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CITY DOCTOR COMES UP WITH A GREEN METHOD TO RECYCLE WATER

Now, your bath water can help city combat crisis

Linah Baliga

The city is facing its worst ever water crisis, and its citizens like Dr Ajit Gokhale who are braving it head-on. While many have adopted traditional methods of conserving water, Gokhale has a unique idea to save water. He is recycling bath waste water in housing societies and giving it a second life. Gokhale has already set up recycle plant at the Kanti Apartments housing society in Bandra and at a bungalow in Khar (West).

Gokhale has realised that most housing society members are receptive to the idea of treating bath wastewater over any other wastewater. "Bath water is the cleanest wastewater available in any housing society. There are other types of wastewater like kitchen and toilet wastewater. Toilet wastewater is bad and the kitchen wastewater when collected for treatment starts stinking," Gokhale said.

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Explaining the process of recycling bath wastewater, Gokhale said that the wastewater is brought to a suitable site where a tank or a pit of suitable dimension is made. The dimensions depend on the site conditions and volume of the wastewater. The tank or pit is lined by soiling and LDP lining. The tank is filled with a coarse mixture of high porosity, efficient sewage treating bacteria and supporting media.

Specially selected plants are then planted with their roots forming an association with the bacteria to give an effective sewage treatment. This system remains functional for many years with almost zero maintenance.

"We collect bath water and treat it through advanced reed bed system. The area required for advanced reed bed is 3 square metres for 1,000 litres of wastewater to be treated per day. So for five flats, an area of 6 square metres is required," Gokhale said. "However, if there are more number of families and the area is less then we do the recycling through physico-chemical treatment. Physico-chemical treatment requires 1 square metre per 10 families."

Gokhale also has bath water recycle plant set up at Symbiosis in Pune and at various hotels in Guhaghar, 350km away from Mumbai.

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The system in place at Kanti Apartments housing society, Bandra; (inset) Dr Ajit Gokhale

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