

New environment law effective today – Penalties vary between KD 100 to 1 million to death

KUWAIT: Despite including many controversial clauses, a new environment protection law takes effect today with very strict penalties for violators. The law that was passed by the National Assembly in the previous parliamentary term and finally published in the official gazette Al-Kuwait Al-Youm states establishing a new environmental police division to follow up and track activities hazardous to the environment. According to the new law, penalties include a KD 100 fine for smoking in closed and semi-closed public areas, fining flower pickers KD 250 and KD 500 for littering. It also punishes those causing the death of marine and land fauna by KD 500.

In addition, the law includes the most severe punishment for those importing or storing nuclear substances with a KD 1 million fine or the death penalty. EPA deputy director for technical affairs Mohammed Al-Enezi said that the law would make EPA act more or less like the Audit Bureau as it would issue annual reports on the role of each ministry in putting this law into practice.

Enezi added that EPA had contacted all government bodies briefing them on the law's articles and the duties to be played by each of them. "By powers of this law, EPA will be entitled to refer any government body to investigation if negligence or leniency in enforcing the law is detected. Violators will be severely punished as well," he stressed, pointing out that the law also punishes those causing noise pollution and gigantic vessels polluting seawaters. — Al-Rai

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This article was published on 11/10/2014