

MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Large hotels, malls to report waste data

By GRACE CHUA

IN A bid to cut waste and boost recycling, the Government is making it compulsory for large hotels and shopping malls to report how much waste they generate and their targets for reducing and recycling it.

Only hotels with more than 200 rooms and malls with net rental areas of more than 50,000 sq ft will have to do it.

In all, about 100 hotels and 74 malls will be affected by the measure, which will be introduced in 2014.

Environment and Water Resources Minister Vivian Balakrishnan announced the move yesterday.

Elaborating on it later, a National Environment Agency (NEA) spokesman said the outcome of the new measure would help decide whether it will be extended to "other commercial and industrial premises".

Hotels and malls can generate more than 1,000kg of waste a day, while their recycling rate can be as low as 10 per cent or even less, said the spokesman.

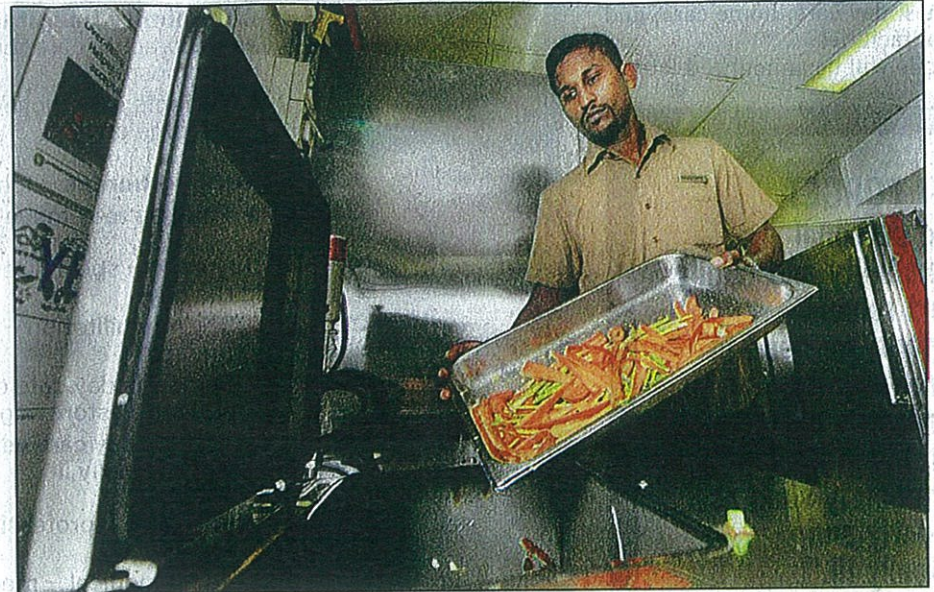
If more is done, money can be saved, according to an NEA study involving Grand Hyatt Singapore.

The hotel saved \$17,000 or 35 per cent on haulage fees when it cut its waste from 124 tonnes a month to 70.

CapitaMalls, which manages 20 shopping centres here, already monitors its waste, said a CapitaMalls Asia spokesman. "We are confident we will be able to meet any new regulations."

Environmental consultant Eugene Tay is convinced the new measure will spur hotels and malls to educate customers, suppliers and tenants on reducing and recycling waste.

He suggests that they could require their tenants "to sign a 'green lease' or give them incentives to reduce waste".



Mr Chellathurai, a steward at Fairmont Singapore, pouring food scraps into the Eco-Whiz machine that converts solid food waste into fertilisers and liquids. ST PHOTO: RAJ NADARAJAN

Under the new mandatory measure, malls are responsible for reporting overall waste data and improvement plans.

Dr Balakrishnan did not mention any penalties for failing to comply but the NEA spokesman said: "Enforcement action will be the last resort."

The ministry and the NEA will also change the way public waste is collected. Currently, Singapore is divided in-

to nine sectors for household and trade waste collection.

But in new contracts from July, the nine will be consolidated into six sectors to make collection more efficient.

Also, all HDB homes will pay the same waste collection fee for the same set of services. Now they pay different amounts, based on how far they are away from the incineration plant.