



DESMOND FOO



HE NOSE HIS TOILETS:

You certainly won't find Mr Jack Sim (left), president of the Restroom Association of Singapore doing this in a loo that bears a five-star rating (above) awarded by the association.

What's with the doors?

[From previous page]

Many sinks and toilet bowls are too high for young children and there are not enough grab handles in the loo cubicles for old folks.

He reserves his strongest feelings for toilet doors.

"A toilet should never have a door. You know how many germs there are on the door knob? Put in an automatic door or just have walls."

His idea of a well-designed loo is one with many clothes hooks or shelves in the cubicles, more space around the basin so that water will not splash out, and a properly fitted hand dryer which does not switch on each time someone walks past it.

Under the new programme, each loo will be assessed by qualified, independent representatives of the association and plaques given on a yearly basis. The loo brigade will only review toilets which are involved in the programme.

And, yes, the public gets a say too. The scheme calls for people to report if they find dirty toilets.

He says: "Should there be a continuous deterioration of the standard of the toilet at any point of time before the one-year period is up, the award will be withdrawn."

He believes that having a clean toilet will go a long way in keeping customers coming back. "A clean toilet is a competitive business tool, which will attract more customers to shopping malls, parks, cinemas

and other public places, thereby bringing great profitability."

And a clean toilet encourages users to keep it clean, whereas people don't bother to do so with a dirty one. So, the loo deteriorates very quickly.

It would seem that now, you really can decide where to take your, uh, business.



They're OK too

ANOTHER campaign to keep toilets clean is the Singapore's OK programme, run by the National Environment Agency (NEA).

Launched on May 6, while Singapore was thick in the throes of the severe acute respiratory syndrome (Sars), the campaign aims at keeping cleanliness standards at an all-time high in the 29,000 public toilets across the island.

Operators of public toilets will get a big yellow label saying "Singapore's OK" if they meet certain standards.

These are: Ensuring all the sanitary fittings work well;

providing soap, toilet paper and either hand-dryers or paper towels; and employing a cleaner during peak hours.

The labels will be pasted on the premises.

The agency will conduct spot checks to make sure the high standards are being maintained and withdraw the labels if public complaints over the cleanliness standards are valid.

The scheme is voluntary, but the NEA is expecting a strong response from operators who want to be seen to be playing their part in the war against Sars.