NEW commuter facilities such as overhead bridges, pedestrian underpasses and taxi stands will soon come with “green” features to conserve energy.

LED lighting will also be installed at existing overhead bridges and other facilities whose fluorescent lights need replacing.

This announcement was made yesterday by the Land Transport Authority (LTA), which added that since February, it had installed LED lighting and intelligent lighting detection systems at 50 overhead bridges islandwide.

Among them are one along Still Road South near Tao Nan School, and another near Block 213 in Boundary Road.

According to the LTA, using LED lights at these bridges reduces their monthly energy consumption by up to 50 per cent, compared to the energy used by fluorescent lights.

The total energy saved in a year by using LED lights at these 50 bridges is equal to the energy consumption of 18 households living in five-room Housing Board (HDB) flats, an LTA spokesman said.

In an intelligent lighting detection system, sensors located along the staircase of each bridge will detect when a pedestrian passes by and automatically switch on the lights. Lights go off after 10 minutes if no one passes by.

On average, there are 40 lights on an overhead bridge and 70 per cent of these will be switched off in this system.

The LTA said it would progressively implement this lighting detection system on new overhead bridges in Singapore, reducing energy consumption at each bridge by up to 70 per cent.

Though some lights on the bridges will be switched off between midnight and 7am, the LTA said the new system would be safe for pedestrians.

Lights at the overhead bridges’ entrances and staircases will remain switched on for security reasons.

The LTA spokesman added that these new features were a “feasible and cost-effective” way to save energy.

Moving forward, LTA said it would retrofit new facilities such as overhead bridges, pedestrian underpasses, linkways, bus shelters and taxi stands with LED lights.

Adjunct Professor Chong Chee Leong of the School of Science and Technology at SIM University said LED lights not only reduced energy consumption but are also functional and cost efficient.

He said: “Coupled with today’s emerging environmental awareness, where there is growing interest in energy-efficient lighting, expanding the use of LED lights is a step in the right direction.”

A separate trial to determine the feasibility of implementing LED street lamps in the road network is ongoing.

LED lights are already being installed in several housing estates. Last year, 10 town councils embarked on a project to replace some 540,000 fluorescent lights in corridors and staircases.

ROYSTON SIM

Overhead bridges get ‘green’ lights