely. Airport and Hospital Authority do not. *Drink Without Waste* urges government to switch all water fountains to bottle refilling stations.

The *Drink Without Waste* campaign approached government departments in July 2021 with a request for information on the status of their water dispensers. Information received includes whether the dispensers are operating, their locations and any plans for new dispensers. We also asked whether the dispensers are bottle refill stations or water fountains.

Almost 60% of water dispensers continue to be suspended. The figures show that the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) and the Food and Hygiene Department (FEHD) have suspended all water dispensers. This provokes the public to buy water in single-use plastic bottles, contrary to the government's environmental strategy encouraging the public to "Bring Your Own Bottle" or "BYOB". The LCSD operates public parks, promenades, pleasure grounds, beaches, sports and cultural facilities. The FEHD operates public toilets, among others.

The figures also show that all traditional water fountains are suspended and considered a hygiene risk. Modern bottle refilling stations, however, appear to be considered safe for public use. *Drink Without Waste* therefore urges all government departments to switch all their water fountains to bottle refilling stations as soon as possible.

Water dispenser survey: Main findings

1. Only 41% of water dispensers in government departments are currently in use.
2. Almost all traditional water dispensers managed by LCSD and FEHD are suspended because of hygiene concerns over water fountains.
3. Surprisingly, NONE of the water dispensers in hospitals and airport are suspended. These are all bottle refill dispensers.
4. Many government departments were unable to provide a list of the location of their water dispensers. Some suggested us to contact individual premises for information.

Water dispenser survey: Main recommendations

- a. **Upgrading water dispensers:** *Drink Without Waste* urges government departments to replace all fountain type water dispensers with bottle refilling stations.
- b. **Clear information on the location of public water dispensers:** To assist the community and staff to "drink without waste", we recommend government departments to publish and promote the location of every water dispenser.

Drink Without Waste is a campaign initiative by the *Single-Use Beverage Packaging Working Group* including manufacturers, retailers, landlords, large institutions and green groups. Our strategies are to remove 70 - 90% of used beverage packaging from the waste stream:

Reduce: Promote beverage dispensers, and encourage people to "bring your own bottle".

Redesign: Promote "design for recycling" packaging standards.

Recover: Implement convenient collection networks, supported with value-on-return schemes.

Recycle: Encourage state-of-the-art recycling facilities.

For more information, see: www.drinkwithoutwaste.org and facebook/drinkwithoutwaste.

Water dispenser survey: Summary results

Government Department	Existing water dispensers for public use			New water dispensers planned for public use (mostly bottle refill stations)
	In use (Mostly bottle refill stations)	Suspended (Mostly water fountains)	Suspended %	
FEHD	0	15	100%	0
LCSD	28	1018	97%	0
HAD	21	16	43%	5
AFCD	24	5	17%	5
EPD	28	2	7%	375***
TD	0	0	-	0
AA	100	0	0%	50
DH	190	0	0%	0
Hospital Authority	344	0	0%	0
Total	735	1056	59%	435
Others **	~1000		NA	

* Last updated: 17 September 2021

** Estimated number of water dispensers present in other government premises (Police stations, courts, centres for tax, business registration, immigration).

*** Future locations of new dispensers under EPD budget include LCSD and TD facilities.

Water dispenser survey: Pictures



Sheung Wan Sports Centre
Water fountains and bottle refill suspended



Northern District Sports Ground
Water dispenser suspended



Tin Ping Sports Centre
Water fountain suspended, bottle refill OK



High West Picnic Area
Water fountain and bottle refill suspended



Portland Street Rest garden
Bottle refill station