

Chandigarh administration to enforce mandatory rainwater harvesting in houses of 500 sq yds or more

12Chandigarh: Soon, the Chandigarh administration will start enforcing the mandatory installation of rainwater harvesting systems in residential properties of 500 sq yards or more. To enforce this mandatory clause, the deputy commissioner submitted a proposal to the UT administration to issue a fresh notification regarding the mandatory provision of rainwater harvesting in existing buildings of one kanal and above under the Chandigarh Building Rules (Urban) 2017. As per paragraph No. 35 of the notification dated October 16, 2008, issued by the chief administrator, UT, Chandigarh, "all buildings which are or will be located on plots of one kanal and above shall have rainwater harvesting as per the specifications given by the Administration, and all the existing buildings shall install rainwater harvesting systems to recharge the groundwater within two years from the date of issuance of this notification." However, the said notification was specifically superseded by the Chandigarh Building Rules (Urban) 2017, and after the rules came into force, no such notification was issued by the Administration again to make rainwater harvesting structures mandatory for existing houses of one kanal and above. Nishant Kumar Yadav, deputy commissioner and estate officer, Chandigarh, in the proposal submitted to the UT, said, "It is also mentioned that as per Jal Jeevan Mission for the preservation of rainwater, if rainwater harvesting structures are to be made applicable for existing houses, a separate notification is required...for issuance of the notification with regard to the mandatory provision of rainwater harvesting in the existing building of one kanal and above under the Chandigarh Building Rules (Urban) 2017."

BOX1: Only 11% eligible houses covered so far
So far, only 11% of the eligible houses have installed rainwater harvesting systems. Out of the approximately 8,500 eligible residential properties where it is mandatory to install rainwater harvesting, only around 1,000 have installed it. "At the time of passing new building plans, whether for new houses or reconstruction of old houses, the plans are approved only if the rainwater harvesting structures are incorporated," said a UT official.

BOX2: DEADLINE FIXED IN 2024 BUT ELAPSED
In June 2024, the UT administration ordered the installation of rainwater harvesting in buildings where it is mandatory before July 15. A public notice was issued by the then deputy commissioner-cum-estate office, which said, "Residential plots of one kanal and above, residential group housing buildings, hotels, multiplexes/malls, commercial sites (converted from industrial), banquet halls/marriage palaces, timber sites, educational/academic institutions, are required to get the rainwater harvesting constructed, repaired/renovated before July 15." But no action was taken in pursuance of the order as no UT notification in this regard was issued.

BOX3: Govt buildings
In April this year, the UT chief secretary directed that all govt buildings, including schools, colleges, and anganwadis, should be equipped with rainwater harvesting structures (RWHS). It was decided that all govt buildings, schools, and Anganwadi centres in Chandigarh should be saturated with rainwater harvesting structures by November 2025. It was also decided that an advisory be issued to autonomous bodies, such as PU and PGI, and govts of Haryana, Punjab, and Central to construct rainwater harvesting systems on their premises. All existing rainwater harvesting systems shall be geo-tagged. Since the direction, the UT engineering department installed 128 new RWHS in govt buildings, and 84 new ones are being installed. The latest impetus has come following the Government of India launching the 'Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain 2025' campaign with theme 'Jal Sanchay, Jan Bhagidari- Jan Jagrukta ki Or' on March 22, 2025, to promote rainwater harvesting. Follow more information on [Air India plane crash in Ahmedabad](#) here. Get real-time live updates on rescue operations and check full list of passengers onboard AI 171.

12

12

12

12

12

Follow more information on [Air India plane crash in Ahmedabad here](#). Get real-time live updates on rescue operations and check full list of passengers onboard AI 171.