

Waste disposal

Waste is items that we (individuals, offices, schools, industries, hospitals) do not need and **discard**.

■ Types of waste

- Liquid: wash water from homes, liquids used for cleaning in industries and waste detergents.
- Solid: any garbage, refuse or rubbish that we make in our homes and other places. These may include old car **tyres**, broken furniture and even electronic devices.
- **Hazardous**: those that potentially **threaten** public health or the environment. Such waste could be inflammable (can easily catch fire), reactive (can easily explode), corrosive (can easily eat through metal) or toxic (poisonous to human and animals). In many countries, appropriate authorities supervise the disposal of such hazardous waste.
- Organic: this comes from plants or animals sources. Commonly, they include food waste, fruit and vegetable **peels**, flower **trimmings**. They are biodegradable. Many people turn their organic waste into compost and use them in their gardens.
- Recyclable: waste that can be potentially recycled is termed “Recyclable waste”. Aluminum products, plastics, glass products, paper products can be recycled and fall into this category.

■ How is waste treated and disposed?

Waste management simply means the collection, transport, processing or disposal, managing and monitoring of waste materials to minimize its consequences on humans and the environment.

- Incineration method:
This simply means burning waste. This method is common in countries with limited landfill space. It is appropriate for treating waste with contamination (like those from hospitals) and hazardous waste from factories, but the method produces too much carbon dioxide. Modern incineration processes are more efficient and cleaner. This method is very common in Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands.



to discard: *buttare via, eliminare*
hazardous: *pericoloso*
peel: *buccia, scorza*
to sort out: *sistemare, organizzare*

to threaten: *minacciare*
trimmings: *scarti del taglio*
tyre: *pneumatico*

- **Sanitary landfills:**
Generally, this term means a large piece of land away from living places where all the waste from a town is deposited. Proper landfill management involves **sorting out** all the waste and sending only the waste that cannot be recycled and composted to the site. In many towns, sorting is not done, and all the waste is mixed up and deposited. That is a problem because, glass, and plastics take thousands of years to decompose. Additionally, the landfills soon become full, smelly and unsafe for the environment.



bin bags: *sacchetti per la spazzatura*
to sort out: *sistemare, organizzare*

- **Recycling:**
This means processing used materials into new, useful products. Recycling also uses less energy and it is a great way of controlling air, water and land pollution. In many countries, the authorities help families with **bin bags** with labels on them. Families then sort out the waste themselves and place them in the right bags for collection. When recyclable waste is collected, they are sent to the recycling unit, where all the waste from each type are combined, crushed, melted and processed into new materials.

1 Answer the following questions.

1. What does the term "waste" mean?
2. What types of waste can be collected and treated?
3. Give some examples of each type of waste.
4. What does the incineration process consist of?
5. What is a sanitary landfill?
6. What does "recycling" mean? Why is it good for the environment?
7. What kind of waste disposal is used in the place where you live?
8. Does your family separate and recycle waste? Do you have bin bags or tanks for collection?
9. Can you give any examples of recyclable waste?
10. How does the recycling process work?