

RA9003 IN A NUTSHELL



BASICS OF THE ECOLOGICAL SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT ACT

REPRINTED FROM "SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT
MADE EASY" A HANDBOOK BY THE UNDP/DENR/
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WASTE REDUCTION AND PROPER SOLID WASTE SEGREGATION ARE NO LONGER CHOICES WE HAVE TO MAKE. AS LAW-ABIDING CITIZENS OF THIS COUNTRY, WE ARE REQUIRED TO FOLLOW A LAW ENACTED AS EARLY AS 2001.

Republic Act 9003, or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000, was signed into law on January 26, 2001. It is considered a broad-based and comprehensive approach to solid waste management.

It involves segregation at source, segregated collection, storage, transfer, processing, treatment and disposal of solid waste.

The law promotes a way of thinking that waste is a resource that can be recovered. This can be achieved by following the 3 Rs: reduce, reuse, and recycle. The law mandates us to put these principles into practice. By doing so, the problem of solid waste management can be solved.

The law requires the following:

- Solid waste must be reduced at source.
- Recyclable materials must be recovered.
- The remaining waste, after recyclable and biodegradable materials have been separated and used, is to be disposed of properly.

Solid waste management begins inside the household. Starting in our homes, we must learn to conserve resources so we can reduce the amount of materials that we throw away.

Our local government units (LGUs) are responsible for enforcing the law. Government agencies on the national level are required to support LGUs in carrying out this responsibility. LGUs are thus required to draw up a solid waste management plan.

In terms of areas of responsibility, the barangay is tasked to ensure that households and establishments reduce waste, reuse materials, and recover recyclable items. The city or municipality provides a garbage collection system, and a proper waste treatment and disposal facility that protects the environment. ■

SOME PROVISIONS OF RA9003

Compiled by Beryl Baybay

- LGUs are mandated to divert 25 percent of the wastes thrown in disposal facilities to help reduce waste production within the first five years after the implementation of the act.
- All households, institutions, industrial and commercial establishments, and agricultural sources should segregate their wastes before collection. Wastes should be stored in separate containers and properly marked as "compostable," "non-recyclable," "recyclable," or "special waste." Designated areas and containers should be provided where residents can drop off the segregated wastes that later will be collected by the haulers. (Chapter 3 Article 2)
- There should be separate collection schedules and separate trucks that will collect specific types of wastes (Article 3)
- Some of the prohibited acts as outlined in Chapter 6 Section 48 and corresponding penalties based on Section 49 are the following:

Violations	Penalties
Littering, throwing, or dumping wastes in public places such as roads, sidewalks, canals, esteros or parks and establishments	A fine of not less than P300 but not more than P1,000, or rendering of community service for not less than one day to no more than 15 days to an LGU where such prohibited acts are committed, or both.
Open burning ("pagsisiga") of solid waste	A fine of not less than P300 but not more than P1,000 or imprisonment of not less than one day to no more than 15 days, or both.
Allowing or causing the collection of non-segregated or unsorted waste Squatting in open dumps and landfills Open dumping, burying of biodegradable or non-biodegradable materials in flood-prone areas Unauthorized removal of recyclable materials intended for the collection of authorized persons	A fine of not less than P1,000 but not more than P3,000 or imprisonment of not less than 15 days to no more than six months, or both.
Mixing source-separated recyclable material with other solid waste in any vehicle, box, container or receptacle used in solid waste collection and disposal	A fine of P500,000 plus an amount not less than 5 percent but not more than 10 percent of his net annual income during the previous year.
The construction of any establishment within two hundred (200) meters from open dumps or controlled dumps or sanitary landfills	A fine not less than P100,000 but not more than P1,000,000, or imprisonment not less than one year but not more than six years.

Any citizen may file an appropriate civil, criminal or administrative action in the proper courts/bodies against any person, government entities or official who violates or fails to comply with the provisions of the law. However, the law also protects those who implement it against suits intended to harass or pressure. You may download the full text of RA 9003 from www.emb.gov.ph. □