

PhTimes

Keep Singapore Clean official newsletter

4Q 2020 - First Edition



Editor's Note



"On behalf of the Public Hygiene Council, I am pleased to bring you our inaugural quarterly e-newsletter **PH Times**. This is timely, as we approach our 10th year of leading the *Keep Singapore Clean Movement* in 2021. We have implemented programmes for all segments of Singapore society. They include PHC's annual "Keep Clean, Singapore!" campaign, our R.I.S.E. Champions Network, Sustainable Bright Spots in housing estates, Park & Beach Clean-Up with CleanPods, Schools Outreach and an Integrated Communications Programme. Each edition of **PH Times** features latest happenings, and various individuals and organisations who partner with PHC to keep our beloved city clean, green and safe. Enjoy the read!"

- Tony Tan, Executive Director

Inaugural top scoop

Keep Clean, Singapore! 2020 Virtual Launch



(L-R) Mr Tony Tan (Executive Director, PHC), Mr Lim Biow Chuan (Coordinating Chairman of PAP Town Councils), Mr Edward D'Silva (Chairman, PHC), Ms Grace Fu (Minister for Sustainability & the Environment), and Mr Tan Meng Dui (CEO, National Environment Agency).

Keep Clean, Singapore! is an annual ground-up initiative led by the Public Hygiene Council (PHC) to galvanize community efforts and shore up public support for a truly clean Singapore. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, this year's launch event was done online with a skit by popular getai artistes in Singapore. Miss Grace Fu, Minister for Sustainability and the Environment and Special Guests, Mr Lim Biow Chuan, Coordinating Chairman of PAP Town Councils, and Mr Tan Meng Dui, CEO of the National Environment Agency launched the event on Saturday, 19 September 2020.

PHC Chairman Mr Edward D'Silva also took the opportunity to dress up as a bumblebee to emphasise that a rich biodiversity and thriving environment for all can only be achieved in a clean and green environment.



A clean environment is only possible if everyone plays their part to clean up after ourselves. Watch the launch event on PHC's YouTube channel.

Updates



Getai artistes Lin Ruping, Sherraine Law, Wallace Ang and Wang Lei.

Keep Clean, Singapore! 2020 Launch *(continued)*

To further drive home the message that littering is not as harmless as it seems, the launch featured a skit performed by Wang Lei, Lin Ruping, Sherraine Law and Wallace Ang who spoke about the harmful effects of littering, and the need to return our trays after meals at the hawker centre.

The closing of the event marks the start of our KCS Dance Challenge until 31 October 2020. Read more details on the challenge in the section below.

Keep Clean, Singapore! 2020 Dance Challenge

To instil a sense of excitement and ownership for the KCS festivities, the KCS Dance Challenge was initiated this year to provide an opportunity for Singaporeans to take part in the contest. The aim is to foster a sense of ownership for the cleanliness of our environment.

Local musicians Jack & Rai were commissioned to record a jingle titled "Wash your hands, Bin your trash, Keep your trays". Contest participants were encouraged to download the jingle and record their own dance to the jingle. Top entries uploaded onto social media before 31 October 2020 with the hashtag #kcsdancechallenge would win attractive prizes!



Local musicians Jack & Rai demonstrating the KCS Dance Challenge on their social media channel.

Cleaners' Uniform Design Competition

PHC organised a design competition with students from Temasek Polytechnic to develop ideas for a future cleaners' uniform that can elevate the image of our F&B cleaners.

Four winning designs were showcased during the KCS launch event and the winners were presented with \$1000 prize vouchers for their outstanding entries in the competition. Mdm Ho and Andari, who appeared in our previous "A Cleaner's Voice" videos online were invited back to model the uniforms with fellow cleaners Shanker & Timothy Low.



Cleaners Andari, Shanker, Mdm Ho & Timothy Low donning the winning uniform designs.

Getting to know Singapore's cleaners



Mr Andari



Mdm Ho

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, we took a moment to spend time with Mr Andari and Mdm Ho who shared with us their experience working as cleaners.

Mr Andari has been a cleaner for the past 30 years. His daily work involves him sweeping and wiping down the common areas in the Bendemeer housing estate. Coincidentally, Mr Andari also happens to stay within the same estate where he works at. He often bumps into residents through the course of his work and many people will stop by to have a chat with him as friends. Mr Andari pointed out that people sometimes leave food scraps behind in the void deck attracting rats and pests. He hopes that residents will be more thoughtful and play their part for a clean environment by throwing their trash in the rubbish bin.

Madam Ho has been an estate cleaner for the past 4 years, after switching over from working in a food court in her previous job. Ever since people started working from home earlier this year, Madam Ho's workload has become heavier as more trash gets littered in the estate. Residents also tend to smoke by their windows and throw the cigarette butts directly out of the window. She hopes that people can be more considerate not only to their fellow residents, but to the added cleaning workload that this brings to cleaners like herself. Although Mr Andari and Madam Ho's work often gets tough and sweaty in our tropical climate, we are left with admiration for the hard work that both of them put in daily to keep our shared spaces spotlessly clean.



