

# Too many Hong Kong malls keep toilets locked

ON your next shopping trip to Hong Kong, don't forget to use the loo before you leave your hotel room.

The South China Morning Post (SCMP) has reported that many malls in the city either have insufficient toilets or they are kept locked and are accessible only to staff.

SCMP visited 12 shopping centres in Mong Kok and found that the toilets were locked in more than half of them, including Sin Tat Plaza, Sino Centre and the Hollywood shopping centre.

The toilets were locked at half the shopping centres visited in Causeway Bay,

including Laforet and the Ginza Shopping Arcade.

At Laforet, all the women's toilets were locked.

When contacted, the Chinese Estates Group, which manages the mall, said the toilets were locked as a matter of public security.

It added that patrons could use them by getting keys from either the tenants or building management staff.

But not all loos are available to the public.

At the Argyle Centre in Mong Kok, patrons were only allowed to use the toilets on the

first floor.

When SCMP visited the mall, 17 women were queuing up for a bathroom.

## 20-minute wait

Some women complained they had waited for more than 20 minutes.

The mall's management said toilets on the second and third storeys were reserved for tenants to avoid delays and loss of work time for sales staff.

The guideline on the number of toilets in shops and department stores is determined

by the Buildings Department.

This number is assessed based on the number of people expected to use a building, depending on the useable floor area of a commercial building.

The Buildings Department is now working on a proposal for a legislative amendment to increase the ratio of toilets to women visitors in offices, shopping arcades, cinemas and other places of public entertainment.

Unfortunately, whether these toilets should be kept unlocked or not is not being discussed in the proposal.