

Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules, 2026

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance

Why in News?

Recently, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has notified the Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules, 2026, which will come into effect from 1 April 2026.

- The new Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules, 2026 integrates principles of Circular Economy and Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).
- It broadens the scope of responsibilities, increases linkages for reuse of waste as fuel in boilers, cement kilns, to promote circular economy, and introduces clear penalties for non-compliance.
- **Amendment to** - The SWM Rules, 2016.
- **Formulated under** - The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.
- **Objective** - Promote sustainable and efficient waste management, reduce burden on urban bodies, and enforce the 'Polluter Pays' principle.
- **Key Features** -

Components	Provisions
Segregation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory at source - Wet, dry, sanitary, and special care waste. • Wet waste - Composted or processed through <u>bio-methanation</u>. • Dry waste - Sent to Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) for sorting and recycling. • Sanitary waste - Securely wrapped and stored separately. • Special care waste - Collected by authorized agencies or deposited at designated centres.

Bulk Waste Generators (BWG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They are entities generating ≥ 100 kg/day, consuming $\geq 40,000$ litres/day water, or having floor area $\geq 20,000$ m². Includes government departments, local bodies, PSUs, institutions, commercial establishments, and residential societies. Levy of user fees on waste generators as per local bye-laws.
Extended BWG Responsibility (EBWGR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BWGs are accountable for the solid waste generated by them. Required to process wet waste on-site wherever feasible. Can obtain EBWGR certificate if on-site processing is not possible. <i>Bulk waste generators contribute ~30% of total solid waste</i>, making this responsibility critical.
Land Allocation & Buffer Zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graded criteria for development around solid waste processing/disposal facilities. Buffer zone mandatory for facilities with capacity > 5 tonnes/day. CPCB issues the guidelines for buffer size and permissible activities.
Online Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Centralized online portal</i> to track waste generation, collection, transport, processing, disposal, biomining, and bioremediation of legacy dumpsites. Registration and authorization of waste processing facilities online. Reports and audits submitted online.
Local Bodies & MRFs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local bodies handle collection, segregation, and transport in coordination with MRFs. MRFs are recognized as sorting facilities and deposition points for e-waste, special care waste, sanitary waste, etc. Focus on peri-urban rural areas; encouraged to generate carbon credits.
Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RDF are produced by the shredding/dehydrating of municipal solid waste with high calorific value. They are mainly non-recyclable plastic, paper, and textiles. Industrial units (cement, waste-to-energy) must replace conventional solid fuel with RDF. Fuel substitution is expected to increase from 5% to 15% over six years.

Landfilling & Legacy Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landfills restricted to non-recyclable, non-energy recoverable waste and inert material. Higher landfill fees will be incurred for sending unsegregated waste. Annual audits by SPCBs, monitored by District Collectors. Mapping, assessment, biomining, and bioremediation of legacy dumpsites with quarterly reporting online.
Hilly Areas & Islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Levy user fees on tourists to regulate tourist inflow based on capacity. Designated collection points for non-biodegradable waste. Local populations encouraged to hand over waste; hotels/restaurants process wet waste locally.
Implementation Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central and State-level committees established for effective implementation. State-level committee chaired by Chief Secretary or Head of UT Administration. Committees recommend measures to CPCB for compliance and monitoring.

References

1. [PIB | Solid Waste Management \(SWM\) Rules, 2026](#)
2. [IE | Solid Waste Management \(SWM\) Rules, 2026](#)