How to reduce household waste in the time of COVID-19

WCT COVID TASK FORCE
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Some basic questions we should ask ourselves

● What use can I find for the leftover plastic containers/bottles/cartons?
● How much should I buy?
● What types of waste can I consider recycling?
Where is our waste coming from?

Kitchen
- Medicine cabinet

Work space
- Closet

Bathroom
- Plants/Kitchen garden
Six R’s of waste management

- Re-think
- Refuse
- Reduce
- Reuse
- Repair
- Recycle
Vegetable scraps:

- Composting is ideal, but needs some planning. So here are a few ways to put some kitchen waste to use if you have no compost bin:
  - Peels of citrus fruits have anti-microbial properties and can make for good cleaners
  - Water from boiled vegetables can be used to water plants
  - You can regrow vegetables like mint, carrots, potatoes, etc.
- Meat, oil and dairy products slow down the composting process
Tea/Coffee powder:
- Dry tea powder and place it in potted plants or at the base of plants in your garden. It acts as manure and helps capture moisture in the soil.
- Coffee powder can work wonders as a natural scrub for vessels as well as your body.
Kitchen Saga 2

- Say ‘NO’ to disposable kitchen towels, bees wax papers, aluminium foils or cling foils.
- Use cloth bags.
- Glass/plastic lunch boxes and bottles make up for good storage space, planters and decorative items. So, why discard them?
- Order material in bulk to reduce the quantity of large packaging material.
- Opt for online sellers which offer minimal packaging services.
- Rinse plastic, tin and glass material before you discard them.
- Plan your meals and buy only what is necessary.
Closet

- Do not throw away old clothes. They can make great pet toys and mops!
- Try to fix small tears or loose stitches on your own (sewing is an art that can be easily learnt!).
- A lot of those unwanted ‘nice’ clothes can be turned into table runners, floor mats or bed spreads.
- Declutter your wardrobe and donate clothes if they are of no use to you, once the lockdown is over.
Bathroom and Laundry

- Buy cleanliness supplies in bulk quantities.
- Use refillable bottles.
- Certain cosmetic products can be substituted with homemade remedies.
- Reuse unused water in the bucket instead of discarding it during a bath.
- Opt for recyclable or biodegradable brands of toilet paper, sanitary napkins, etc.
- Signup for all the bill payments online. Go paperless!

- All the paper waste generated can be stored and routed to recycle centres/raddiwalas after the lockdown is over.

- Find out if any of these recycling places can have the waste items collected from your home.
Expired vitamin and macro or micro element pills can be used as plant nutrients by crushing them and adding them to the soil mixture in garden or potted plants.

**DISPOSING MEDICAL WASTE:**

- Disposing off any kind of medical waste like gloves, syringes, bandages, cotton, etc. should be done with utmost precaution.
- It should be wrapped in paper, bagged separately and clearly labelled in local language.
- Needles should not be discarded in plastic bags as they can easily poke holes through the bag and become exposed, posing danger to others.
Some Common Things

• Large cartons can be brightly coloured and used as segregation bins or storage containers in kitchen, closet or office.

• It is important to separate and store e-waste.

• In several cities, there are various recycling companies that collect waste from your house. Find the one nearest to you. Eg.: http://www.raddiconnect.com/
Are we segregating?

There are two broad types of segregated waste - ‘wet waste’ and ‘dry waste’.

In the time of pandemic, it is important for us to reduce our waste and segregate it carefully.

Segregation at our end reduces the effort of sanitation workers and decreases their chances of getting exposed to health hazards.
A lot of household waste can be reused. We have compiled a few tips and advice for you here, but for more, call out to the ‘Google genie’ to grant a wish to unlimited, useful information!