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Second Minister Grace Fu said yesterday that MEWR is exploring the feasibility of a usage-based pricing system for waste disposal, to incentivise households to be more green. (PHOTO: LIANHE ZAOBAO)

Households which recycle more and throw out less rubbish could soon pay a smaller fee for waste disposal.

Second Minister for the Environment and Water Resources Grace Fu said yesterday that her ministry is exploring the feasibility of a usage-based pricing system for waste disposal, to incentivise households to be more green.

"We could consider passing some of the savings back to the households, so that there is a direct relationship between their behaviour and their pocket," Ms Fu told reporters at the opening of an eco-exhibition at Marina Bay Sands.

A Save-As-You-Reduce project will be piloted in selected public and private residences in Punggol and Bartley, with residents to be updated regularly on how much they recycle and throw away. During the pilot, from next month till February, waste-disposal patterns as well as the impact on cost and operations will be monitored.

Incentives for the project are not known yet, but a similar one to be launched in a Housing Board (HDB) precinct in Yuhua will mean savings of \$1 a month off residents' monthly waste-collection fees. That is, if each household reduces 20 per cent, or about 0.5kg, of waste per day, HDB said in October.

Ms Fu said that recycling by Singapore households "remains poor". She added: "It is important for us to improve the infrastructure for recycling.

"There are many areas that are deficient at the moment, and the Government is addressing them, including how we are placing the recycling bins and how often we clear them."

Ms Fu also announced that the Government will be extending water- and energy-efficiency labelling to more appliances, to help consumers make more informed purchases. Air-conditioners and refrigerators sold in Singapore will also be subject to higher standards of energy efficiency from September.