The 4 winning Cleaner's Uniform Design Competition entries.

Keeping Singapore clean

Engaging New Year's Eve crowd to Keep SG Clean

Earlier this year, we did our yearly litter-free outreach during the New Year's Eve Countdown at the peripheral areas around Marina Bay on 31st December 2019. With support of 120 volunteers from the Lions Club of Singapore (Mandarin) and 10 Litter-Free Ambassadors from NEA, we nudged event-goers to pick up after themselves and to bin their trash.

Volunteers stated that areas were significantly cleaner compared to previous years and people were keen to play their part to keep our environment litter free. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, subsequent mass outreach at events such as Chingay 2020 and National Day 2020 were put on hold. We hope to be back on track in 2021!



Volunteers from Lions Club of Singapore (Mandarin) posing for a group photo after the outreach activity.

Partnering with coffee shop operators for Clean Toilets & Premises with SG Clean

In February, PHC partnered with former Nee Soon South MP Lee Bee Wah to urge coffee shop operators in her constituency to enhance hygiene standards at their premises. These include regular cleaning and making sure that high touch points in the premises were regularly sanitised. This was done under the "Keep Viruses at Bay" initiative by PHC as an early response to the rapidly evolving COVID-19 situation at that time and to ensure basic standards of hygiene for common areas as Singapore stepped up on its efforts against the COVID-19 virus.



PHC Chairman Edward D'Silva with former MP for Nee Soon South Lee Bee Wah at February's media event in GHK Coffee Shop. (Image credit: The Straits Times)

As Singapore gradually emerged from the Circuit Breaker in late June and activities such as eating out began to resume, PHC took the opportunity to hold a 2nd media event focused on coffee shop cleanliness to reiterate the importance of maintaining high standards of cleanliness and hygiene.



(anticlockwise) PHC Chairman Edward D'Silva speaking during the virtual media event in July with former MP for Nee Soon South Lee Bee Wah, current MP Carrie Tan and major coffee shop operators to urge them to adopt greater cleanliness and hygiene standards under the SG Clean quality mark.

During July's coffee shop media event, PHC worked with newly elected Nee Soon South MP Carrie Tan to urge major coffee shop operators to get onboard with the national SG Clean movement and attain the basic SG Clean quality mark for good cleanliness. At that time, at least 400 out of 1,100 coffee shops island-wide had met the requirements and received the SG Clean quality mark. Major coffee shop operators such as Broadway, S-11 and GHK have stated their commitment to work towards attaining the certification for all their respective coffee shops.

PHC also recommended that coffee shop operators take advantage of government grants available such as the Toilet Improvement Programme which can help upgrade existing public facilities in coffee shops.



PHC Chairman Edward D'Silva joining Bukit Timah MP Sim Ann and residents for the Bin It Up, Bukit Timah heartland initiative.

Heartlands engagement - Bin It Up, Bukit Timah!

Bukit Timah Constituency launched their latest initiative "Bin It Up, Bukit Timah!" on Sunday, 27 September 2020. Led by Grassroots Adviser Sim Ann, residents from Bukit Timah's various residential zones grouped themselves in teams of five to clean-up their heartland estates in the cool morning air.

The event also marked the start of regular litter-picking activities in Bukit Timah, which will be held on every last Sunday of the month. Residents are reminded to bin their trash and keep their neighbourhood litter-free.

Our Dirty Litter Secrets - A Clean Environment begins with a Clean Home

Litter can attract pests such as rats, cockroaches and pigeons, which have the potential to pose serious health risks. If food scraps are left lying on the ground, they will rot, and germs and viruses will grow on them. These pathogens will be passed on to pests that come into the contact with litter. This is the main idea behind the “Dirty Litter Secrets” campaign, which highlighted the harmful public health hazards that litter brings when not discarded properly in a bin.

In support of SG Clean, PHC also launched the Family Litter Secrets campaign during the May school holidays. This was aimed at parents and children to adopt good hygiene habits both at home and outside. Keeping Singapore clean is an integral part of our lives. It requires a wide collective effort from all of us not to litter and we should advise others to do the same.



Campaign video for Dirty Litter Secrets



Campaign videos for Family Litter Secrets

Networking with Uniformed Groups

In the annual get-together with the nine School Uniformed Groups in February, PHC shared its new initiatives such as the Sustainable Bright Spot and R.I.S.E. Champions Network.

Chairman Edward D’Silva remarked that littering can have a harmful effect to the environment and is hazardous to our health. Taking reference from the current COVID-19 outbreak, dengue situation as well as the shortage of cleaners in the near future, he emphasised the need for Singaporeans to take responsibility and practise good hygiene habits such as returning trays and binning of trash.



