

# Market upgrading: NEA works closely with stakeholders

We refer to the letters "Fans, hoods hold key to better airflow at markets" (March 21) by Mr Sim See Hwee and "Revamped hawker centre worse than before" (March 21) by Miss Pauline Margaret Chung.

The Hawker Centres Upgrading Programme, which started in 2001, helps to maintain our markets/hawker centres in good physical condition and provide a conducive marketing and dining experience for customers.

Through upgrading of the physical infrastructure, we have improved significantly the level of cleanliness, hygiene standards and ventilation in many hawker centres.

The National Environment Agency (NEA) also makes it a point to improve toilet facilities during the upgrading. In fact, a public survey done in 2005 showed that an overwhelming majority of the respondents felt strongly that upgraded centres were cleaner (92 per cent), drier (88 per cent) and more spacious (82 per cent).

The programme also allows us



PHOTOS: NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

**A hawker centre at Block 6, Jalan Bukit Merah, before (left) and after its upgrading. A 2005 survey showed that most respondents felt upgraded hawker centres were cleaner, drier and more spacious.**

to increase stall sizes whenever possible, thus making it easier for stallholders to maintain good hygiene conditions.

Each upgrading is carried out with the prudent use of public funds in mind, to ensure that practical improvements are made to existing centres.

This is done in close consultation with the various stakeholders, such as the grassroots, hawker associations and town council representatives.

The design and upgrading of hawker centres are undertaken by teams of professional building consultants, architects and engineers,

who study the conditions of each centre carefully before putting forward appropriate proposals to meet the upgrading objectives. This will also ensure a good balance between aesthetics and functionality.

We would like to assure readers that the NEA will continue to work in close consultation with our stakeholders to upgrade hawker centres and improve the vibrancy, hygiene standards and dining experience at these centres.

We thank the writers for their feedback and suggestions:

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