

Clean toilets: Cooperation needed from all

I REFER to the recent concerns over public toilets expressed by members of the public.

To maintain clean public toilets, the cooperation of both the users and the public-toilet operator or building management is needed.

Besides providing good infrastructure, it is key for public-toilet operators or building management to have a good cleaning and maintenance regime. Users, on the other hand, need to act responsibly, with due care and consideration for the next user. Public toilets will not be clean if there is a lapse in any one of these aspects.

Under the law, public toilet operators or building management are required to provide adequate amenities, such as hand soap and toilet paper. Operators or the management may be fined up to \$1,000 in the first instance if these amenities are not provided. In addition, they also have to ensure that their toilets are clean and in good working condition at all times. Failure to do so may result in the operator or management being sent to court where a fine of up to \$2,000 may be imposed.

Last year, enforcement action was taken against 80 such operators. This year, so far, we have taken action against 46. NEA will not hesitate to take stern action

against operators who fail in their duty to keep their public toilets clean or provide basic amenities. That being said, users must not abuse the facilities like pilfering toilet paper or damaging fixtures.

As for adequate toilet cubicles for users, there is a Code of Practice on Environmental Health that specifies the minimum requirements for male and female public toilets. Developers and operators are, however, strongly advised to provide toilets that meet their customers' needs as the traffic flow and number of users varies from premise to premise.

To raise public awareness of the need for clean public toilets and user responsibility, NEA, has, over the years, initiated many public education programmes such as "My coffeeshop shines" and "My mall shines". NEA will continue to work with the community, grassroots organisations and private bodies, such as the Restroom Association of Singapore (RAS), to create platforms to spread this important message.

Members of the public can call our hotline at 1800-CALL NEA (1800-2255632) to alert us of dirty toilets for our follow-up action.

We thank readers for the feedback.

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