



Does confusion creep on you when it comes to segregating your waste? No need to worry as **Clinton Vaz** guides you every step of the way.

Time to quantify your waste

Most people interested in sorting out their own garbage problem often say that they don't know where to begin. Most of the common questions I have heard people ask are: Will it take a lot of my time? Should I buy a compost bin first? Where do I dispose the plastics? What about batteries? Can I burn some of my waste if I take care of the rest? Who are the people that I ought to contact for all of the above?

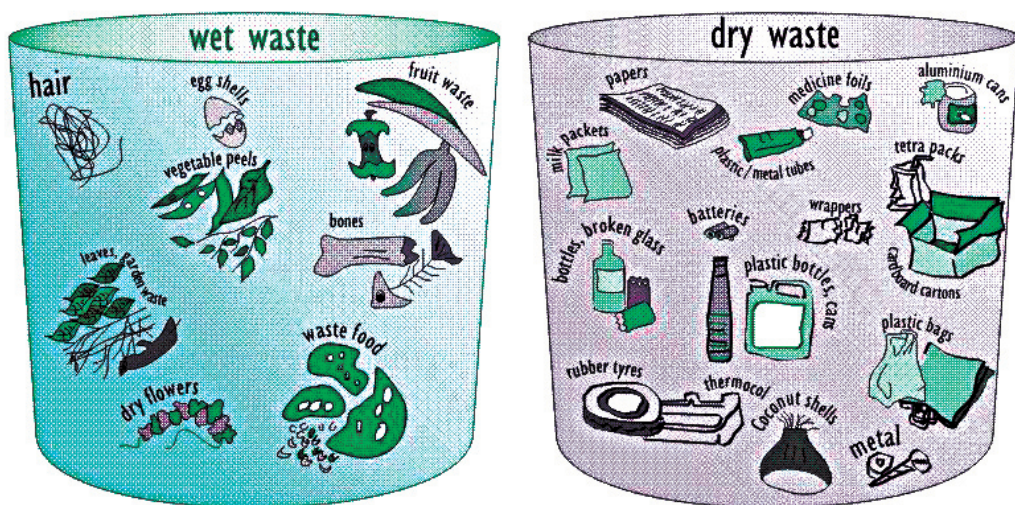
Waste Management basically has four main aspects: Proper Awareness, Collection, Transportation and Treatment/Disposal. And when planning to put an environment-friendly and sustainable waste management system in place, you need to first look at both ends of this chain first before you get to the middle. You can't do much if you don't have responsible places for the waste to go to. At the same time, you can't do all of this, if you and

those living with you don't understand how to do it. Per capita waste generation is on the rise because of our current lifestyle. As per today's figures, an average Goan generates 200-500gms of garbage per day. We are fortunate not to live in American or Europe, where the figures are much

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higher at 3,500 to 5,000gms per day. We now know that we are responsible for the waste generated, but average figures aside, do we know how much we ourselves individually generate? After all, nobody can plan any infrastructure without the right figures. It's also interesting to re-assess ourselves once in a while, to check if we still are on the right path to sustainability.

Waste Characteristics, Quality of Waste or Waste Inventories are all fancy words for looking into your bin to see what makes up your waste.



Separating your waste.

In late 2005, while I worked in Panjim, a team of 180 sanitation workers helped me individually weigh and empty each of the city's garbage bins and then to cross check, we weighed the garbage trucks too, to get fairly accurate quantities of separated waste over a three-week period.

With smaller quantities, you

should be better off, and quicker in doing the same in your own home.

Quantify your Household waste

Now here's an activity that can be done by everybody in your household. More participation will lead to more understanding of your own waste problem, so involve the kids and maid too. All you need is a pencil and a paper and 5-10minutes per day of study.

