

## Solid waste management strategy for the urban area of Ragama

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The Municipal Solid Waste Management has been a growing problem in developing countries. Sri Lanka being a developing country needs a lasting solution to this problem. Therefore, it is necessary to find out whether the existing solid waste management practices and its structure could support the process efficiently and effectively in order to prevent the environment pollution, provide good sanitation and healthy environment for people to live in.

Municipal solid waste Management (MSWM) is a major responsibility of local government. It is a complex task which requires appropriate organizational capacity and corporation between numerous stakeholders in the private and public sectors. Although, the SWM is playing a pivotal role in public health and environmental protection the SWM in most cities of Sri Lanka is highly unsatisfactory. As such, this study attempts to ascertain the present solid waste generation pattern, analyze the existing problems of SWM system of local authorities, identify the technical issues and issues related to institutional understanding, and finally to develop sustainable SWM plan for local authorities.

Scope of the study is limited to analyze the issues related to SWM in Local Authorities in Sri Lanka: special references to Ragama Urban Council Area. And also the study was concentrated on Household and Commercial Solid Waste, the SWM of toxic is not considered.

With this point of view, the study was carried out in the urban area of Ragama which defined as an urban area under UDA act No.41 of 1978. The solid waste materials of Ragama urban area were categorized in to two broad categories; Household Solid Waste and Commercial Solid Waste. The household solid waste collected locally and the amount depend on the size, level of the population, and the consumption habits. The commercial waste is generated by commercial facilities but it is disposed at public expense. The gross waste collection per day is 8200 kg. which includes Polythene and Plastics, Bio-degradables (short term), Bio degradable (long-term), Metal, Wooden, Glass, Paper, Building, Slaughter House, Saw dust/Paddy/Husk and Cloths/ Garments and others. The most dangerous of the waste is highly toxic and hazardous material generated by the industries.

As such, the urban council is required to give resources and employ responsible and efficient people to address this problem and also a sustainable SWM plan. And it is anticipated that a permanent, economically viable, socially acceptable, and environmental friendly solution for solid waste management in Urban Area of Ragama could be achieved which in turn beneficial for development of more effective national strategy for Solid Waste Management of urban areas in Sri Lanka.

**Key words:** Municipal solid waste, Urbanization, Solid waste management, Local authorities, Social implications

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