

MEDIA RELEASE

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MORE THAN 1,200 ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS TAKEN FOR PUBLIC TOILET CLEANLINESS LAPSES IN 2024

Singapore, 21 November 2024 – Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and the Environment, Mr Baey Yam Keng, launched the Cleaner Public Toilets Campaign 2024 today at Senja Hawker Centre¹. This year’s campaign tagline, “Everyone wins when our toilets are clean”², marks a progression from last year’s focus on individual awareness towards a call for collective action. This aligns with the focus of the Year of Public Hygiene, so designated by the Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment, which places a strong emphasis on shared responsibility to uphold high standards of public hygiene and cleanliness in Singapore.

2 Co-organised by the National Environment Agency (NEA) and the Public Hygiene Council (PHC), the campaign continues to see strong support from partners, including the Restroom Association (Singapore) (RAS), Singapore Food Agency (SFA), and Singapore Kindness Movement (SKM), to promote the responsible use of public toilets.³ The campaign will also reach out to various segments of the community through partnerships with local stakeholders, such as Grassroots Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations, Social Service Agencies, and schools, to publicise campaign messages and educate them about conscientious public toilet use.

Stepped up enforcement on public toilet cleanliness by NEA and SFA

3 Since the beginning of 2024, NEA and SFA have stepped up enforcement on public toilet cleanliness and ensured that operators take responsibility and properly maintain their toilets. From 1 January to 15 November 2024, 1,253 enforcement actions were taken against premises owners, across all premises types including transport nodes and retail food establishments. This is three times more than the 367 enforcement actions taken in the same period last year. SFA also suspended 10 coffeeshops for toilet-related (and other food safety) offences under the Points Demerit System, compared to suspension of 1 coffeeshop each in 2022 and 2023.

4 For failure to provide basic amenities (such as soap or toilet paper) or to keep toilets clean, owners or operators of public toilets can be given a fine with composition sum of up to \$500. Under the Environmental Public Health Act 1987, for lapses such as insufficient basic amenities and unclean toilets, the maximum fine on first conviction is between \$1,000 and \$5,000, depending on the nature of the lapse.

Ground up initiatives by PHC

5 PHC, a supporter of the campaign since 2021, joins NEA as co-organiser of the campaign this year, enabling PHC’s extensive on-ground engagement initiatives and network of

¹ Key features of Senja Hawker Centre toilets can be found in [Annex A](#)

² Key campaign visuals can be found in [Annex B](#)

³ Partner quotes and contact can be found in [Annex C](#)

partners/stakeholders to be leveraged for collective efforts to raise awareness, drive action and behavioural change, and promote advocacy for cleaner public toilets. This year, PHC expanded to transport nodes its Neighbourhood Toilets Community Group (NTCG) programme⁴ – a collaboration between operators, community volunteers and users, to reinforce the message of collective responsibility in keeping public toilets clean. PHC also successfully piloted a toilet cleanliness module in its Buddy Clean Workshop⁵, to help primary school students understand the importance of keeping toilets clean.

6 “The Public Hygiene Council has played a key role in co-organising the Cleaner Public Toilets campaign with the National Environment Agency this year. All of us – including operators, cleaners and users – have an important role to play in improving public toilet cleanliness. To drive our collective efforts, PHC has this year introduced a toilet cleanliness module into our Buddy Clean Workshop initiative, to share knowledge with primary school students and teach them practical skills on how to keep toilets clean. PHC has also expanded to transport nodes our Neighbourhood Toilets Community Group programme, which constitutes a critical partnership between premises operators and community volunteers, to reinforce the importance of collective responsibility in keeping our public toilets clean,” said Mr Andrew Khng, Chairman of PHC.

Keeping public toilets clean calls for social responsibility

7 Maintaining the cleanliness of our public spaces, including public toilets, is a collective responsibility that benefits everyone. All users should adopt a conscientious attitude by practising the four key actions: keep toilet seats **clean**, **flush** toilets fully, keep the floor **dry**, and **bin** litter properly. These simple steps create a positive cycle where each person's efforts contribute to a cleaner toilet for the next user. While the campaign primarily addresses user behaviour, it complements ongoing efforts relating to toilet design, enforcement, and cleaning practices. When we all play our part, we elevate the standards of our public spaces, ensuring that everyone enjoys the comfort of clean toilets. Remember, everyone wins when our toilets are clean.

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⁴ More information on NTCG can be found in [Annex D](#)

⁵ More information on the Buddy Clean Workshop can be found in [Annex E](#)



MEDIA FACTSHEET

NEIGHBOURHOOD TOILETS COMMUNITY GROUP (NTCG)

Concept of the Neighbourhood Toilets Community Group (NTCG)

1 The Neighbourhood Toilets Community Group (NTCG) is an initiative by the Public Hygiene Council (PHC) that aims to drive collective responsibility and ownership to improve public toilet cleanliness.

2 NTCG forges partnerships between coffeeshop operators and the local community, with the objective of jointly caring for public toilets via clearly defined roles and responsibilities.

3 Under the NTCG partnership, operators will step up their cleaning regime to provide clean toilet facilities for users, while community volunteers will help to monitor cleanliness of the toilets as well as report to the operators when toilet amenities – such as flushing systems, dryers or soap dispensers – are not in good working condition. Volunteers will also engage users to remind them to keep the toilets clean.

Pilot Trial for NTCG

4 PHC introduced the first NTCG pilot trial in April 2022, in partnership with Yuhua Citizens' Consultative Committee (CCC), Jurong-Clementi Town Council, and grassroots organisations.

