

\$216m monitoring system to be installed for rented flats

BY TONNY CHAN

THE Housing Authority will invest \$216 million over the next five years setting up a central monitoring system for all its rented flats.

Lifts, water pumps, electrical installations and fire fighting equipment will be put under constant surveillance.

Close monitoring of installations would help diagnose repetitive and hidden faults to enable timely maintenance, an authority spokesman said.

Chairman of the authority's

Building Committee Edward Ho said operators at a central control room could locate a faulty lift within seconds once the system was operational.

"With timely maintenance, it will be less likely for these installations to break down," he said.

"Without the monitoring system, the Housing Department has to rely on tenants to report any breakdown. For example, it takes an average of six hours to notice a lift breakdown."

Mr Ho said the committee endorsed the proposal to set

up the system at a cost of \$216 million over five years at its meeting yesterday. The operation and maintenance of the system would cost \$23 million a year.

When completely installed, it could release some staff deployed to inspect the equipment and result in a saving about \$4.2 million each year.

The department tested the system on 10 rental blocks over six months this year.

The system would not be extended to Home Ownership Scheme estates unless flat owners agreed to bear part of the cost.