

Key Changes Plastic Waste management Rule 2016 as amended til 31st Mar 2026

Key Changes:

S No.	Change
3.ga.	“End-of Life disposal” means using plastic waste for generation of energy subject to relevant guidelines in force, which includes co-processing (e.g. in cement, steel or any other such industry) or waste to oil, except in cases where feedstock chemicals are produced for further use in the production of plastic which may then be considered under recycling or for road construction as per Indian Road Congress guidelines etc.” “End of Life disposal” means the utilisation of plastic waste for the purpose of energy recovery including co-processing in industries such as cement, steel, and any other similar industry, waste-to-energy processes, waste-to-oil conversion, and use in road construction in accordance with applicable guidelines; Provided that, it shall not include processes wherein plastic waste is converted into feedstock chemicals, or for the production of new plastic, which shall be considered as recycling
Key Changes	Revised definition of <i>end-of-life disposal</i>: Previously, it permitted activities like energy recovery and use in road construction, while excluding processes involving conversion into feedstock. Now, the definition more explicitly clarifies that any process converting plastic waste into new plastic materials or feedstock chemicals is not considered end-of-life disposal and is instead classified as recycling.
3.qa.	“Plastic Waste Processing” means any process by which plastic waste is handled for the purpose of reuse, recycling, co-processing or transformation into new products or generation of energy.
Key Changes	The definition has been updated to explicitly include the phrase “generation of energy.”.
3.qb.	“Plastic Waste Processors” means recyclers of plastic waste as well as and entities engaged in using plastic for energy (waste to energy) including in coprocessing or converting plastic waste it to oil (waste to oil) except in cases where feedstock chemicals are produced for further use in the production of plastic which may then be considered under recycling, industrial composting; 3.(qb) “Plastic Waste Processors” means entities involved in recycling of plastic waste or entities engaged in end of life disposal of plastic waste”;
3.ua	3.(ua) “Reuse” means using an object or resource material again for either the same purpose or another purpose without changing the object’s structure;
3.ub	3.(ub) “Seller” means a person who sells plastic raw material such as resins or pellets or intermediate material used for producing plastic packaging.
3.ub	3.(ua) “registered environment auditor” means Environment Auditor as defined under the Environment Audit Rules, 2025;
3.uc	3.(ub) “reuse” means using an object or resource material again for either the same purpose or another purpose without changing the object’s structure;
	3.(uc) “seller” means a person who sells plastic raw material such as resins or pellets or intermediate material used for producing plastic packaging;’.
Key Changes	1) Earlier, the definition of <i>Plastic Waste Processor</i> covered both recyclers and entities involved in energy recovery (such as waste-to-energy, co-processing, and waste-to-oil), while excluding feedstock-to-plastic processes, which were categorized under recycling. In the revised version, the definition is streamlined to include only recyclers and entities handling end-of-life disposal, without specifying particular processes. 2) A new definition for <i>Registered Environment Auditor</i> has been introduced for the first time. 3) The serial numbering of the definitions for <i>reuse</i> and <i>seller</i> has been revised, with no substantive change to their meaning.

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S.No.	Change
3.w	“ Local Body ” means urban local body or authority with different nomenclature such as municipal corporation, municipality, nagar palika, nagar nigam, nagar panchayat, municipal council including notified area committee (NAC) and not limited to or any other local body or local authority or other authority constituted under the relevant statutes such as gram panchayat, where the management of plastic waste is entrusted to such agency;
Key Changes	Added authority word in local body definition
11(2)	11(2) Each recycled plastic packaging or commodity shall bear a label “recycled having [—specify percentage—] of recycled plastic” and a mark as shown below and shall conform to the Indian Standard: IS 14534: 2023 titled as “Plastics—Recovery and Recycling of Plastics Waste—Guidelines”, as amended from time to time. NOTE: PET-Polyethylene terephthalate, HDPE-High density polyethylene, V-Vinyl (PVC), LDPE-Low density polyethylene, PP-Polypropylene, PS-Polystyrene and Other means all other resins and multi materials like ABS (Acrylonitrile butadiene styrene), PPO (Polyphenylene oxide), PC (Polycarbonate), PBT (Polybutylene terephthalate) etc. 11(2) In rule 11, for sub-rule (2), the following sub-rule shall be substituted, namely,: — Each recycled plastic packaging or commodity shall conform to the Indian Standard: IS 14534: 2023 titled ‘Plastics—Recovery and Recycling of Plastics Waste—Guidelines’, and shall bear the label and marking as shown below indicating the use of recycled plastic content in accordance with the said standard, and shall also comply with the applicable marking and labelling requirements specified by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, in respect of food contact application.”. NOTE: PET-Polyethylene terephthalate, HDPE-High density polyethylene, V-Vinyl (PVC), LDPE- Low density polyethylene, PP-Polypropylene, PS-Polystyrene and Other means all other resins and multi-materials like ABS (Acrylonitrile butadiene styrene), PPO (Polyphenylene oxide), PC (Polycarbonate), PBT (Polybutylene terephthalate)”.
Key Changes	• Label wording simplified: Earlier, the label had to explicitly mention the percentage of recycled plastic (e.g., “recycled having X% of recycled plastic”). Now, it only needs to indicate the use of recycled plastic content as per the standard, without mandating a fixed wording format. • Alignment with Indian Standard strengthened: While both versions refer to IS 14534: 2023, the new rule places stronger emphasis on full compliance with the standard for labeling and marking. • Additional compliance for food-contact materials: A major new requirement is added—packaging used for food contact must also comply with Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) labeling and marking norms. <i>(This was not mentioned earlier.)</i> • Clarity on labeling requirement: The old rule focused on a specific label statement + symbol, whereas the new rule broadly requires labeling and marking “as per the standard,” making it more flexible but standardized.

