

EXPERT SPEAK

Waste management in the hospitality industry

Increasing industrialisation, urbanisation and changes in lifestyle have seen waste-generation on the rise. **Dr. Amiya Kumar Sahu** explains how this can be a major problem, unless it is managed carefully



Solid waste management is a significant problem in eating houses, restaurants, star hotels, resorts and other commercial hospitality centres in India. Due to an increase in urbanisation and scarcity of land, it has become necessary to manage waste at the source of generation itself.

Broadly, waste is classified as wet or dry. The wet waste can be converted into compost to be reused or recycled. There are various technologies available to process such waste, both indigenous as well as from developed countries. The general practice of disposal of waste is to deliver the same to municipal authorities or appoint private contractors. The waste generators do not want to take responsibility for managing the waste.

Proper management will not only decrease the amount of waste, but also help ensure long-term sustainability of fragile coastal ecosystems. The natural beauty of beaches, coral reefs, forests and rivers will be preserved and tourists can enjoy their beauty.

Effective waste management benefits us in the following ways: reduced manpower requirements for handling and disposal; revenue from the sale of recyclables; protection from insect and rodent infestations; reduction of fire hazards; improved community relations; compliance with government regulations and codes; reduced odours; improved aesthetics/sanitation and increased guest satisfaction.

National Solid Waste Association of India (NSWAI) is a non-profit organization in the field of solid waste

management. It deals with toxic and hazardous waste, as well as biomedical waste in India.

NSWAI helps the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) in various fields of solid waste management. It makes policies and action plans. The association is responsible for the collection of information and data related to solid waste management from the municipalities of urban Class-I cities (population more than one lakh) and urban Class-II cities (population above 50,000). It then collates and disseminates information to a website which is linked to national and international organisations.

The following activities are carried out by the association — to collect, process and compile a database on solid waste generation and management throughout the country; to disseminate information on all aspects of solid waste management through seminars, workshops, refresher courses, literature and audio visual techniques; to conduct training for enhancement of professional competence in solid waste management; to participate in committees set up by various authorities and institutions on matters related to solid waste management; to render advice and consultancy in the field of solid waste management; to make recommendations to concerned authorities and institutions regarding solid waste management legislation, rules and regulations, guidelines, research and NSWAI also promotes the development as well as use of clean technologies and the sharing of know-how. It provides a forum for exchange of national and international experience, expertise and information in the field of solid waste management. The association undertakes any other activities leading to the improvement of health, safety and environment.



Low-cost solid waste management in hotels

Hotels can reduce unnecessary waste by purchasing reusable products, rather than disposable or single-use products. Although reusable products sometimes have a slightly higher initial cost, they offer substantial savings in the long-term.

Hotels should try to reduce or eliminate of single-use items such as paper napkins and other disposable items (plates, cups, cutlery, place mats, aprons and cook hats). Reducing the use of plastic film can be facilitated by purchasing durable plastic containers to store food in refrigerators and freezers. In most cases, disposable items can easily and cost-effectively be replaced with durable items. For example, durable coasters can be used, instead of paper napkins that must be replaced with every drink.

Wherever possible, use cloth cleaning rags instead of disposable paper towels; replace paper napkins and table coverings with linen; use cloth bags or baskets instead of plastic bags, to collect and return guest laundry, guest room towels and linen; use refillable amenity dispensers in guest bathrooms and install bulk dispensing systems for guest amenities and cleaning products, instead of using disposable individual containers.

Develop a comprehensive system for garbage separation, recycling, and composting. It is much easier to keep waste separate from the beginning, than to separate it after it is mixed. Garbage should be separated into items which can be reused, composted, or recycled. Separate bins for recycling or reuse, should be provided across the hotel; a recycling bag can be installed on housekeeping carts to hold recyclable materials from guestroom wastebaskets. Bins for collecting compost materials should be located in the kitchen.

Keep garbage receptacles covered and remove them frequently. Ensure that containers are thoroughly washed, disinfected and dried. Collect yard waste in canvas bags, wheelbarrows or carts rather than in disposable plastic bags. Avoid burning garbage, since it contributes to air pollution and odours.

Composting waste

Composting is the natural decomposition of organic material, such as yard waste and vegetable and fruit waste. Composting is a simple process that requires only a modest amount of effort and can significantly reduce or eliminate the need to purchase fertilizer. The key to a successful composting program is to separate the materials.

There are a range of methods for composting. 'Bio-bins' with bio-media, ie BTM (Bio Trigger Mechanism) is the most advanced and innovative technology. It's an insitu composting technology, that converts biodegradable waste into compost, within 10-15 days. The method is simpler and cheaper than any other composting process. 'Bio-bin' composting can be done by using electrical energy.

The most recent development in this area is the automatic shredding mechanism. It shreds waste for easy biodegradation by applying bio-media.

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Link:<http://www.hospitalitybizindia.com/detailNews.aspx?aid=286&sid=42>