

Solid Waste Management

Principles and Practice

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Preface

Ideally, a theory and a practice should be the same. However, when it comes to reality, theory differs from practice.

Every year nearly one-third of the world's population dies due to communicable diseases. On the other hand, many countries spend more than one-third of their annual expenditure on armed forces without realising that the threat to their community is more within the nation.

While most of solid waste management is designed by literates and experts, a major part of the solid waste is managed by illiterates or the least literate or non-expert. Hence, there will always be shadows between the aspiration and reality—the reason that many solid waste management projects fail. While international consultants prepare volumes of manifests for hazardous waste transportation, illiterate drivers ship hazardous wastes with these manifests without knowing what to do with them.

While international agencies fund many waste management projects, corrupt politicians may seek a share in the amount spent toward such a project. In addition, there is also an inherent culture of citizens in many developing countries throwing waste on the streets. While the third world struggles to get rid of waste from the immediate neighborhood, some developed countries may add to the waste by shipping waste from their countries in the name of charity or other guise.

Solid waste management needs more common sense rather than the solution of complicated partial differential equations and financial plans.

In spite of many lacunae, innumerable efforts have been made in the past few decades to do much for the Earth. Although waste management has not developed the way some other streams of science/engineering have grown, there are people and agencies who are working within their own limitations which have helped make progress in this area.

Once we dig out and use all the possible resources on the Earth we would definitely turn to waste for recovery of resources—a practice which is now proven to be profitable in the case of extracting precious materials from waste from electrical and electronic equipments rather than from the ore.

Considering the above issues, an attempt is being made by us to minimize the knowledge gap in print and on field after working more than a decade in the field and surveying more than 300 literatures. We have made an attempt to touch almost all the important aspects of solid waste in this book while keeping in mind both the theory and practice. We have also tried to bring wholesomeness to our effort by discussing problems across the world instead of sticking to a single country.

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