



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### NEA LAUNCHES TECHNICAL GUIDE AHEAD OF THE UPCOMING ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION REGIME

*Training for Environmental Control Coordinators (ECCs) will be made available from March 2021 by SkillsFuture Singapore accredited training providers*

**Singapore, XX March 2021** – The National Environment Agency (NEA) has introduced a Technical Guide for premises managers in preparation for the upcoming environmental sanitation (ES) regime, which will take effect later this year. The ES regime will be implemented progressively with the first tranche of more than 2,000 higher-risk premises at preschools, schools, youth facilities<sup>1</sup> and eldercare facilities, from July 2021 onwards, followed by hawker centres and coffeeshops, targeted to be completed by the end of FY 2021<sup>2</sup>. This staggered roll-out will provide premises owners more time to prepare for the new cleaning workflow, and to send their staff for Environmental Control Coordinator (ECC) training. Training for ECCs will be made available from March 2021 and will be conducted by SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG) accredited training providers.

#### Technical Guide

2 The Technical Guide developed by the Environmental Sanitation Technical Committee<sup>3</sup>, which will be available on NEA's website, details the national baseline guidelines for improving environmental sanitation in high-risk premises. This provides premises owners with information on what to do and look out for when performing their routine and periodic cleaning and disinfection, as well as when dealing with incident(s) involving bodily fluids/discharge. Some of these guidelines include:

- Minimum daily cleaning frequencies for toilets, lifts, bin centres and high-touch surfaces.
- Minimum six-monthly thorough periodic cleaning, which includes cleaning of areas that are not easily accessible and not covered by routine cleaning (e.g. out-of-reach window panels, ceiling and wall fans). Intense cleaning of areas that are already covered under routine cleaning may also be required during thorough periodic cleaning. The frequency of the thorough periodic cleaning may be increased depending on the type of premises.
- Pest management plan to ensure that measures are in place to prevent pest issues.

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<sup>1</sup> Examples of youth facilities include children's homes, children and young persons homes, etc.

<sup>2</sup> FY2021 refers to end March 2022.

<sup>3</sup> The Environmental Sanitation Technical Committee was chaired by NEA with representation from various government agencies, academia, medical profession, cleaning industry associations and disinfection industry.

- Cleaning and disinfection methodology/protocol to respond to incident(s) involving bodily discharge (e.g. vomitus).
- Provision of necessary equipment and cleaning agents to carry out effective cleaning and disinfection.

3 This set of national baseline guidelines will serve as a reference document for sectoral leads to customise sector-specific environmental sanitation standards, which are mandatory for specified premises under the ES regime<sup>4</sup>. A sample of what an Environmental Sanitation Programme would look like is also included in the Technical Guide. NEA and sectoral leads are in the process of developing and consulting industry partners on the sector-specific standards, which will be rolled out progressively from mid-2021. Multiple engagement sessions have been conducted with managers/ owners/ operators of specified premises, such as preschools, youth and eldercare facilities, hawker centres and coffeeshops, to gather more in-depth feedback on how to better tailor the sector-specific standards to the respective specified premises.

### **Roll-out of Environmental Sanitation Regime**

4 More than 2,000 premises will be expected to implement the ES regime by the end of FY 2021. Premises Managers will be required to implement an Environmental Sanitation Programme and be responsible for the cleanliness of their premises. They will be required to appoint Environmental Control Coordinators (ECCs), who will assist them in developing and implementing the Environmental Sanitation Programme.

5 In order to be registered as an ECC with NEA, individuals are required to attend and pass a requisite ECC training course. The training will provide ECCs with skills in planning and implementing a full array of environmental measures including cleaning and disinfection, pest management, waste management and other relevant environmental topics. The training course will be conducted by SkillsFuture Singapore (SSG) accredited training providers<sup>5</sup>. This is to ensure that ECCs receive professional training to fulfil their responsibilities and assist their Premises Managers in meeting the baseline environmental sanitation requirements for their premises. ECCs should preferably hold supervisory roles within the premises that they are working in. More than 2,000 ECCs are expected to be trained from March 2021.

### **Towards a National Culture of Keeping Singapore Clean**

6 The experience of COVID-19 reinforces the need for us to put in place good systems to ensure that we can emerge stronger together and remain resilient to public health threats. Improving cleanliness and hygiene standards upstream can protect occupants and staff from public health risks, and minimise downstream business costs resulting from environmental lapses, such as closure of premises, large cleaning and disinfection bill, or impact from reputational damage. It will also benefit premises through a cleaner environment and increased business due to greater consumer confidence, as consumers become increasingly aware of the importance of cleanliness arising from outbreaks such as COVID-19.

7 To cope with the anticipated increase in demand for cleaning services, NEA is working with the industry to attract locals to join the environmental services industry through various upskilling initiatives and programmes and encouraging greater adoption of

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<sup>4</sup> Premises that are not covered under the ES regime may also voluntarily refer to the Technical Guide, which is applicable to premises across all non-healthcare settings.

<sup>5</sup> The training partners are ITE, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Republic Polytechnic, Singapore Polytechnic and Temasek Polytechnic.

technology by cleaning companies. We will also continue to work closely with the sectoral leads and premises owners and operators to prepare them for the upcoming ES regime, as we work collectively towards the common goal of instilling a national culture of keeping Singapore clean. With the cooperation of owners and operators of the various premises, we aim to uplift and maintain a higher standard of cleanliness and hygiene, and better protect the health of the vulnerable segment in our population.

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**About National Environment Agency**

Formed on 1 July 2002, the National Environment Agency (NEA) is the leading public organisation responsible for ensuring a clean and green environment, and the sustainable development of Singapore. Its key roles are to protect Singapore's resources from pollution, maintain a high level of public health and provide timely meteorological information. NEA also develops and spearheads environmental initiatives and programmes through its partnership with the People, Public and Private sectors. It is committed to motivating every individual to care for the environment as a way of life, in order to sustain a quality living environment for present and future generations.