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12.	Prescribed authority: 12.(3A) The concerned Local Body in its jurisdiction shall be the authority for enforcement of the provisions of these rules relating to waste management by the waste generator, restriction or prohibition on use of plastic carry bags, plastic sheets or like, covers made of plastic sheets and plastic packaging and items prohibited under rule 4, and in cases where urban local body and a local authority, constituted under relevant statutes, have overlapping jurisdictions, the urban local body shall be the authority for enforcement of the provisions under this sub-rule, and for areas beyond the jurisdiction of urban local body but within the jurisdiction of local authority including peri urban areas, the local authority shall be the authority for enforcement of the provisions under this sub-rule. 12.(3B) The concerned Gram Panchayat in its jurisdiction shall be the authority for enforcement of the provisions of these rules relating to waste management by the waste generator, restriction or prohibition on use of plastic carry bags, plastic sheets or like, covers made of plastic sheets and plastic packaging and items prohibited under rule 4. 12.(3C) The concerned Panchayat at District Level in its jurisdiction shall be the authority for enforcement of the provisions of these rules relating to waste management by the waste generator, restriction or prohibition on use of plastic carry bags, plastic sheets or like, covers made of plastic sheets and plastic packaging and items prohibited under rule 4.”.
Key Changes	• Urban areas: The Urban Local Body is responsible for implementing and enforcing plastic waste regulations, including waste management by generators and restrictions on plastic carry bags, sheets, and other prohibited items. In cases of overlapping jurisdictions with another local authority, the Urban Local Body will act as the primary enforcement agency. • Peri-urban / non-ULB areas: Where areas fall outside an Urban Local Body but are governed by another local authority, that authority will be responsible for enforcement. • Rural villages: The Gram Panchayat is tasked with enforcing plastic waste rules within village limits. • District-level rural areas: The District Panchayat holds responsibility for enforcing these rules across its jurisdiction.
17.5	Annual reports. (5) The State Pollution Control Board or Pollution Control Committee concerned shall cause the report submitted by the urban local body and Panchayat at District level to be audited by itself or through a designated agency or Registered Environment Auditor and copy of the report of such audit and the annual report shall be made available on website of State Pollution Control Board or Pollution Control Committee concerned.
Key Changes	Added Registered Env. Auditor words in Annual Reports section.

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S.No.	Change
7.c.d	Schedule-II 7.c.d. Obligation for use of recycled plastic content (Producer) 7.3.d Obligation for use of recycled plastic content (Importer) 7.4.e Obligation for use of recycled plastic content (Brand Owner) I. Any recycled plastic used in imported material shall not be counted towards fulfilment of obligation. The importer shall fulfil its obligation of use of recycled content (in quantitative terms) through purchase of certificate of equivalent quantity from such Producers, Importers, and Brand Owners who have used recycled content in excess of their obligation. Central Pollution Control Board will develop mechanism for such exchange on the centralised online portal. II. The targets for mandatory use of recycled plastic in plastic packaging category-wise, as given above, shall not be applicable in cases, where use of recycled plastic in plastic packaging is not permitted, under a law or regulation or rule notified by Central Government or by statutory bodies such as Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation, or the Central Insecticide Board or any mandatory Indian standard, in force, or any other statutory requirement specified by the Central Government: Provided that while claiming exemption under this provision the producer, importer or brand owner shall submit the applicable law or regulation or rule or a mandatory Indian standard in their annual returns on the centralized online portal. Note: 1. Statutory requirement shall mean a law or regulation or rule or a mandatory Indian Standard, in force, where use of recycled plastic content is not permitted. 2. Guideline for audit and verification for use of recycled content in plastic packaging shall be prescribed by the Central Pollution Control Board within a period of six months from the date of notification of these rules. 3. The target for use of recycled plastic content, in case of multi-layered plastic packaging (Category III), shall be limited to the weight of plastic layers present in the multi-layered plastic packaging (Category III). (ii) The producer/Importer/Brand Owner is permitted to carry forward the unfulfilled target for mandatory use of recycled plastic content in plastic packaging used in food contact applications for the year 2025-26, for a period of up to three consecutive years starting from 2026-27 over and above the target mandated for those years, while ensuring that a minimum of one third of the unfulfilled carried forward target is fulfilled in each year of that said period, till the complete carried forward unfulfilled target is fulfilled.
Key Changes	• Requirements for using recycled plastic are waived in cases where other laws or standards prohibit its use (such as in food, pharmaceuticals, or insecticides). • Producers, importers, and brand owners must provide the relevant legal or regulatory reference when seeking this exemption. • The Central Pollution Control Board will release audit guidelines within six months. • In multi-layered packaging, compliance targets apply only to the plastic components. • For food-contact packaging, any shortfall in the 2025–26 target may be carried forward for up to three years, with at least one-third of the pending amount to be met each year.

