

## 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"> <li>• <b>Mandatory at source</b> - Wet, dry, sanitary, and special care waste.</li> <li>• <b>Wet waste</b> - Composted or processed through <u>bio-methanation</u>.</li> <li>• <b>Dry waste</b> - Sent to Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) for sorting and recycling.</li> <li>• <b>Sanitary waste</b> - Securely wrapped and stored separately.</li> <li>• <b>Special care waste</b> - Collected by authorized agencies or deposited at designated centres.</li> </ul>

<b>Bulk Waste Generators (BWG)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They are entities generating <math>\geq 100</math> kg/day, consuming <math>\geq 40,000</math> litres/day water, or having floor area <math>\geq 20,000</math> m<sup>2</sup>.</li> <li>• Includes government departments, local bodies, PSUs, institutions, commercial establishments, and residential societies.</li> <li>• Levy of user fees on waste generators as per local bye-laws.</li> </ul>
<b>Extended BWG Responsibility (EBWGR)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BWGs are accountable for the solid waste generated by them.</li> <li>• Required to process wet waste on-site wherever feasible.</li> <li>• Can obtain EBWGR certificate if on-site processing is not possible.</li> <li>• <b><i>Bulk waste generators contribute ~30% of total solid waste</i></b>, making this responsibility critical.</li> </ul>
<b>Land Allocation &amp; Buffer Zones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graded criteria for development around solid waste processing/disposal facilities.</li> <li>• Buffer zone mandatory for facilities with capacity &gt;5 tonnes/day.</li> <li>• CPCB issues the guidelines for buffer size and permissible activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Online Monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Centralized online portal</u> to track waste generation, collection, transport, processing, disposal, biomining, and bioremediation of legacy dumpsites.</li> <li>• Registration and authorization of waste processing facilities online.</li> <li>• Reports and audits submitted online.</li> </ul>
<b>Local Bodies &amp; MRFs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local bodies handle collection, segregation, and transport in coordination with MRFs.</li> <li>• MRFs are recognized as sorting facilities and deposition points for e-waste, special care waste, sanitary waste, etc.</li> <li>• Focus on peri-urban rural areas; encouraged to generate carbon credits.</li> </ul>
<b>Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RDF are produced by the shredding/dehydrating of municipal solid waste with high calorific value.</li> <li>• They are mainly non-recyclable plastic, paper, and textiles.</li> <li>• Industrial units (cement, waste-to-energy) must replace conventional solid fuel with RDF.</li> <li>• Fuel substitution is expected to increase from 5% to 15% over six years.</li> </ul>

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

## References

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