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CLP volunteers join forces to promote electrical safety for the elderly

Volunteers from CLP Power Hong Kong Limited (CLP Power) have identified five key household hazards that arise from inappropriate use of electricity by elderly people, as part of CLP's "CHEER for the Senior Buddies" programme. To address this, volunteers and their children today took part in a drive to re-wire elderly people's homes and share tips on using electricity in a safe and environmentally friendly way.

Chan So Man is a 93-year-old lady who lives on her own in a traditional village house in Yuen Long. The electrical installations in her house are old and in urgent need of rewiring – particularly since some areas of her house are at risk from power leakage, which, in a worst-case scenario, could become a fire hazard.

Sadly, Chan's case is not an isolated example. Many of the homes of elderly people have fallen behind in terms of electrical maintenance. The wiring has become worn over time and the electrical installations do not meet current safety guidelines.

Solving these problems and ensuring safer, greener homes for our senior citizens is one of the key objectives of CLP Power's "CHEER for the Senior Buddies" programme. The scheme, which kicked off today, is organised in conjunction with Yan Oi Tong and Professor Alfred Chan, Chairman of Elderly Commission presided over today's opening. The programme also aims to enhance elders' awareness on electrical safety in the home and offers free electricity safety check ups and green tips on smart ways to use electricity.

Speaking at the launch ceremony, Mr. Paul Poon, Chief Operating Officer of CLP Power said, "As a responsible company that cares for our community, CLP Power encourages its staff to contribute their professional knowledge and technical skills to help those in need. We are very proud of their contribution to ensuring a safe living environment for the elderly."

Mr. Poon said that the volunteers had identified five common electrical hazards in elderly people's homes. As well as worn out wiring and improper installations, other hazards included improper use of electrical sockets and appliances (see table 1).

Yan Oi Tong echoed these concerns. As part of its long-term work to assist Hong Kong's senior citizens, the organisation emphasises the need for proper, up-to-date electrical installations. They welcomed the work of the CLP volunteers, who were providing a valuable service to underprivileged elderly citizens. Tips on green electricity use will also help them to save money on their electricity bills.

These green tips being provided by CLP volunteers and their children include using Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs) where possible, and using a combination of fans and air conditioning to cool down homes rather than keeping the air conditioning switched on constantly. The use of CFLs alone can help reduce electricity bills by as much as 80 per cent (see table 2).

The word "CHEER" in the programme's name stands for **C**aring visits, **H**ome rewiring, **E**nergy saving talks, **E**co-tours and **R**educing carbon emissions. These services will be provided to underprivileged elderly people in Tuen Mun, Yuen Long and Tin Shui Wai districts. The programme is a new addition to CLP's existing initiatives to provide rewiring services to the elderly.

CLP's volunteer team currently consists of over 800 volunteers. Together, they are aiming to spend more than 1,500 hours providing services to over 1,000 elderly people this year.

Table 1

Key hazards caused by inappropriate use of electricity by elderly people	Potential risk
1. Worn-out wires and improper installations	Power leakage Fire Risk to life
2. Overloading of electrical sockets	Power leakage Fire
3. Lack of protection from Residual Circuit Device (RCD)	Power leakage Fire Risk to life
4. Inadequate lighting in the home, dimly-lit living environment	Tripping / falling
5. Improper use of electrical appliances, e.g. electrical fans/heaters/blankets	Power leakage Fire

Table 2

Smart tips for saving energy
1. Switch to Compact Fluorescent Lamp (CFLs), which can deliver electricity savings of 70-80%
2. Switch off electrical appliances when not in use, instead of leaving them in 'stand-by' mode. A typical electrical appliance consumes 0.5 to 10W* in 'stand-by' mode
3. Make greater use of electric fans and less use of air conditioners if possible: air conditioners account for up to 50% of total domestic power consumption during summer*. Fans consume about a tenth of the electricity used by air conditioners. When the air conditioner is on, keep windows and doors shut to stop cool air escaping. Drawing curtains helps to keep sunlight out

* Information from *The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD)*



Mr. Paul Poon Wai-Yin (third from left), Chief Operating Officer of CLP Power Hong Kong Limited; Professor Alfred Chan Cheung-Ming (second from left), Chairman of Elderly Commission; Ms. Cecilla Li Yuen-Wah (second from right), Assistant Director of Social Welfare Department (Elderly); Mr. Eddie Cheung Kwok-Choi (first from right), District Officer (Tuen Mun) of Home Affairs Department; Mr. Leung Kin-Man (first from left), Chairman of Tuen Mun District Council; together with Miss Clarea Au Suet Ming (third from right), Vice Chairperson of Yan Oi Tong, officiated CLP's "CHEER for the Senior Buddies" Volunteer Programme. The programme aims to enhance elders' awareness on electrical safety in the home and green tips on smart ways to use electricity, so as to help save the earth.



A total of 100 Yan Oi Tong elders, joined hands with over 100 CLP volunteers took part in the "CHEER for the Senior Buddies" Volunteer Programme Kick-off Ceremony.



Mr. Paul Poon Wai-Yin (middle right), Chief Operating Officer and Mr. Chow Lap Man (middle left), Marketing and Customer Services Director of CLP Power Hong Kong Limited, encouraged CLP colleagues to bring along their children to be volunteers at the "CHEER for the Senior Buddies" Programme, to share green tips on smart ways to use electricity.



CLP volunteers helped Chan So Man, a 93-year-old lady who lives on her own in Yuen Long, to conduct electricity safety check up and replace worn-out wires in her home, as well as sharing green tips on smart ways to use electricity.

About CLP Power Hong Kong Limited

CLP Power Hong Kong Limited (“**CLP Power**”) is the Hong Kong utility subsidiary wholly owned by CLP Holdings Limited, a company listed on the Hong Kong Stock Exchange and one of the largest investor-owned power businesses in Asia. CLP Power operates a vertically integrated electricity supply business in Hong Kong, and provides a highly reliable supply of electricity and excellent customer services to 5.7 million people in its supply area.

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