



Environment



Hygiene



Health



Wild Life



Quiz



Web of Waste Recovery. Where does your garbage go?

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Have you ever wondered what happens to that chocolate wrapper, orange peel or frooti pack after you throw it in your garbage bin? What do you think your kabadi walla does with the newspapers, bottles or old milk bags or what happens to all the old clothes given to the kapra-bhandi wali?

Waste leaving the household can be broadly classified into dry waste (non-biodegradable) and wet waste (biodegradable waste). Dry waste from households contains mainly plastic, metal, glass, paper and cloth waste. This waste can be further classified into waste that is thrown out and waste, which is sold.

Who Handles It?

Waste from the households in South Bombay travels via the rag picker and kabadi wala to sub-dealers and dealers in Bhendi Bazar to Grant Road area. Rag pickers usually get a lower amount for the waste collected, as it is soggy and soiled.

The sub-dealer buys a mixed composition of waste further separates it and sells it to dealers who buy only one type of waste i.e either paper, plastic, metal or glass. The dealers further sorts out the waste according to grade and condition of the material.

What Happens To It?

1) Paper

Paper from South Bombay is transported to the main dealer at Masjid-Bunder from

here it is sold to paper factories in Vapi, Dhulia and even Gaziabad (U.P.).

At the factory the paper is washed by a chemical process to remove all traces of ink and other contaminants, then it is pulped and mixed with virgin material in accordance to the final quality of paper desired.

For better quality paper more virgin is added. All paper in India is recycled to a certain extent and all paper is also strengthened with old cloth. The greatest proportion of waste is used in the manufacture of card boards newsprint and to make hand made paper.





2) PLASTIC

Dharavi is the largest plastic reprocessing centre in the country. Waste plastic is sold by the dealers to small scale plastic reprocessing factories. The plastic is sorted by colour



at these factories and is then ground into flakes, washed to remove

contaminants and subsequently dried on the roof tops when the flakes are completely dry, they are melted and moulded into granules. These granules are sold to other plastic industries who mould them according to the product required.

White plastic is most valuable as it is made from virgin material while black colour plastic is plastic that has been recycled many times.

3) METAL

Metal is separated by the dealer into three grades according to the weight of the metal. Metals from household products are usually of the

cheapest quality. The waste is crushed by a hydroelectric press and is then melted into ingots and thereafter rolled into sheets from sale. Most of the metal reprocessing factories are on the outskirts of Mumbai. Some of the waste metal also goes to Punjab and to the outskirts of Delhi to be reprocessed.

4) GLASS



Broken glass is used by factories to lower the temperature of their furnaces. It is also separated by colour and blown into cheap bottles in Mahalaxmi and Kurla. Broken glass from Bombay is



also sent to Firozabad districts where it is made into bangles and marbles.

5) WHERE REUSE TAKES PRECEDENCE OVER RECYCLING:-

A lot of waste is reused several times before it is recycled. Prime examples of institutionalised methods of recovery and reuse is that of glass bottles. The same is true of plastic jerry cans and oil and biscuit tins.

Old clothes are collected by the Kapra-Bandhi wali. These clothes are mended and sold in Bharat Bazar (near Grant Road). A large number of old clothes are also transported by train to Baroda and Ahmedabad for sale. Clothes which cannot be reused are cut into rags and sold to automobile garages and also to the paper industry.

Any materials which are not recovered from households or the community bins are recovered by municipal workers in the garbage trucks or landfill sites in Deonar.

THE NEED FOR CITIZEN'S INITIATIVES

Our cultural frugality and poverty keep the web of waste recovery alive. Though an environmental benefit is derived from the process the whole sector is driven by an economic motive. Households can play a very important role in humanizing the waste industry and conserving scarce resources.

A) By not mixing their waste and giving it directly to the building jamadar or ragpicker, the working conditions of the rag picker/Jamadar would be improved.

