

From July, failure to segregate waste could invite prosecution

Graphic: Shailish Wazarg

BMC To Enforce 100% Separation Of Wet & Dry Waste

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In an unprecedented attempt to enforce 100% door-to-door segregation and collection of waste, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) has decided to aggressively prosecute defaulters. Other than a fine of up to Rs 50,000, the punishment for repeated non-compliance could even include imprisonment for office-bearers of the defaulting society or the flat owners. Jail term would be decided by court.

The civic authority will make segregation of dry and wet waste at source compulsory from July. The circular, issued by deputy municipal commissioner (solid waste management) Prakash Patil, states that by July, the BMC will make available all the infrastructure needed for the initiative. It will purchase additional collection compactors and upgrade segregation centres. The BMC will stop accepting mixed waste.

The civic body will issue a notice to any society that fails to segregate waste and initiate prosecution proceedings in accordance with the Municipal Solid Waste Rules 2000.

There is a provision for a minimum penalty of Rs 1,000. The society will be given a notice period of 30 days before it is fined. If a society fails to comply with the rules after three notices, the BMC could file a case in a metropolitan court.

Civic officials added that societies will be sent a special notice listing guidelines on how to go about segregating waste. They will be allowed to engage a rag-picker for their dry waste; this could earn them revenue. In case a society cannot find a rag-picker on its own, the BMC will give it a list of NGOs in an area and the society can choose from them.

Currently, the BMC collects door-to-door waste from 30-40% households; less than 2% waste is being segregated.

This time, the BMC will have to meet the target as it is one of the service level benchmarks prescribed by the Union ministry of urban development. Failure will make the BMC ineligible for Central funds under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Renewal Mission (JNNURM). The 100% collection has to be achieved by March 2014 and segregation by 2015.

Similar initiatives were undertaken earlier but due to lack of infrastructure for collection, transportation and disposal, the practice did not take off.

BEST OUT OF WASTE

SEGREGATION: HOW IT'S DONE

On an individual level, all you need to do is keep separate bins for dry and wet waste

The society, too, should keep two separate bins for dry and wet waste, and flat owners should dump garbage from their homes accordingly



GARBAGE CAN BE SEPARATED INTO TWO CATEGORIES

Wet waste

It includes organic kitchen waste such as leftovers of vegetables and meat, wilted flowers and so on



Dry waste

It includes tins, plastic bags and bottles, cartons, wooden scrap, rubber glass and paper. It is recyclable



HOW THE BMC PLANS TO COLLECT WASTE

The BMC will send different compactors for dry and wet waste. Wet waste will be taken to the dumping grounds where it will be scientifically treated and converted into manure, for now. There is also a long-term plan to convert waste into energy



Dry waste will be taken to the BMC's waste collection plants that exist in all its wards. It will be given to rag-pickers for recycling

WHY THE BMC MUST ENFORCE INITIATIVE

The BMC has been told to achieve 100% segregation and collection of waste under the service level benchmarks prescribed by the Union ministry of urban development. Failure will render the civic body ineligible for Central funds under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Renewal Mission (JNNURM)

WHY EARLIER ATTEMPTS FAILED

Attempts were made in 2000 and 2008 as well. In both the cases, lack of enough compactors saw the plan fold up before it took off

IN CASE A SOCIETY DEFAULTS

According to the Municipal Solid Waste Rules, 2000, the minimum penalty in case a society flouts waste segregation

regulations is ₹1,000. The society must be given 30 days notice before it can be fined

If a society fails to comply with the rules after three notices, the BMC can file a prosecution case against it

The third default would invite a fine up to ₹50,000 for the office bearers of the society management and/or the flat owners. They could even face imprisonment



Source: The BMC

WHY SHOULD WASTE BE SEGREGATED

Mumbai produces around **6,500 metric tonne** of garbage everyday. Segregation of waste is, therefore, critical to reduce the load on the crumbling dumping grounds

Currently, less than **5%** of the total waste is segregated by rag-pickers appointed at the BMC ward level

Less than **2%** waste is segregated by individual homes 
Potential: Around **975 tonnes** of the garbage is recyclable; it can generate revenues worth **₹9,750 per day**

4,000 tonnes is organic waste; it can generate revenue of **₹8,000 per day**
Expected revenue from waste **₹17,750 per day**