



WasteWatch

A Newsletter by Chintan-Bharti Waste Resource Centre

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Construction & Demolition Waste

When you demolish a building, its not just brick and mortar that become waste. There are electric wires, asbestos, glass, metal, wood, at the very least. Some are hazardous and others are not. All these have a life beyond being broken down.

In Delhi, the municipality is not mandated to pick up construction and demolition waste even under everyday circumstances. There is no place to dump it. Just loading it into a truck is hard, and if a private person takes it to a landfill, it's just so expensive because you pay by weight. So usually, it is disposed off on a vacant plot in the neighborhood. But this problem just got worse. The last 6 months have been demolition time in Delhi. Everything not located in the appropriate site, as per the Master plan, is being sealed or demolished. For the few thousand structures that will be broken down, what will happen to these increased amounts of waste?



have issued a framework for its handling, because of the sheer cost of waste haulage. Each day, the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai picks up 2200 tons of C&D waste. It spends almost 40 million rupees on this and related operations annually. Now, the responsibility lies on the generator. Can this generator be more creative?

In the US, most demolition waste is used for road beds, on landfills and in new housing. In some parts with relatively old and valuable architecture, special hand made bricks, iron grilles, and doors fetch high prices. In Berlin, just after the wall came down and there was a construction boom, a young entrepreneur set up a construction waste recycling plant, where most of the waste was powered into reusable debris. It was simple, but highly profitable because the construction boom both destroyed old and derelict buildings and created new ones.

According to the Technology Linked Business Opportunity Publications, India still produces 12-14 m tons of demolition waste per annum. This does not include waste from such mass demolitions. Bigger cities in the recent past have generated more of this waste, because of the conflict between the housing of the poor and aspirations of the planners. Demolitions follow and in terms of waste, a new problem is created. In Greater Mumbai, the authorities

Instead of using up precious landfill space, recycling it for reuse is a much more useful proposition. For this, the government must allocate land, loans, market linkages to sell the end product and policy that makes it possible to create profits from debris. As in the case of fly ash bricks, using a small percentage of recycled C&D waste should be mandatory in the metros. Then maybe, the debris of our buildings will find a new life.

This newsletter is brought to you by: Chintan-Bharti Waste Resource Centre
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