



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

The Public Hygiene Council Mobilises Volunteers for Oil Spill Clean-up Efforts at East Coast Park

Collective efforts from our dedicated volunteers continue to be invaluable in supporting our beach clean-up progress

SINGAPORE, 20 JULY 2024 – The first mobilisation of volunteers for the final phase of beach clean-up at East Coast Park took place today. The Public Hygiene Council (PHC) will be mobilising hundreds of dedicated volunteers in the coming weeks to help in this effort, to prepare East Coast Park beach sandy areas for reopening to the public. The collective efforts of our volunteers will contribute to the restoration and preservation of our coastal areas.

Leveraging Help From Our Volunteers

2 Volunteers will help to comb the beaches and remove residual tar balls – small, dark-coloured pieces of coagulated oil – and related marine litter from the coastlines spanning the extensive stretch of the 6,180-metre East Coast Park beach. They will walk sections of the beach near the tide lines, and use rakes or tongs to gently scrape or pick up tar balls and oil-stained debris, collecting them for onward disposal. The first mobilisation of volunteers for beach clean-up at East Coast Park was conducted today at Area B [see Annex A for Location Map].

3 The beach clean-up efforts leveraging volunteers have been spearheaded by PHC, with support from the National Environment Agency (NEA). In preparation for this final phase of clean-up, PHC has been coordinating and equipping volunteers over the past few weeks, and has engaged various key interest and volunteer groups – such as Stridy, International Coastal Cleanup Singapore, Kindred Community, SG Beach Warriors, and Green Nudge. Early trial sessions involved discussions on safety precautions, best practices and protocols, and on-site demonstrations on the proper use of equipment and clean-up procedures for tar balls and marine debris.

4 Hundreds of volunteers are expected to help with this initiative over the coming weeks – including members of the public, key stakeholders, corporate organisations, grassroots organisations, National Youth Corps, interest groups and volunteers from PHC’s R.I.S.E Champions Network and NEA’s Volunteer Corps.

5 Mr Andrew Khng, Chairman of the Public Hygiene Council, emphasised the significance of collective efforts amongst stakeholders, partners and volunteers in advancing clean-up efforts. He shared, “We are truly heartened by the overwhelming response from volunteers who have come forward to offer their help for PHC’s clean-up activities, reaffirming the positive impact of



community support and action. The dedication and commitment of our volunteers exemplify the spirit of unity and shared responsibility in preserving our coastal environments. It is through such collaborative endeavours that we can make a meaningful difference, and create a lasting impact in preserving our beaches and marine ecosystems. We are truly grateful for the unwavering support and participation of all those involved.”

Reflecting On Singapore’s Oil Spill: Turning Crisis Into Action

6 On 14 June 2024, more than 400 tonnes of oil spilled near Pasir Panjang Terminal and led to widespread contamination across various coastal areas in Singapore. Beyond the immediate and extensive clean-up operations, the incident highlighted the need for collective action from all. PHC stepped up to mobilise volunteers from its R.I.S.E Champions Network to assist in litter picking activities at East Coast Park areas, to support cleaners who had been redeployed to clean up the oil spill at the beachfront. Since 17 June 2024, more than 1,200 volunteers have dedicated their weekends to conduct litter picking activities at East Coast Park. Community groups and corporate organisations have also organised complementary clean-up activities in the area.

7 The ongoing beach clean-up efforts, supported by our dedicated volunteers, are expected to be completed in the coming months. These efforts will contribute to the reopening of East Coast Park beach, for all to enjoy once again.

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