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7.4.b	7.0 Brand Owner (BO): 7.4.b Obligation for reuse I. The Brand Owner using Category I (rigid) plastic packaging for their products shall have minimum obligation to reuse such packaging as given below: Provided that the above target provided in table shall not be applicable in cases where reuse of Category I rigid plastic packaging is not permitted under a law or regulation or rule notified by the Central Government or by statutory bodies, such as Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation, or the Central Insecticide Board or mandatory Indian standard, in force, or any other statutory requirement specified by the Central Government: Provided further that while claiming exemption under this provision the brand owner shall provide the applicable notification or statutory order or rules or regulation or a mandatory Indian standard in their annual returns on the centralised online portal. Note: 1. Statutory requirement shall mean a law or regulation or rule or a mandatory Indian Standard in force, where reuse of Category I rigid plastic packaging is not permitted.” Brand owners using Category I rigid packaging face minimum reuse obligations based on product volume and application: <table><tr><th>Description of Category I Rigid Plastic Packaging</th><th>2025-26</th><th>2026-27</th><th>2027-28</th><th>2028-29 onwards</th></tr><tr><td>Volume/Weight ≥ 0.9 L/kg but < 4.9 L/kg</td><td>10%</td><td>15%</td><td>20%</td><td>25%</td></tr><tr><td>Volume/Weight ≥ 4.9 L/kg (Drinking Water)</td><td>70%</td><td>75%</td><td>80%</td><td>85%</td></tr><tr><td>Volume/Weight ≥ 4.9 L/kg (Other Products)</td><td>10%</td><td>10%</td><td>15%</td><td>15%</td></tr></table> The brand owner is permitted to carry forward the unfulfilled target of minimum obligation to reuse for Category I (rigid plastic packaging), for the year 2025-26, for a period of up to three consecutive years starting from 2026-27 over and above the target mandated for those years while ensuring that a minimum of one third of the unfulfilled carried forward target is fulfilled in each year of that said period, till the complete carried forward unfulfilled target is fulfilled: Provided that responsibility for ensuring product quality and authenticity of products being packaged and implementation of mandatory Indian Standards or mandatory regulations shall lie with the concerned Brand owner.	Description of Category I Rigid Plastic Packaging	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29 onwards	Volume/Weight ≥ 0.9 L/kg but < 4.9 L/kg	10%	15%	20%	25%	Volume/Weight ≥ 4.9 L/kg (Drinking Water)	70%	75%	80%	85%	Volume/Weight ≥ 4.9 L/kg (Other Products)	10%	10%	15%	15%
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Key Changes	• Brand Owners are required to meet prescribed reuse targets for rigid (Category I) plastic packaging. • These targets are not applicable where any law, regulation, or mandatory Indian Standard prohibits reuse (such as in food, pharmaceutical, or insecticide applications). • To avail this exemption, Brand Owners must upload the relevant legal or standard reference in their annual return on the CPCB portal. • A “statutory requirement” refers to any binding law or mandatory standard that restricts the reuse of Category I rigid plastic packaging. • An additional provision has been introduced for Category I rigid plastic packaging of ≥ 4.9 L/kg (excluding drinking water), setting reuse targets at 10% for 2025–26 and 15% from 2026–27 onwards. • Any shortfall in reuse targets for 2025–26 can be carried forward for up to three years (2026–27 to 2028–29). • At least one-third of the pending target must be achieved each year until the backlog is cleared. • Despite reuse, Brand Owners continue to bear full responsibility for product quality, authenticity, and compliance with all applicable standards.
7.4.III	III. The quantity of rigid packaging reused by brand Owner shall be calculated by reducing virgin plastic packaging manufactured/imported/purchased in that year from the sales of the Brand Owner. The brand owner shall provide this information on the centralized portal developed by Central Pollution Control Board. III. The Brand Owner shall furnish information on the total sales, use of virgin plastic content and recycled plastic content in the rigid plastic packaging in their annual return, on the centralised portal developed by the Central Pollution Control Board
Key Changes	Old version required a specific reuse calculation; the new version requires broader reporting of sales and plastic content without that calculation.

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