B) Composting biodegradable waste within the area reduces the pressure on the landfill sites and transport costs involved.

C) Citizen's can play an important role in pressurising industry to reduce excessive packaging.

Surprisingly as it may sound Mumbai today is exactly in the same position New York was in the 1920's lot's of garbage and enthusiastic citizens.



Recycling Plastic



The process of recycling plastic allows manufacturers to produce similar or completely different products from the original.

In recent times, the process of recycling household plastics has become much easier with the introduction of residential recycling bins in many areas of a large range of countries.



materials, it means the product will only be recycled once.

Plastics are one of the most difficult substances to recycle, and before the recycling process can begin, all of the plastic materials have to be sorted according to a "Resin Identification Code".(see below).

Sorting plastics can be an expensive and time consuming task, however this is vital for the recycling process.

There are roughly 50 different main groups of plastics, each containing many different varieties. The coding system was introduced to make the sorting of recyclable products easier and more universal.

Recycling is not only good for the environment through the energy saving involved, but also for the creation of jobs. It is said that recycling around 10,000 tons can produce as many as six times the amount of jobs as sending the products to landfill.

The main problem associated with recycling plastics is that in many cases, products which cannot be recycled are being produced from the recycled plastics. Although recycling any product for a different use is slightly better than producing plastic products from the raw



Did you Know?

Slum dwellers and poorer people produce less garbage per person than affluent households.

- Slum dwellers and poorer households buy most of their goods loose and therefore generate almost no non-biodegradable waste.

Inspite of no government initiative or protection India recycles almost 2/3 of all non-biodegradable waste. Industrialized countries like Britain for example is able to recycle only 1/3 of its non-biodegradable waste.

- This is possible only because of our efficient informal waste recovery sector comprising of rag

pickers, municipal garbage collectors, kabadiwalas and suchlike.

- Our recycled waste like paper etc. is not of the same high quality as that in developed countries. This is because the recyclable waste in developed countries is not mixed with the kitchen waste.

In India as we mix our dry and wet waste, the dry waste loses its quality and is harder to reprocess.

- During the monsoon the rag picker earns half of what he/she would normally earn as the waste gets wet and dealers give them half the price for wet waste.

-Another reason why the price of waste falls during the monsoon is because most of the reprocessing industries are small sheds whose activities are interrupted by the

rains.

-On an average 35-40% of household waste is biodegradable. The biodegradable waste has a moisture content of 40-60%.

- Therefore compactors and other advanced technology disposal systems like pyrolysis, waste to energy plants fail to solve the problem.

-Expensive compaction vehicles cannot reduce the volume of waste as our waste has organic content.

Moreover, compaction crushes and mixes the waste so thoroughly that it makes separation and recovery of waste impossible.

-Given our efficient waste recovery informal sector and the composition of garbage separation at source of garbage is the most sensible solution. This allows for the dry waste to be recycled and the wet waste to be vermicomposted / composted.

QuizTime

1. Roses requirehrs of sunlight to grow properly.

- a.2.
- b.3
- c.4
- d.6

2. Our informal waste recovery sector comprises of.....

- a.ragpickers.
- b.recycling industries.
- c.vermicomposting.
- d.vermiculture.

3. Paper from South Bombay is transported to the main dealer at.....

- a.Bandra.
- b.Vile Parle
- c.Masjid Bunder.
- d.Ghatkopar

4. Recycling is not only good for the environment through the energy saving involved, but also for the creation of...

- a.houses
- b.jobs
- c.factories
- d.offices

5. Birds don't.....

- a.Sweat.
- b.fly
- c.eat food
- d. have wings.

6. Egyptians used pillows made of.....

- a.rubber.
- b.stone.
- c.wool.
- d.cotton.

Answer the quiz and mail it to us with all your identity details by 30th Nov. 2009 at admin@burhanifoundationindia.org or you could even mail it on the following address and the lucky winner will receive exciting prizes.

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