

**DEDICATED:**  
Madam Tan Cheo Huang has been caring for this toilet in Hougang for over 20 years.

TNP PICTURE: GAVIN FOO

## PASSING THE TEST

The grading system starts at three stars and goes up to a maximum of five stars.

Five-star toilets are known as "premium restrooms" and fulfil these criteria:

- The facilities must be in working condition
- Basic amenities like hand soap and toilet paper have to be provided
- There must be no odour or litter
- Floor and facilities must be reasonably dry
- There must be customer satisfaction
- Facilities have to be user-friendly, eco-friendly and there have to be "special delights".



# HEY, GOOD LOO KING

## Four toilets in markets get five-star rating from Restroom Association (Singapore)

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**A** FIVE-STAR toilet in a market? Yes, there are four in Singapore, certified by the Restroom Association (Singapore) or RAS.

The first toilet to receive this rating, in May, is in the market and food centre at Block 209, Hougang Street 21.

But it's not the sort you would expect to find in the heartlands.

When The New Paper visited it recently, it was brightly lit and mostly dry. All the taps, soap dispensers and flushes were in good working order.

There were no stains on the urinals and hardly any smell.

There are ledges for users to place their belongings.

### Armrests

In the male squat toilet, there are armrests for users.

There's also a full-length mirror as well as plastic flowers above the wash basin mirrors.

The toilet is similar to the ones at Changi Airport and the Singapore Zoo in that it is not completely enclosed.

Inside the toilet, one can hear the sound of hawkers selling food and birds chirping in the trees nearby.

A 70-year-old retiree, who wanted to be

known only as Mr Lee, said: "I think the toilet is exceptionally clean."

"Every time I come in, I feel like I'm in a shopping mall, and not in a market."

To a large extent, the credit should go to Madam Tan Cheo Huang, 79, who has been helping to maintain the toilet for more than 20 years.

She charges 10 cents per entry. A packet of tissue paper, or some toilet paper, costs an extra 20 cents.

She was all smiles and eager to chat with people who visited the toilet. She called some of them her "regular customers".

Madam Tan said she cleans the toilet at least twice a day and whenever she thinks it is necessary.

She added in Mandarin: "Where can you find a toilet of this standard in a market? Although I'm retired, I'm happy to contribute to society by manning the toilet."

The toilet's official caretaker is Madam Tan's daughter, Madam Susanti Wu, 43.

But Madam Wu told The New Paper that her mother has been taking care of the toilet ever since the market opened in the 1980s.

The toilet is open from 5am to 11pm, seven days a week. On a typical day, Madam Wu looks after it from 5am to 11am.

Madam Tan takes over until 5pm, after which it will be Madam Wu, or her elder-

## Flush with success

This year's L00 (Let's Observe Ourselves) award winners include:

### Organisation Category (Private sector)

- Dragages
- Koufu
- Singapore Zoo - Rainforest Kidzworld

### (Public sector)

- Aljunied Town Council
- Ang Mo Kio-Yio Chu Kang Town Council

### (Educational institutions)

- Holy Innocents' Primary School
- Northland Primary School
- Zhenghua Primary School

### Cleaning Industry Category (Contractor)

- CSP Maintenance, cleaning contractor for Opera Estate Primary School

### (Restroom cleaner)

- Madam Mak Lai Kew from Greenridge Primary School

sister, till closing time.

Madam Wu said: "Sometimes, I feel that the work can be too taxing for her. But then again, it is a good way for her to keep active."

If mother or daughter see someone throwing rubbish on the toilet floor instead of in a bin, they will tell the person off.

Madam Wu said: "It is our responsibility to do so."

The toilet at Block 209 was the first in a market and food centre to receive a five-star grading.

It is also a "Happy Toilet", a form of recognition given by RAS based on five criteria - design, cleanliness, mainte-

nance, effectiveness and customer satisfaction.

The toilet at Block 209 is under Aljunied Town Council. Last Wednesday, the town council received one of 15 new awards launched by RAS. (See report above.)

The L00 awards - short for Let's Observe Ourselves - were given out to recognise organisations, cleaning industries and individuals who have helped Singapore achieve a world-recognised standard of toilet cleanliness.

According to an RAS spokesman, the three other five-star market and food centre toilets are located at:

- Block 160/162 Ang Mo Kio Avenue 4
- Block 137 Tampines Street 11
- Block 630 Bedok Reservoir Road