5 The pilot trial was implemented over a span of three months from May to July 2022, at the following **three coffeeshops**:

- PDSS 318 Food Cafeteria at Block 318 Jurong East Street 31
- MEETUP @ 494 at Block 494 Jurong West Street 41
- Get Together at Block 429 Jurong West Avenue

6 A survey was conducted with patrons of the three coffeeshops after the pilot trial. The survey results showed that many people recognised that toilet cleanliness is important, and agreed that it is the collective responsibility of coffeeshop operators and users to keep public toilets clean. The majority of respondents also indicated that toilets that are kept clean and dry benefit user experience the most. Many commented that the responsible use of public toilets is as important as increased cleaning frequency of the toilets.

7 NTCG volunteers from Yuhua Eco Sustainability Group (Yuhua ESG) received the Restroom Association (Singapore)'s LOO (Let's Observe Ourselves) Awards (Organisations Category) in 2022, for their contribution and good practices towards restroom cleanliness.

Onboarding New Partners

8 **Four more Broadway coffeeshops** came onboard the NTCG programme in 2023, in partnership with community volunteers from the Lions Club of Singapore Mandarin (LCSM), which is a member of PHC's R.I.S.E Champions Network.

9 PHC plans to leverage the coffeeshop merchant associations and PHC's R.I.S.E Champions Network to onboard more coffeeshops and volunteers into the programme.

10 To date, **seven coffeeshops have successfully completed** PHC's NTCG programme.

11 PHC has also been partnering **SBS Transit** since September 2024, to pilot the NTCG initiative at the following **transport nodes**:

- 2 bus interchanges
 - Serangoon
 - Tampines

- 3 MRT stations
 - Downtown Line – Macpherson
 - Downtown Line – Geylang Bahru
 - North East Line – Hougang

Expansion of NTCG Programme

12 In 2025, PHC plans to expand this meaningful initiative and roll out the NTCG programme to more bus interchanges and MRT stations, in partnership with transport operators, coffeeshops operators, and community volunteers.

13 Public toilet cleanliness is our collective responsibility. Everyone – including operators, the community, and the authorities – has a role to play in keeping our public toilets clean.

14 For more information on PHC's initiatives, please visit the PHC website at: <https://www.publichygienecouncil.sg>

##End##



MEDIA FACTSHEET

BUDDY CLEAN WORKSHOP (BCW)

Keep Singapore Clean Movement (KSCM) in Schools

- 1 The **Keep Singapore Clean Movement (KSCM) in Schools** is a student-driven and school-supported effort where students take ownership of the cleanliness of their schools and the environment.
- 2 In line with KSCM in Schools, a capacity building workshop titled “Buddy Clean Workshop” was launched to inculcate positive social values and norms on cleanliness amongst students.
- 3 The programme leverages peer influence and feedback to shape the behaviour of students. It also helps to foster shared responsibility and ownership of common spaces through regular cohort-wide cleaning.
- 4 A KSCM educational resource kit is available online for students, parents and teachers. It incorporates cleanliness related information and educational materials collated from various sources.

Concept of the Buddy Clean Workshop (BCW)

- 5 The **Buddy Clean Workshop (BCW)** was introduced to primary schools in 2016, to provide a 3.5-hour capacity building workshop to equip teachers and students with the knowledge and skills to carry out routine cleaning activities independently.
- 6 In 2020, the Public Hygiene Council (PHC) additionally introduced educating students on the importance of **keeping the school environment and public spaces clean**, as well as training them in communications and listening skills, teamwork, and practical training on how to keep public spaces clean. At the end of each workshop, students would discuss and reflect on their learnings, to help them internalise what they had learnt.
- 7 BCW comprises three components and learning outcomes:
 - a) Introduction:
 - (i) Students are introduced to the consequences of littering and the need to keep their school clean.
 - (ii) Students undergo discussion on the role of cleaners, to develop empathy and respect for them.
 - b) Capacity Building:
 - (i) Students undergo activities to learn how to communicate effectively, listen actively, and work together as a team to keep the school clean.
 - (ii) Students learn various cleaning skills (e.g. how to sweep, mop) to conduct hands-on cleaning activities in school.

c) Discussion and Reflection:

- (i) Students discuss their group's performance, and reflect on what they have learnt and areas for improvement.

8 In alignment with the Ministry of Education (MOE)'s Character and Citizenship Education (CCE) framework, BCW is an environmental based Values-In-Action programme targeting Primary 3 and 4 school students.

9 Since 2020, **more than 13,000 students from 54 primary schools** have participated in PHC's BCW.

10 Findings from BCW runs revealed a 40% reduction in average litter count at participating schools. The majority of students reported that engaging in cleaning activities enhanced their appreciation for the work of cleaners.

Pilot Trial for New Toilet Component in BCW

11 In March 2024, PHC worked in partnership with Clementi Primary School and Kong Hwa School to pilot a **new toilet component in BCW**. Selected groups of around 80 Primary 3 and 4 school students were engaged in the cleaning of their school toilets.

12 Findings from the pilot trial showed that most of the students who participated in the new toilet cleaning component came away with a better understanding of the importance of toilet cleanliness. They shared that they would do their part to keep public toilets clean, and would encourage their peers to likewise practise good toilet etiquette.

Expansion of Refreshed BCW

13 In 2025, the new clean toilet component will be incorporated into BCW, with plans to **implement this at 15 primary schools**.

14 For more information on PHC's initiatives, please visit the PHC website at: <https://www.publichygienecouncil.sg>

##End##