

# All-night hawkers a nightmare say families

By Antoine So

SHAM Shui Po residents say all-night illegal hawkers' stands are ruining their sleep because of lax surveillance by the Urban Services Department.

A study last week by Sham Shui Po Community Service Centre found more than 50 hawkers on footpaths at night.

"Because the stores aren't covered, residents living above constantly suffer from the noise," the centre's spokesman Yim Chun-ming said.

The study was carried out in response to many complaints to the centre during the past few weeks.

Twenty of the 50 hawkers' stands were illegal, Yim said.

He said many of the kiosks operated until 2-3 am, and even ran until dawn.

District board member Wong Chung-kei said the problem had become worse in recent weeks because the Urban Services Department had not exercised sufficient control.

"The problem has existed for long time in Sham Shui Po, but the department has said it lacked resources to tackle it," Wong said.

The department's district-based general duties teams are responsible for arresting illegal hawkers.

Meanwhile, the regional council has also increased maximum penalties for illegal hawking and making illegal extensions to shops to a \$5,000 fine and three months in jail for first convictions.

Subsequent convictions will be subject to a maximum \$10,000 fine and six months in jail.