PHC Chairman Edward D’Silva speaking with representatives from the nine School Uniformed Groups.



Resume Beach and Park Clean-ups

With Phase Two of reopening, daily activities are slowly coming back to normal. We encourage the public to resume their litter picking activation. Booking for Beach & Park clean-ups can be made online at nea.gov.sg.



CleanPods are Back

With the resumption of beach/park clean-ups, CleanPods have also resumed operations. The CleanPod is a community resource and made available for people to conveniently borrow litter-picking tools such as garden carts, tongs and pails for their clean-ups.

More details and the locations of CleanPods can be found at:
www.publichygienecouncil.sg/cleanpod



Community Clean-ups encouraged

Residents are also encouraged to head out and to do your part to keep your estates litter free. Contact your respective residents’ network in your area to find out more.

Note: Photos of Clean-ups were taken prior to Circuit Breaker in Singapore.

Inspiring anecdote

Every quarter, PHC highlights an inspiring account from one of PHC's various partners to share with fellow readers. Let's learn from their clean environment journey and be clean & green champions!

Sustainable Bright Spot

The Sustainable Bright Spot (SBS) programme encourages residents to embrace the culture of picking-up after themselves and to take ownership of the cleanliness of public spaces.

PHC has strengthened its outreach efforts to residents by working closely with community grassroot leaders. Through different engagement points, residents are reminded that it is important to always practise good personal hygiene.



MP Louis Ng at the launch of Sustainable Bright Spot at Yishun Greenwalk in September 2019.



Staff of Philip Morris Singapore in a beach clean-up as part of World Clean-Up Day.

R.I.S.E. (Reach, Inspire, Synergise, Empower) Champions Network

Started by PHC in 2019, R.I.S.E. is a coalition of schools, corporates, NGOs and non-profit companies who possess a collective will to commit towards a cleaner, more sustainable and hygienic Singapore. For this quarter, we share with you the experience by Philip Morris Singapore, a company part of our R.I.S.E. network on their experience taking part in World Clean-Up Day 2020.

"We did clean-ups at East Coast Park and Pasir Ris Park to coincide with World Clean-up Day on 19 Sep 2020.

The CleanPod at these 2 locations made our lives much easier and best of all, the sturdy garden cart allows for the transport of trash and equipment over varying terrain. Thumbs up to PHC for making our lives easier! We are absolutely delighted to be playing our part for a cleaner and more sustainable environment."

- Jeremy Rabani, External Affairs Manager
Philip Morris Singapore

This issue, we also share with you the experience of the Green & Clean Volunteers Group, who are also part of the R.I.S.E. Champions Network.

"The Green & Clean Volunteers Group was started initially as a social group by our group of friends to do something good for the environment and community during our spare time. We usually spend our weekends doing beach clean-ups or picking litter in the park while we relax in the park. It is important that even while we bond as a group with our friends, we should spare a thought for the environment and keep it clean and litter free. "

- San Lin Latt, Volunteer Leader
Green & Clean Volunteers Group



Green & Clean Volunteers Group helping in a community clean-up in 2019.

Littering is the most critical public health challenge

PHC has long advocated a firmer approach to littering and supports the latest government effort to make amendments to the Environmental Public Health Act to institute a regime for proactive cleaning at premises. We reiterate our belief that businesses in food centers should improve their premises by building tray return stations in more convenient locations and upgrading public toilets. PHC has over the years conducted many outreach campaigns with community partners and schools to foster a litter-free environment. We have repeatedly stressed the need to practise good hygiene Habits, such as returning our crockery and trays, binning our trash, and keeping public toilets clean and dry.

Littering is a critical public health battlefield. If we lose this battle, our efforts to wipe out COVID-19 and dengue will be much harder. Litter can attract disease-bearing pests and also create stagnant pools of water where mosquitoes breed. Even used tissues and masks strewn about can transmit germs and viruses. We hope that everyone will join us in this battle against litter.

It is ultimately up to all of us to help keep Singapore cleaner and safer for one another and our families.

What's next

Keep Clean, Singapore! 2020

- Cleaners' Appreciation
- Dance Challenge, submission of entries close on 31st October



December 2020

- Mass event outreach (New Year's Eve Countdown)

February 2021

- 6th R.I.S.E Champions Network Meeting

April 2021

- Keep Clean, Singapore! 2021 campaign launch

May - October 2021

- Roving roadshows - Keep Clean, Singapore! 2021 at district level in heartlands

June 2021

- 7th R.I.S.E Champions Network Meeting

Mid-2021

- Implementation of mandatory Environmental Sanitation Regime for premise owners



Note: Previous R.I.S.E. Champions Network Meeting held prior to Circuit Breaker.

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