

Urbin: Smart way to handle plastic waste

In the past two months, residents of Raja Street in Mandaveli in the city have managed to collect 281 kilograms of plastic waste. These include pet bottles, and packaging materials containing plastic used for fast-moving consumer products, etc.



Representative Image

Chennai:

Using Urbin — a ‘smart’ initiative by waste management services firm Kabadiwalla Connect — placed in around 30 locations in Mylapore, the residents have fought the challenges posed by the plastics that are quite ubiquitous to our modern living. Ganga Sridhar, one of the four members of Eco Konnector who has been advocating sustainable waste management procedures in the locality, has been supervising one of the bins placed in her apartment.

She keeps the bin outside every Sunday for plastic waste to be collected, and once the bin gets full, it alerts her— thanks to the sensors attached to it. “Having tried several methods, we have found a solution in Urbins. We have been effectively managing our plastic waste with active participation from residents,” she said.

Other areas like Sivaraman Street and Bagirathi Street in Mandaveli, too, have people from apartment complexes taking turns to handle the bins. Next to the Urbins are sewn gunny bags that are used to dispose other dry waste like cardboard covers, aluminium foil, etc. Ganga added that the procedure has made the residents guilt-free, by doing something about the challenges posed by these kind of plastics and other dry waste.

Another reason why the concept has worked well in the locality is the close proximity of the resident welfare associations. “Whatever has to be disseminated is done quickly across platforms and everyone pitches in willingly. It has worked well because the net garbage output has come down. Earlier, even if we did segregate the waste, they would land up only in the main corporation bin,” Ganga added.

Ganesh Kumar, the COO at Kabadiwalla Connect, said, “We collected about 2.5 tonnes of material from 30 bins last month”.

How it works?

Urbin is a smart bin that can collect all kinds of recyclable plastics. The residents can drop plastics in to the bin and the smart sensor attached to it will monitor garbage level. Once the bin is about 80% full, a pick-up is automatically scheduled with an authorised Kabadiwalla. He would then segregate them and report back to the residents through a customised app.