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## Back to Blue

### ELCHK Lutheran Secondary School

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Hong Kong is one of the most densely populated areas in the world. Its population has increased steadily over the past decade, reaching about 6.92 million in 2007, with an overall density of some 6,250 people per square kilometer. In such a limited area, the large number of diesel vehicles leads to a dangerous level of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide and nitrogen dioxide. Declining regional air quality means visibility in Hong Kong has decreased, and instances of reduced visibility reached a record high in 2004.

Motor vehicles, especially diesel vehicles, are the main causes of high concentrations of respirable suspended particles and nitrogen oxides at street level in Hong Kong. The greenhouse gases emissions of air conditioners and the factories is another main reason causing air pollution. Water waste is another environmental problem we cannot neglect. Many restaurants use lots of water but they didn't check and service their water pipes regularly. As a result, water resources are being wasted unknowingly.

As technology advances, huge TV screens can be seen almost everywhere, large and powerful speakers are placed outside DVD shops to attract customers. But at the same time, these hi-tech products are one of the causes of noise pollution in Hong Kong. However, the most annoying noise comes from construction sites. During construction works, drills generate noise non-stop, while noisy generators provide electricity for pile drivers. Like the drills, they cause serious noise pollution.

But in fact, we can help change things by small changes in our habits and lifestyle. For example, we can keep our air-conditioners at 25.5 Celsius. When drivers park their cars on the side of the road, they could switch off their engines to cut down the release of air pollutants by the cars. Car owners can choose environmentally-friendly diesel oil instead of petrol. We can also use public transport and mass transport system, like bus, train, ferry and MTR.

Faced with worsening global warming and other environmental problems, the government has launched the Action Blue Sky Campaign, but are people in Hong Kong – and the world – willing to work to protect our planet?

In the near future, we will see the answer.