Start with making a list of the various rooms and open spaces in your home. Next, walk around and list and count items in each of these rooms and spaces that can potentially be waste within the same year. As an example, the bathroom list would contain things like shampoo bottles, toothpaste tubes, and toothbrushes. You would add perfume bottles, toilet rolls and perhaps used soap wrappers. Make a note of them all and the quantity of generation in that room. You may mention common fixtures like light bulbs that are in all rooms once for the entire household.

In the kitchen, make note of the type of waste going into the bin.

Roughly quantify the amount of vegetable waste, fish waste, meat, bones etc. Note the number of milk bags/cartons thrown away, the number of plastic carry bags thrown away, then number of other food item containers/bags thrown away as well.

If you have a garden or some household plants, include the leaves and plant cuttings into this list as well.

Sorting Lists

Once you have done that over a minimum of three

separate days, you will have a comprehensive list of what waste you generate and the quantity of it generated at your home. Next week I shall help you classify these waste categories or fractions into a list as per local systems of treatment and disposal. This also helps you plan your waste management infrastructure such as the number of bins, and size of compost bin to use. This list, abroad is known as a sorting list. Sorting lists help households recognize the right fraction of waste when disposing their waste. A sorting list might seem unnecessary at first... we all know that a used pen would be placed in the hard plastic fraction, or an empty one can be placed in the metal fraction. However, with more and more complex products coming out, the list can be useful.

Examples of difficult to classify objects are items such as mobile phones, lighting bulbs and tubes or paper packaging with plastic or aluminum linings.

Get down to making your own quantifying list today. Sit down over your family dinner and discuss the makings of this list. Remember, there is a reward for this too. Every sorting list emailed or posted to us in the next 15 days, will receive a free usable wallet or purse made from recycled material as a token of encouragement. If you need any help in making this list, call me at 9890936828.

Let's hear from you! Email klintvaz@gmail.com or arati05@gmail.com. You can even post a letter to us at 'Goa Going Green' C/o Arti Das, Gomantak Times, Gomantak Bhavan, St Inez, Panjim, Goa.

Organic / Compostable Waste	YES	NO	Quantity Generated	Unit
Fruit peels and cores	✓		0.5 + 0.4 + 0.3 + 0.2	kg
Vegetable peels	✓		0.2 + 0.15 + 0.3 + 0.2	kg
Meat, Fish & Poultry waste products	✓		1 + 0.5 + 0.5 + 2	kg
Soiled newspapers		✓		
Soiled Waste Paper	✓		3	kg
Soiled napkins and tissues	✓		15	nos
Sweepings from rooms	✓		0.5 kg x 30 = 15 kg	kg
Recyclable Waste Items	YES	NO	Quantity Generated	Unit
Beer Bottles (Any Brand) 375ml		✓		
Beer Bottles (Any Brand) 750ml	✓		12	nos
Binding, Miscellaneous Wires		✓		
Bolts / Nails / Screws		✓		
Book Hard Covers w/o Pages	✓		7	nos
Book Pages, Waste Paper	✓		30	nos
Bottle Covers, Caps (Metal)	✓		12	nos
Bottle Covers, Caps (Plastic)	✓		40	nos
Bread Bags (Plastic)	✓		60	nos
Broken Clear Glass Liquor/Wine/Sauce Bottles	✓			
Camera Film Containers		✓		
Carry Bags (All Colours, Thickness, Size) (Plastic)	✓		15	nos
Carry Bags (Paper)	✓		20	nos
Chocolate Boxes	✓		3	nos
Clear / Frosted Glass	✓		5	kg
Clear Bulbs	✓		3	nos
Clear, Frosted Glass Perfume, Cream, Lotion Bottles	✓		2	nos
Coloured Glass Liquor, Wine Bottles	✓		1	no
Coloured Glass Perfume, Cream, Lotion Bottles	✓		1	no
Computer, Audio, Video CDs	✓		1 + 3 + 1	no
Cooking Utensils (Aluminum)	✓		1	no
Cutlery (Metal)		✓		
Cutlery (Plastic)	✓		30 nos	nos

This chart will enable a reader to quantify the amount of waste generated in a day.