

Solid Wastes

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What are solid wastes?

Solid wastes refer to everything that goes out in trash. We can define solid wastes as the 'discarded materials other than fluids'.

Types of solid wastes

- [Biodegradable waste](#)
- [Recyclable](#) material
- [Inert](#) waste
- Composite wastes
- Domestic [hazardous waste](#) & [toxic waste](#)



Municipal Solid Wastes

- Wastes from homes, offices, etc.
- Collected and disposed by the [municipality](#) and generally consists of paper, waste food materials, leather, textile, rubber, glass, etc.
- Provide breeding ground for flies and other insects when they are dumped in the open.

Fly ash

- Generated by Thermal power plants generate
- Composed of oxides of silica, iron and aluminum and low concentrations of toxic heavy metals.

Defunct ships

- Broken down in developing countries for scrap metal
- Contain toxic substances like asbestos, mercury, etc.
- The workers are not suitably protected and are exposed to [toxic chemicals](#).
- The coastal area becomes polluted.



Hospital wastes

- Contain pathogenic microbes, disinfectants and other harmful chemicals.

Industrial wastes

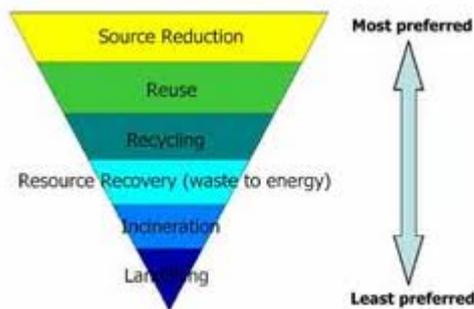
- Produce large amounts of corrosive and highly [inflammable](#) chemicals.

Electronic wastes (e-wastes)

- Generated in the developed countries and are sent to developing countries where certain metals like copper, iron, etc. are recovered from them.
- Workers are exposed to the toxic substances as recycling is done by hand.

Disposal of Solid Wastes

- Municipal solid wastes are burnt to reduce the volume.
- Sanitary landfills have been adopted as an alternative to open-burning dumps.
- Municipal wastes are incinerated and the heat emitted is used to generate electricity.
- They are also recycled for various components.
- Fly ash is used in construction industry or buried as landfills it is also used for soil amendment as it increases water retention and aeration of soil.
- [e-wastes](#) are buried as landfills or incinerated; they are also recycled.



3 R's

1. Reduce - Instead of buying new, use the ones that are in the house
2. Reuse – Instead of throwing away the bottles, they can be used pencil stands or small vases
3. Recycle – Using cloth shopping bags instead of [plastics](#). It can be used again and again.

Solid Waste & Human Health

- [Rag pickers](#) get chronic diseases as they are directly handling of solid waste.
- The release of chemical waste from industries into the environment leads to chemical poisoning
- Municipal waste along with industrial waste creates radioactive hazards to the one who are exposed to it.
- Direct dumping of untreated waste in water bodies affect the food chain through the plants and animals that feed on it, because of the accumulation of toxic substances.
- Hospital and other medical waste requires special attention otherwise they may spread infectious microbes
- People exposed to hazardous waste may get cancer too in some cases.

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Reference Links:

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- <http://edugreen.teri.res.in/explore/solwaste/health.htm>
- http://www.nilgiris.tn.gov.in/SOLID_WASTE_MANAGEMENT.htm
- http://isebindia.com/95_99/99-07-2.html
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