

Recognition of best practices in public sanitary conveniences



1. Background

The provision of public toilets in transportation terminals, parks and recreational areas, marketplaces and other public locations is not only a convenience to the itinerant public but also a service that can promote a cleaner and more healthful urban environment. WHO considers it to be a basic human right that individuals have access to improved sanitation facilities at the household level. But inevitably people also need access to sanitary conveniences when they travel, work, study, play, shop and conduct other activities away from home.

Lack of public sanitary conveniences results in discomfort for many individuals and may to some extent discourage some visitors and residents alike from long periods of activity outside the home or, in the case of visitors, outside the hotel. Moreover, lack of public sanitary conveniences may result in some degree of fouling of public places, intrusion on patrons' toilets in commercial establishments by non-patrons, or both.

The provision of public toilets poses many challenges to city governments however, not least of which is the need to ensure that facilities are safe to use and to ensure security from crime and acts of violence. Closely related to this is the need to ensure that facilities are not utilized for unintended purposes such as temporary sheltering or illegal economic activities. A key challenge from the health perspective is to ensure that public sanitary conveniences are well maintained in order to prevent toilets, sinks etc. from being out of service and to ensure hygienic conditions of the facilities and environs at all times. Unless facility operations are subsidized from other sources, this may necessitate user fees – a policy that has to be balanced with the principle of equitable access to services.

A further challenge with regard to equity is to ensure that facilities are accessible to and suitable for use by disabled, handicapped and injured persons, children and the elderly.



2. Good Practice Award

Eligible awardee:

Any member of the Alliance for Healthy Cities that has sustained a programme of public sanitary conveniences for a minimum of five years.

Materials to be submitted:

A concise written report structured to address each of the six criteria listed below.

The report should include as attachments captioned high-resolution colour photographs in electronic format, which depict the city's public sanitary conveniences.

Criteria for selection:

The recipient of the good practice awards will be selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- 1) Evidence of increasing usage by the public over time. (1-5 points)
- 2) Effective measures implemented to ensure safety and security of users. (1-5 points)
- 3) Evidence of effective facilities maintenance programme, and prevention of malfunctioning and unhygienic facilities. (1-5 points)
- 4) Reliability of hand washing facilities and reliable provision of soap, safe running water and hand drying facilities. (1-5 points)
- 5) Disposal of liquid and solid waste from public sanitary conveniences in environmentally sound manner and in compliance with national and local legal requirements. (1-5 points)
- 6) Equity of access and usage by diverse user groups. (1-5 points)

Written reports submitted by Alliance members should address each of the above-mentioned criteria.

Award:

The winner will receive a plaque of recognition. Additionally, the mayor of the winning city, or his representative, will be sponsored by WHO to attend the World Toilet Summit and Exposition 2010 (date and venue to be announced) as a learning experience to strengthen the city's ongoing programmes, and to share experiences and lessons learnt with Summit participants.¹

Deadline for submission:

16 August 2010

¹ Information on the World Toilet Summit and Exposition can be found at this web site:
<http://www.worldtoilet.org/>



3. **Contact information**

Applications and any queries should be sent to:

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