



Your waste can generate money

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Ahmedabad: Do you know that the waste you throw away every morning can give you money? Two simple steps and your domestic waste can be of some value. You need to segregate waste at your end into dry and wet waste. After the waste is divided, call the scrap dealer and give away your waste. You will not only earn but in the process, help save the environment too.

Around 40000 female waste pickers collect waste from door-to-door every morning, sort the dry waste and collectively sell it. Every worker earns from Rs 300-500 every week.

It was an unorganized business until Sewa (Self Employed Women's Association) stepped in and worked on this model. Every waste item has a price (see the box) and every waste picker gets her due. The same model can be applied at a domestic level. The waste newspaper is of Rs 6/ kg, unused clothes in the house can be of Rs 10/kg and so on. Either you can spend some time, sort the waste, sell it and make some money or you can give it to the waste picker. What looks like waste to you, can be somebody's livelihood.

Manjulaben, who has been collecting waste from shops on Gandhi road for years, says, "During Diwali and also in the month of March, we work for whole nights and earn as much as Rs 500/day". Sewa with its strong female workforce of waste pickers has been working towards waste Management for decades. Now, even citizens have started taking initiative at their own level. Residents of Goyal Complex in Vastrapur led by Seema Chandra, pursuing M Tech at Cept University, have started a pilot project in their complex.

Total of 40 households are involved in the project. Each house has been given two dustbins to dump dry and wet waste separately. After the waste is collected from all the houses, wet waste directly goes into the mix waste in the AMC dustbin. The dry waste is then segregated into paper, glass and plastic waste in different dustbins. This segregated dry waste is sold to the scrap dealer at the end of the week. 'It is the undivided waste that causes a lot of diseases and affects the environment in general, so why not divide and sell?', said Seema who is working on a thesis, 'Zero Waste Management'.

FIGURATIVELY SPEAKING

Waste generation		Waste processing	
▶ Almost 110,667 metric tonnes (MT) of solid waste is generated from the city on a monthly basis		▶ Total Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) processed in Ahmedabad is 10,000 MT monthly out of a total of 110,667 MT	
Waste disposal			
▶ Presently, most of the waste (90%) is being dumped in the open at the Pirana landfill. A total of 97,000 MT of MSW out of 110,667 MT monthly is disposed at scientific landfill site			
Total waste			
31.70%	▶ From Municipal bins (including street sweeping)	10.50%	▶ Commercial establishments (including offices, institutions)
0.20%	▶ Dead animals and special markets (meat and fish market)	24.50%	▶ Residential/door to door
1.40%	▶ From hotels and restaurant kitchens	11.70%	▶ Others
MT -Metric tonnes Figures from AMC's vision document on 'Road Map for Zero Waste'			
Waste management - business model			
▶ A departmental store in the city recently launched an offer where a customer can sell any waste from their house-- from clothes to kitchen vessels and avail shopping coupons		▶ Amul had this scheme 3 years back in which it gave a discount of Rs 30 on a 1kg ice cream pack in return of 30 used milk packets	
Plastic bags		Hard plastic	
Type of material	Type of Scrap	Prices (₹ per Kg)	
Type 1	Used for packing electronic items	5	Type 1
Type 2	White bags, bags used for milk & washing powder	7	Brush, Tumbler
Type 3	Different types of bags	3	Ice cream cup, light weight cup, tea cup
Paper waste			Shoes waste, broken plastic, bottle caps, light weight plastic
Brown paper	Notebook cover, craft paper	1	Type 4
Hard boards	Waste paper, medicine boxes,	1	Solid hard waste, audio cassettes, DVDs
Newspaper		6	Cloth waste
Magazines		5	Clean Cloth
Office record paper			Which are used in factories and garages
		4-5	White Cloth
			Which are useful for glass sellers
			10
			10

