



**CHINTAN**  
Environmental Research  
and Action Group

# FACT SHEET

## Waste

### What is Waste?

**“Waste constitutes useless material or material of little value to be discarded; damaged, surplus or rejected material”**

Waste is discarded material as a result of human activities or natural processes, which does not yet possess any economical value.

### Categories of Waste

Based on its origin, Solid Waste is classified as

- **Organic Waste** - Wet waste
- **Inorganic Waste** – Dry waste

**Organic Waste:** This waste degrades easily in natural processes. Household waste consists, to a large extent, of organic matter. Organic waste may generally include kitchen waste, leftovers of meals, vegetable waste, fruit peels, leaves etc.

**Inorganic Waste:** Some of the inorganic materials do not decompose at all, whereas others decompose slowly. This type of waste at the household level includes glass bottles, plastic bags, cans etc.

**Special Waste:** is waste that needs special treatment to avoid its dangerous effects on health and environment. Special waste comprises hospital waste, batteries, energy saving light bulbs, solvents and paints, chemical substances such as insecticides, waste from mining and oil exploration activities, explosive substances, etc.

### Rules and Regulations

- **Article 51-A:** Makes it a constitutional duty of every citizen to protect and preserve the environment.
- **Municipal solid waste (Management and Handling) Rules, 2000:** It tells us how we can store, transport and reprocess the waste and who has what responsibilities.
- **Delhi Plastic Bag (Manufacture, Sale and Usage) and Non-Biodegradable garbage (control) Act 2001:** Issued by the Govt. of NCT, Delhi. It bans the use of plastic bags, which are below 20 microns in thickness. It also bans the use of colored and recycled bags for storing, packaging and carrying foodstuffs because of toxic dyes, which can leach out into the food. It carries a huge fine, as high as Rs.25,000, for manufacturing them.
- **Bio-medical waste (management and handling) Rules, 1998:** They make it mandatory to segregate waste into 4 colour codes for specific disposal.
- **Hazardous waste (management and handling) amendment rules, 1998:** They cover only such wastes as are listed under these rules. According to CPCB (Central Pollution Control Board) there is almost 72,000 tonnes of hazardous waste each year in Delhi.
- **Battery (Handling and Management) Rules 2000:** They apply to lead acid batteries, used in cars, buses etc. and make it compulsory for companies to take back batteries from users through a collection system because of the presence of toxic components in the batteries.

For more information, contact:

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