

Swire Properties Awarded Clean Air Charter Certification

太古地產獲頒《清新空氣約章》認證

Swire Properties was recently awarded Clean Air Charter Certification for its efforts to reduce its environmental footprint. The Bulletin spoke with the company's Head of Technical Services Cary Chan recently on the whys and hows of compliance.

太古地產最近獲頒《清新空氣約章》認證，以表揚他們積極支持環保。本刊訪問了該公司的技術統籌總監陳永康，了解他們履行約章承諾的原因和經過。

BULLETIN: Why did Swire Properties want to get Clean Air Charter Certification?

CARY CHAN: Environmental issues such as air pollution and global warming need to be tackled through the concerted effort of the whole society. Swire Properties would like to demonstrate our commitment on mitigating air pollution; reducing energy consumption and our support to this regional campaign. Through this third-party certification process, we can benchmark and share our knowledge and best practices with the industry.

B: What were some of the key challenges in achieving this? How did you overcome them?

CC: Swire Properties has been adopting the Building Environmental Assessment Method (BEAM) since 1998 for the design, construction, operation and demolition of its buildings. Since the Clean Air Charter commitments incorporate similar elements of BEAM, Swire Properties therefore is well-prepared for this certification.

B: Some companies say compliance is not cheap; what is your response to such statements?

CC: Combating air pollution and global warming is a long-term battle, we do not base our decisions on short-term cost benefit analysis. Our business must get ready and be competitive in a "low-emission" economy where fuel prices and related social cost will be much higher. There will be more stringent regulations that would put companies out of business if they are not ready to adapt to those changes.

Swire Properties, instead of only complying with the existing regulations, is looking ahead into the global trend and changes in other countries. We aim at preparing ourselves better for these changes and the social cost impact for a long term.

B: What advice would you give to companies considering going through the certification process?

CC: My advice is that companies should not take the certification as their goal of protecting the environment by satisfying the requirements of the certification only. They should have a thorough understanding of how their business is affecting the environment, and develop their strategies in minimising its environmental impact.

To achieve this, data collection and analysis are important to give companies a better understanding of their mode of operation and its environmental impacts. Another important point is to get the buy-in from the budget holders who will be making decisions on allocating investment for environmental improvement works.

B: How does Hong Kong measure up in terms of green building practices compared to other cities?

CC: Some green building practices cannot be applied to all cities because of differences in climate and other local conditions. However, according to our benchmarking exercise made with companies in Singapore, U.K., U.S. and Hong Kong, the practices being adopted in building design and operations in Hong Kong are comparable with the international standards. ❀

問: 為何太古地產想獲得《清新空氣約章》的審核認證?

答: 空氣污染及全球暖化等環保議題，必須整個社會合力處理。太古地產希望展示我們對減少空氣污染和能源消耗的決心，以及對這個地區活動的支持。通過這個第三者認證過程，我們可以奠定基準，與業界分享我們的環保知識和最佳實務經驗。

問: 在認證過程中，最大的挑戰是甚麼？你們如何克服這些困難？

答: 太古地產自1998年起採納建築環境評估法 (BEAM)，以設計、興建、運作及拆除其建築樓宇。由於《清新空氣約章》的承諾包含了與BEAM類似的元素，所以太古地產對於有關認證早已準備充足。

問: 有些企業表示，履行約章承諾成本不菲，你有何看法？

答: 減緩空氣污染及全球暖化是一場長期戰爭，我們不會根據短期的成本效益分析作出決定。在這個「低排放」經濟下，燃油價格及相關社會成本定會大幅提高，我們必須做好準備，維持競爭力。當局會引入愈來愈多嚴格規例，如果企業未能適應這些轉變，他們只會被迫倒閉。

太古地產除了遵守現有規例，也留意全球趨勢及其他國家的轉變，希望為這些變化和社會成本的長遠影響做好準備，未雨綢繆。

問: 與其他城市相比，香港在環保建築的實務方面達到甚麼水平？

答: 由於世界各地的氣候和環境並不相同，部分環保建築的實務不能應用於所有城市。然而，根據我們與新加坡、英國、美國及香港企業進行的基準測試，香港在建築設計及運作方面所採用的實務守則，可以媲美國際標準。

問: 對於其他正考慮參與認證過程的企業，你有何意見？

答: 我認為企業不應以獲取認證為保護環境的目標，只求達到認證要求。他們應深入了解公司業務對環境造成了甚麼影響，制訂策略把有關影響減至最少。要達到以上目的，數據搜集及分析非常重要，企業可藉此加深了解他們的運作模式對環境造成的影響。另外也要爭取財政主管的支持，因為他們主宰著環保工程的投資決定。 ❀

For more information on the Clean Air Charter Certification scheme and case studies, please visit www.cleanair.hk 有關《清新空氣約章》認證計劃的詳情及個案研究，請瀏覽www.cleanair.hk

