

# Green Gazette

Supporting a culture of environmental sustainability at NIE Issue 8 | Jan / Feb 2020

## Green Scene

### Donating Clean Clothing at NIE

Are you thinking of clearing your closet for the new year? You can donate your clean clothing at Student Hub! In partnership with [Greensquare](#), and continuing the efforts initiated by a GESL group in 2019, Green Clan helps collect used textiles for recycling. You can now drop off your clean clothes, shoes, bedsheets, towels, curtains, belts, and bags into one of our two donation boxes all year long!



### Snacks Donation Drive in February

If you have unopened packs of goodies after CNY, share them with those who may enjoy them more than you do. Green Clan will be running a Snacks Drive in February for migrant workers. More details will be coming soon. Stay tuned!

## Share Your Green Initiatives

Tell us how you or your colleagues are promoting the 4Rs (refusing, reducing, reusing, and recycling)! Email [greenclan@nie.edu.sg](mailto:greenclan@nie.edu.sg).

## Green FAQ: Plastic Bag Fees

**Q: Some supermarkets in Singapore have started charging fees for plastic bags. This seems to be an ineffective way to reduce plastic use as customers need plastic bags to dispose of rubbish at home. Aren't businesses just passing the costs to consumers without solving the problem?**



**A:** You are right that most Singaporeans live in high-rise housing and plastic bags are often used to bag waste for hygienic disposal. Thus, a plastic bag fee in Singapore may not have the same impact on reducing plastic bag use as in other countries.

However, the evidence suggests that many consumers in Singapore are taking more plastic bags than they need. Research by the Singapore Environment Council has found that on average, each shopper takes 2-4 plastic bags per trip and about 26 percent of households have more than 20 unused bags at home. The documentary "Talking Point" also revealed that in 2017, people in Singapore threw away a total of 2,640 bags every three seconds. Supermarket bag fees are intended to curb some of this excess consumption. For the same reason that most of us live in high-rise housing (limited land area), we need to be careful not to generate too much waste.

If you are stumped about finding bags in which to store your household waste, you are not alone! Here are some [ideas from Journey to Zero Waste Life in Singapore!](#). For example, you could repurpose bread bags (for wet/mixed waste) and mail packaging (for dry waste), or start/join a community group that shares unused bags (perhaps your office mates have bags to give away!).

Finally, if you need to purchase a plastic bag, a silver lining is that supermarkets have channeled the plastic bag fee proceeds to good causes. For example, Prime Supermarket at NTU channels the proceeds of plastic bag sales to NTU student assistance funding.

*We thank the NIE staff who submitted a similar question! Have a question for Green FAQ? Drop us a line at [greenclan@nie.edu.sg](mailto:greenclan@nie.edu.sg).*

## Sustainability in the News

- [Commentary: Eating less meat could help the environment and our health – so what's stopping us?](#) (Channel NewsAsia, 5 Jan 2020)
- [More in Singapore aware of climate change, and willing to bear costs and inconvenience to safeguard planet: Survey](#) (The Straits Times, 16 Dec 2019)
- [Mixed fortunes of zero-waste stores in Singapore: More effort needed for culture to take off](#) (ChannelNewsAsia, 15 Nov 2019)
- [Parliament: Air-con contributes sizeable portion of buildings and household emissions](#) (The Straits Times, 5 Nov 2019)

### About Green Clan

Green Clan was formed in 2017. We are an informal group of research, faculty and admin staff interested in sustainability matters and supporting evidence-informed initiatives for sustainability. [Follow us on Facebook](#) | [Join the team](#)