



PRESS

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MNRE X-Ray Plastic Factories in Nationwide to Prevent Fire for the Environmental impact and Public Health

Mr. Athapol Charoenshunsra, Director General of Pollution Control Department (PCD) revealed that in the past, there were fire incidents, most of which happened in plastic product and pellet factories and plastic recycling plants, such as: Mingty Chemical Co., Ltd. fire disaster in King Kaew, Samut Prakarn; Emstrade Co., Ltd. fire in Sai Mai, Bangkok; and the latest fire in recycling plant of Plus Prosper Co., Ltd. in Rayong. From data record of PCD, there were 24 fire incidents a plastic product factories in the period from 2017 to 2021, 10 fire incidents occurred in 2021. In most cases, fire spread rapidly and was very difficult to control and causing damage to the environment and affecting public health of the surrounding communities of Plastic and initial substance.caused good fuel, inflammable, high heating and difficult to control and firefighting. The main causes of fires are:

1. Deterioration and breakdown of machines which are old and inadequate maintainance then become overheated or spark. This includes electrical short-circuit.
2. Plastics and chemical substrates such as styrene, pentane, natural gases, fuel, and plastics (such as PP, PE, HDPE, PPE, PVC, ABS, and PS) are flammable and can catch fire in a very rapid chain reaction.
3. The manufacturing processes such as melting and molding which has risk of fire during operation.
4. The raw materials and products are stored in the factory area, increasing the risk and severity of fire incident.
5. Lack of firefighting equipment and training for factory staffs and organization.
6. From 2017 to 2020, there have been many new factories which led to large amount of plastic scraps import from overseas being kept in the factories. PCD inspected all 729 factories that presented risks or effects to the environment or health of surrounding communities, over 200 of which were plastic scrap recycling plants with fair to excellent pollution management depending on the size and type of plastic used.

Mr. Athapol said that the Regional Environmental Offices 1 – 16 will be responsible for another countrywide “plastic factory x-ray” in order to have strict enforcement of law and and prevent reoccurrences of fire and to prevent illegal import of plastic waste according to the policy of the Minister of MNRE (H.E. Varawut Silpa-archa). We also plan to prepare for discussions with relevant agencies to get lessons learned from those fire incidents at plastic factory.as well as set up guidelines and measures for inspection and supervision to prevent and reduce the severity of impacts on life and property and public health

Today, PCD has inspected SSRT Plastic Intergroup Co., Ltd.’s plastic factory in Praeksa, Samut Prakarn according to complaints about odors from melting plastics. Factory produces recycled plastic pellets from

scrap plastics, and has completed its improvement of air treatment system according to the order of Samut Prakarn Provincial Industrial Office. Currently, it is under inspection for the charge against it in administrative court asking for compensation of the incidents. PCD will coordinate with other authorities for legal action, Mr. Athapol said.

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