

# **SOFT PLASTICS MANAGEMENT**

## **LIFE CYCLE OF SOFT PLASTICS**

Soft plastics are a kind of Thermoplastic which can be heated and reformed repeatedly. These are very stretchable and flexible. It is a Low-Density Polyethylene which is predominantly used in film applications due to its flexibility and transparency. They are soft; hence they can be broken by hand. These plastics do not belong to the general waste bin but are separated at the source for recycling.

Soft plastic is also used to produce some flexible lids and bottles as well as in wire and cable applications.

Soft plastic has an excellent resistance to acids, bases and vegetable oils. So, this makes it good for packaging applications requiring heat-sealing.

Manufacturers also use Soft Plastics to create thin container lids, squeezable bottles and some toys.

## **ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS OF IMPROPER DISPOSAL**

Accumulation of Soft plastics or any other plastics lead to heavy ecological impact. They release harmful chemicals into the surrounding soil, which can seep into the groundwater or other surrounding water sources and also the ecosystem of the world.

Floating plastic wastes which can survive for thousands of years in water, serves as mini transportation devices for invasive species, disrupting habitat.

## **ANIMAL AND HUMAN IMPACTS OF IMPROPER DISPOSAL**

The real impact of plastic bag litter is felt on wildlife both in the marine environment and in rural areas. Ten of thousands of whales, birds, seals and turtles are killed every year from plastics bags litter in marine environment as they often mistake plastic bags for food such as jellyfish.

Plastic bag once ingested cannot be digested or passed by an animal so it stays in the gut. Plastic in an animal's gut can prevent food digestion and can lead to a very slow and painful death.

A plastic bag can take up to 10,000 years to break down, once an animal dies and decades after ingesting plastic, the plastic is then freed back into the marine environment to carry on killing other wildlife.

Plankton, fish and ultimately the human race, via the food chain, ingest the highly toxic chemicals. Consuming the fish that contain these toxics can cause an increase in cancer, immune disorders and birth defects.

### **BEST PRACTICES FOR PROPER DISPOSAL**

Providing awareness classes to the common people can make a slight change in their state of mind while using the plastics.

Collect the wastes separately in different baskets and dispose them by garbage disposal plans.

Collect in a bin and recycle it.

### **CAMPUS BASED AWARENESS AND DISPOSAL IMPLEMENTATION PLANS**

- Avoid the use of paper cups in the canteen or in any functions in the campus.
- Make students aware of the adverse effects of soft plastics and ask them not to buy food items or chips packed in attractive color packets like potato chips.

- Avoid the use of straws. Make posters regarding this to attract the students and stick them on the walls of every juice stalls surrounding the campus as well as on the walls of the college canteen.
- Ask the students to use banana leaves instead of using aluminum foils or other soft plastics for packing food items while travelling.
- Place waste bins in and around the campus.
- Ask them to use refills or ink pen through awareness programs.
- Make a Speak-out wall in our Campus in an attractive and catchy manner completely with organic or eco-friendly materials.

## **ACTION PLAN FOR THE UPCOMING MONTHS**

### **JANUARY**

- As a new step for the new semester introduce innovative plans to completely erase plastic wastes from the campus.
- Schedule awareness programs for the year.
- Prepare posters about the harmful effects of plastic wastes and stick them all around the campus and on the canteen walls.
- Make a speak out wall in the campus.

### **FEBRUARY**

- Place waste bins in all classes and at the main entrance of the college.

- Conduct a mass campaign in the college titled CLEAN THE CAMPUS to completely eradicate the use of soft plastics.

### **MARCH**

- Conduct the awareness programs scheduled earlier including each and everyone in the college.
- Make sure that the new implementations in the campus regarding waste management is useful.
- Stick posters on the walls of juice stalls around the college to avoid the use of straws.

### **APRIL**

- Prepare reports on the various programs conducted in the campus during the semester.
- Evaluate these reports so as to include more ideas and measures for the upcoming semesters.

Conduct awareness programs and campaigns every semester in the campus.