

Talking Trash: What can we do with all that paper?

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In the last issue, we tried to understand the “waste hierarchy” and how prevention is the most favoured and disposal is the least favoured category of waste management. In this article, let us discuss some methods of channelizing our house-hold paper waste into some of the categories mentioned in the waste hierarchy.

RECYCLE

- Old newspapers are usually the most common paper waste in many of our house holds. The best practice ofcourse is to recycle them. Since an established business around newspaper recycling exists, it is easy for us to hand over the monthly or bimonthly collected paper or “raddi” to the nearest paper mart. There are several raddiwallas/ scrap dealers and paper marts in govandi station road. It will be wise to not bargain with the dealer. After all, they are doing us a favour by ensuring our paper waste goes into the recycling chain.
- A lot of cardboard waste is generated in the house when you have those online goods being delivered at your doorstep. This includes the occasional pizza boxes. The good news is that cardboard too, is recyclable and there are many recycling centres in Mumbai who have tie ups with your local scrap dealer. So ensure that you collect your cardboard waste and sell/give it to the dealer.
- Handover over your washed and cleaned tetrapacks to outlets who reward and hence encourage tetrapack recycling. For more information, see <http://rur.co.in/tetrapak.html>

There are some techniques to make paper bags without cello-tape, stapler and glue.

You can find these online:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=69Mg8JGiSSA>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9tzwr80fQQ4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F0HFKLQqPQk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=emkFzeLAQq8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TDVEkkvODdQ>

REUSE

- You can also use some of those newspapers to make paper-bags that can line your dust bin, instead of those plastic bin liners.
- If you have old notebooks lying around that have some unused pages left, tear them to make a book of your own. Use one-sided papers to make notepads.

PREVENTION AND MINIMIZATION

- During building functions, parties or get-togethers, avoid buying disposable paper or plastic cutlery. The building society or a group of individuals can invest in one set of steel cutlery or any durable material cutlery which can be re-used over and over again, for all functions of the building/society.
- Similarly, go for cloth towels over tissue papers.
- If you have the choice and can afford it, go for recycled paper/stationery. In general, recycled paper stationery is more expensive than regular ones.
- As a routine practice, carry a cloth handkerchief in your bag, so that you can avoid the use of tissues (at eateries/ hotels/ restaurants) when outside the house.

