

## ECOLOGIC

# Managing Waste Disposal is a Challenge

Waste management has various stages — creation, storage, transportation, segregation and disposal. A city's municipality is usually responsible for collection, transportation and disposal. But the public must also ensure that all steps are carefully executed



PAVITRA  
SRIPRAKASH

@pavisriprakash

**A** recent announcement by the Environment Minister has brought construction and demolition (C&D) waste into the limelight! Segregating and depositing such waste to the collection centres for processing is soon to become mandatory. Local bodies will have to utilise 10-20% material from construction and demolition waste in future municipal and government contracts. The C&D waste management plan will be required as part of the submissions to acquire sanctions for construction.

C&D waste is usually produced from demolishing, renovating, repairing a building or dredging of the earth. Various materials can be unearthed, including concrete, bricks, copper, wood, glass, steel, plastic, ceramic

(tiling/sanitary ware). Concrete forms the bulk of this waste comprising 65% of all C&D waste, followed next by bricks/tiles at 25%.

Just consider this — the environmental advantages of the over-used sustainable jargon 'Reduce-Reuse - Recycle' is something the public has been aware of for sometime now.

But there is a fourth 'R' in this mix that is often missed — the question then shifts to who is the party 'Responsible' for such efforts to reach fruition. Is it the governance or the people? The fact is, all agencies, including the public need to join hands and ensure that the 3R's are executed RESPONSIBLY!

In India where urbanism and rural exodus is increasing by a double-digit percentage every year, it is imperative to protect all our resources —



Construction waste is the result of demolition, renovation of buildings or dredging of earth • Express

the water, land, public spaces, environment and people. Government intervention by way of policy shows leadership and is definitely the first step

towards preservation. The reasons of the increase of C&D waste is obvious — new construction in the light of urban development to advance

economic growth is a primary driver; a close second is the renovation and modernisation of many old buildings and infrastructure.

Lastly, the ongoing maintenance of infrastructure (pavements, roads, dams, bridges). The overall volume of the waste cannot be discounted. The management of waste requires various stages — creation, storage at site, transportation to facility, segregation and disposal. A city's municipality is usually responsible for collection, transportation and disposal

**Segregating and depositing building waste to the collection centres for processing is soon to become mandatory**

of unclaimed waste. However as the public, it is also our responsibility to ensure that all the steps are carefully completed to guarantee minimum final wastage. Final wastage

is the stage at which we cannot do anything else with all the human generated waste, which has no choice now but to wind up in a landfill.

Statistics show that the total amount of C&D waste collected is much less than the waste produced in a city. The municipality has to deal with a whole host of wastes other than this type alone. This leads to illegally dumping waste in dried rivers, unclaimed land or any open site without proper supervision. Lack of a scientific method while illegally dumping waste prevents responsible segregation for future re-use of the materials.

Therefore the first issue is tackling the method in which the waste is dealt with!

*(The writer is an architect, urban designer, dancer and chief designer at Shilpa Architects)*