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Government of India

Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution

Department of Food and Public Distribution

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Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi

Dated 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2021

**CIRCULAR**

**Sub: Awareness on Swachhata, Hygiene, Sanitation & Plastic Waste Management during Swachhta Pakhwada from 16th to 28th February, 2021 - reg.**

Swachh Bharat Mission has been launched to achieve total sanitation and cleanliness in India. All Ministries / Departments need to take utmost efforts for mobilizing people participation and to ensure that the mission truly becomes a citizen's movement. This Department draws out and implements a fortnight long action plan every year from 16th to 28th February to bring into focus, the contribution of the Department towards Swachh Bharat Mission and also to carry out substantive work related to Swachhta. The action plan is based on the Department and its attached offices' area of responsibility and include innovative practices, media campaign, workshops, award of functions etc.

2. The Swachhta around us plays a vital role and in order to remain healthy & fit one should maintain hygiene everywhere. Clean drinking water, hygiene, and sanitation play an important part in maintaining health. Contaminated water causes many water-borne infections like Diarrhoea and also serves as a carrier for vectors such as mosquitoes spreading epidemics. It results in control of enteric diseases and boosts child health.

3. Hygiene is the practice of keeping oneself and one's surroundings clean in order to prevent infection and disease and remain healthy and fit. Sanitation is arrangements to protect the public health specially the provision of clean drinking water and proper disposal of sewage. Dirty waste water and excrement must be fully conveyed in sewers to treatment places. In no case, they should spread outside since it will spread infection and disease/ill-health. This is the basic public and private health issue at living, working and any public places. It is our basic right to remain healthy at all places and let us strive for it.

4. Spending more time at work makes us more responsible to follow proper hygiene as there are more people to spread germs and variety of infections. Employees can contribute towards maintaining good hygiene and sanitation.


5. Another major issue being faced by India is Plastic pollution which has become one of the most pressing environmental issues, as rapidly increasing production of disposable plastic products overwhelms the world's ability to deal with them. Plastic trash has become so ubiquitous that it has prompted efforts to be taken at the very basic level. Here are a few small steps one can take for reducing plastic in major ways.

- Bring your own bags and containers to the grocery store

- Say 'no' to straws and plastic lids. If a straw is a must, purchase a reusable stainless steel or glass straw
- Get a stainless steel water bottle
- Use a reusable produce bag. A single plastic bag can take 1,000 years to degrade. Purchase or make your own reusable produce bag.
- Buy boxes instead of bottles. Often, products like laundry detergent come in cardboard which is more easily recycled than plastic.
- Purchase food, like cereal, pasta, and rice from bulk bins and fill a reusable bag or container. You save money and unnecessary packaging.
- Use a reusable bottle or mug for your beverages.
- Use matches instead of disposable plastic lighters or invest in a refillable metal lighter.
- Avoid buying frozen foods because their packaging is mostly plastic. Even those that appear to be cardboard are coated in a thin layer of plastic. In addition you'll be eating fewer processed foods!
- Don't use plasticware.
- Make fresh squeezed juice or eat fruit instead of buying juice in plastic bottles.
- Pack your lunch in reusable containers and bags.

6. Cutting back on plastic is difficult, but taking any of these steps is a big leap forward, especially if everyone participates in their own way. As someone said "It's not about doing everything it's about doing something."

7. Further, the fight with corona-virus is yet to be over, hence the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare has been issuing updated Standard Operating Procedure on preventive measures to contain spread of COVID-19 in offices. All should strictly comply with instructions issued by MHA, M/o H&FW and DoP&T, from time to time, on regular sanitization/cleaning of workplaces, maintenance of social distancing norms, wearing of masks and health & hygiene practices etc.

  
 (Ram Chandra)  
 US(General)

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