

Plastic waste management in colleges

Leo Baekeland created Bakelite in 1907. This was the first plastic that was fully synthetic. Plastic was viewed as a ground-breaking answer to a pressing environmental issue. One million plastic bottles are bought globally every minute, and up to five trillion plastic bags are used annually. Half of all plastic produced is intended for single-use applications, meaning it will only be used once before being discarded.

There are more than 25,000 universities in the world, and each one has a distinctive character that can astonish anyone. With a sizable number of buildings, dorms, canteens, playgrounds, classrooms, and halls where a sizable number of staff members and students carry out their daily activities, educational institutions are comparable to miniature cities. In the course of their regular operations, they produced a lot of plastic waste. Compared to providing formal education, institutions find it challenging to manage them and face several difficulties.

HOW IT STARTED:

Plastic trash was relatively easy to handle during the 1950s to 1970s because so little plastic was created during that time. The generation of plastic garbage, however, more than tripled between the 1970s and the 1990s, indicating a parallel increase in plastic manufacture. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, we produced more plastic waste than in the previous forty years combined. Today, we produce about 400 million tonnes of plastic waste every year.

Plastic has been produced at a quicker rate than any other material since the 1970s. By 2050, it is anticipated that the world's production of primary plastic would have increased by 1,100 million tonnes.

HOW IT CAN BE CONTROLLED:

Proper education should be given about the value of waste management and the 3 R's: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle in order to effectively address the threat that is global pollution.

Reduce: The best strategy is to prevent producing waste, which means avoiding excessive use of goods and services, utilising environmentally friendly products, and conserving energy. It also covers the creation of durable items, energy saving, the use of environmentally friendly technologies, hybrid transportation, and source reduction through minimising the inputs used in the production process. Reduced packaging, energy-efficient production, and the utilisation of renewable energy sources are all part of it.

Reuse: Reusing is a good strategy for cutting waste. Included in this is the recycling of packaging materials that can help cut down on disposable waste. Utilizing used goods is a form of reuse.

Recycling: In this method, used goods are converted into raw materials that can be utilised to make new goods. Recycling of the items yields raw materials that are less polluting, more affordable, and energy efficient. Additionally, this prevents the usage of fresh raw resources.

AWARENESS AMONG STUDENTS:

The goal is to improve community perceptions about the risks of plastic pollution and the possible solutions, which will encourage more individuals and groups to take action. Individual behavioural

changes, improved recycling and sorting, ethical corporate practises, and others are examples of community actions that can be taken.