

## ENGLISH EDITORIAL

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SINGAPORE  
ROUND-UPSMOKERS UNCONCERNED  
ABOUT HEALTH OF OTHERS

ALMOST all smokers are aware of the harm of second-hand smoke to others but more than half of them continue to smoke in front of their friends and family who don't smoke, according to a recent poll of 243 smokers here.

The poll, conducted by pharmaceutical company Pfizer, also found that 55.6 per cent of respondents admitted they did not always abide by the law that restricts smoking near building entrances and exits.

S'PORE-NEVADA TIE-UP  
ON GAMING REGULATION

A MEMORANDUM of Understanding signed between the Casino Regulatory Authority of Singapore and the Nevada Gaming Control Board yesterday will pave the way for enhanced collaboration between the two bodies in the field of gaming regulation. This includes the sharing of expertise, as well as exchange visits.

JWT AMONG 3 FINALISTS  
OF SPH'S THE PITCH CONTEST

SINGAPORE Press Holdings yesterday announced the three finalists for The Pitch, a reality contest that challenges advertising agencies.

They are (in no order of merit) JWT, BBDO/Proximity and Bates 141. The three teams will meet next Thursday for the grand finals.

## Water industry set to boom

By JOY FANG

SINGAPORE'S economy is expected to get a boost of at least \$590 million per year through investments made in the water industry that would generate at least another 2,300 jobs over the next five years.

This is almost double what the industry contributed in 2005. It had then contributed \$660 million to Singapore's gross domestic product (GDP) and some 6,300 jobs.

The Environment and Water Industry Programme Office (EWI) - an inter-agency body comprising PUB, the Economic Development Board (EDB) and International Enterprise Singapore - formed in 2006, revealed these figures yesterday at a media briefing held at the Marina Barrage.

Mr Yeoh Keat Chuan, EDB's assistant managing director, said that EWI has already crossed the halfway mark towards its target of contributing \$1.7 billion to Singapore's GDP and 11,000 jobs by 2015.

The agency is confident that it will be able to reach this target by then, he added.

The EWI said the addition to the GDP and injection of new jobs stem from new projects secured by the industry from

## TRANSFORMATION OF THE WATER INDUSTRY

	2006	2011
Number of water companies	50	more than 70
Number of corporate R&D centres	1	14
Number of public-sector R&D centres	2	8
Number of testbedding projects (cumulative)	15	107
	2005	2011 - 2015
Contribution to GDP	\$660m	At least \$1.25b
Contribution to jobs	6,300	At least 8,600

SOURCE: ENVIRONMENT AND WATER INDUSTRY PROGRAMME OFFICE

2006 to last year. They will be added to the economy when the projects are fully realised.

The majority of the new jobs are expected to go to highly skilled professionals, such as engineers for high-value manufacturing and research engineers.

About 70 per cent of these jobs are expected to go to Singaporeans and permanent residents.

This comes in the wake of the Research, Innovation and Enterprise Council - chaired by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong - naming in 2006 environmental and water technologies as one of three key research areas to focus on for economic growth.

About \$330 million in funding was pumped in from the National Research Foundation for this purpose.

Since then, Singapore has developed into a thriving centre for water-related research and development (R&D), as well as for testbedding projects.

For instance, the number of testbedding projects here multiplied, from 15 to a total of 107 this year, while the number of water companies in this industry stands at more than 70, up from 50 in 2006.

Singapore-based companies have also managed to gain a foothold internationally, securing \$8.4 billion worth of overseas projects since 2006.

Projects in the Middle East and North Africa made up the bulk of contracts secured, including Hyflux's seawater desalination plant in Algeria.

Mr Goh Chee Kiong, director of the clean-technology department in EDB, said overseas com-

panies value Singapore as an attractive investment location because of the country's excellent infrastructure, strong government backing and the ease of doing business.

Singapore has R&D centres and opportunities for testbedding as well as commercialisation and export - something unique compared to other parts of the world, said Mr Goh.

The country is also a vibrant marketplace, offering a convenient place for companies to form R&D partnerships.

"These selling points will continue to be our focus, going forward. There's still a lot of work to be done, the journey ahead is still very long. We will remain steadfast in focusing on our differentiated advantages," he said.

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## HELPDESK 我的字典

**Gross domestic product:**  
国内生产总值  
guó nèi shēng chǎn zǒng zhí

**Testbedding:** 作为实验台的  
zuò wéi shí yàn tái de

**Desalination:** 海水淡化  
hǎi shuǐ dàn huà

**Selling points:** 卖点 mài diǎn

Small actions, big  
green contributions

By JECOLIA TONG

IT MAY be a small green gesture but it is hoped that it will go a long way towards countering climate change.

Staff of Sharp Electronics (Singapore) will not only switch off the lights in their River Valley Road office during lunch

time next Friday but they will also set their computers to energy-saving mode.

They will also be encouraged to leave the office on time.

Sharp Electronics is one of about 30 participants who have pledged to do their part on Eco Action Day 2011 on June 3, so far.

Eco Action Day, an annual

event held here since 2007, is organised by Ricoh Asia Pacific and the Singapore Environment Council (SEC).

It focuses on resource and energy conservation. Participants have to pledge action upon completing registration online.

"People are often put off and become impartial to green issues as the issues appear too immense to tackle, and most feel powerless to do anything to change things," said an SEC spokesman.

"The Eco Action Day campaign demonstrates that small actions by individuals multi-

plied across many organisations make for a significant contribution to change."

Ms Wong Yee Thing, who is part of Ricoh's Regional Environmental Management Group, said that Eco Action Day also commemorates World Environment Day, which is on June 5.

This year, the organisers of Eco Action Day are hoping to receive more sign-ups than the 46 who pledged to do their part last year.

They are also targeting to do better than last year, when carbon-dioxide emissions were reduced by 4,141.13kg - an amount that would fill about 265,000 balloons - on Eco Action Day.

The organisers also hope that green practices, such as saving electricity, will be adopted by participants permanently.

As of yesterday, Eco Action Day's participants include companies, schools, government agencies, community centres and hospitals.

The SEC spokesman said: "There is definitely a growing awareness and concern here in Singapore regarding energy and resource conservation."

"Judging by the response from the community and industry towards our programmes, the awareness is being translated into action."

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Hundreds  
have given  
minister  
feedback

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Development (MND) than in the Ministry of Health over the next five years, he spoke about the flood of feedback he has received from "hundreds" of e-mail messages, letters and

messages on Facebook.

They offered him advice and suggestions and Mr Khaw said he expects to receive more.

The feedback has given him a "feel of the nature" and "the scale of the unhappiness and concerns".

While several people have "wisely advised" him "not to try to please all as that will surely fail", he said that it was not possible to please everyone as the demands are often contradictory.

Mr Khaw wrote: "For example, many want me to bring property prices down. Many also warn me not to bring prices

down.

"I am, therefore, realistic about what is doable."

He said that he will consult widely - with experts, customers, industry players and Singaporeans - and use both online and offline communication platforms to engage groups of varying sizes.

This will also be done through closed-door forums, open forums and big or small groups.

He said: "It will be time-consuming but I am sure (it) will be enriching and educational."

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