

Milk Packet: A Tiny Part Causes Pollution

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From waking up to going back to sleep we use plastic every moment. As plastics are easily accessible, we are using it more and more and that is causing harm to all the species and surrounding environment. We all know that plastic plays a major role in environmental damages and plastic packaging accounts for nearly half of all plastic waste globally.

In our country packaged milk is one of the daily essentials. Milk packets are made of low-density polyethylene (LDPE), which is a subclass of plastics. Most of people have no clear concept of proper milk packet disposal. They just use it and throw it



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separately, they don't use the proper cutting technique. We snip or tear off a portion of the milk sachet and that tiny part can cause damage. Even if these pieces are thrown into a designated non-biodegradable bin, do they actually make it to the landfill and recycling units to be processed? No, they don't.

All we can do is packets open by cutting a line halfway across the



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out with biodegradable kitchen wastes. But we must segregate these separately. For recycling purposes this type of plastic has to be compressed at a high temperature and in certain shape else, they add no value. If one disposes the packet



cover. But if a portion of the packet is snipped off, make sure to put it in the main packet before disposing of it. If such pieces do not reach the recycling units, it disintegrates into microplastics, that is, less than five millimetres in length, like the size of microbeads used in gels and toothpaste.

Rain and wind carry these smaller fragments into drainage systems,

which could lead to clogging. These can even enter waterbodies and as a result, marine organisms may mistakenly consume them.

Few months ago, Karnataka vice-president Tejaswini Ananthkumar had tweeted, if milk packets are opened without separating a small piece of it, about 50 lakh such pieces can be prevented from making it to the garbage. She also stated that these small pieces cannot be recycled.