

Clean up the loo – with paper towels



Gloria Chandy
Editor

Toilet paper trails in restrooms all over the country give some indication of how blasé many people are about hygiene outside of their own homes.

I generally dislike using public toilets but, of course, I have no choice at times. I can never be sure of what state I might find them in.

A swank shopping mall might harbour a dreadful loo. However, that is not because the toilet cleaners aren't doing their jobs.

Many of them work assiduously at this unenviable task, but I suspect they have difficulty coping with the mess people make.

The strips of toilet paper stuck to usually wet floors are an eyesore. There are other things that make me feel squeamish – like strands of hair all over a washbasin and bits of food from a recent gargling session.

However, I have a particular distaste for those squelchy floors carpeted with toilet tissue.

This is a result, you might have observed, of people dragging strips of it out of the loo so they will have something to dry their hands with.

I usually do this myself

because nine out of 10 women's restrooms here do not have paper towel dispensers. In their place are hand dryers which often work inefficiently or do not work at all.

Perhaps mall managers are being penny wise and pound foolish. This mess could easily be averted if paper towel dispensers were placed immediately above large waste bins to collect the used towels.

Hand dryers, touted as more hygienic and eco-friendly, do not seem to serve their purpose. I don't think restrooms are more sanitary because they exist.

Disposable towels won't be wasteful if they are made from environmentally friendly recycled paper.

Very few public loos have these and in those that do, the mess is minimal and the floors dry. The toilets are, by consequence, cleaner and more hygienic.

People will take care to behave hygienically if they are in an environment that is clean and neat.

It is hard to feel the same motivation in a dirty toilet.

If paper towels were more readily available, we might just have cleaner loos.

I'll bet money would be saved too as a lot less toilet paper would go to waste on toilet floors!

gloria@sph.com.sg