

New guidelines to curb construction pollution

Faizan Haidar

faizan.haidar@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Delhi government has come up with a bunch of guidelines to curb pollution from construction sites, which includes keeping the ground at construction sites wet and covering vehicles that carry construction material.

According to Delhi environment department sources, around 7-8% of the total pollution in the city was due to construction sites. The department has issued a notice to 172 companies in this regard a few months ago too.

Government officials had then stated that they couldn't take further action due to the

lack of proper guidelines.

Now the environment department has circulated a stepwise guideline and if construction companies violate them, action will be taken.

"We have asked them to cover the trucks that carry construction material. Also the construction site should be properly covered. To let the dust settle, they have been asked to keep the ground wet. Also the construction workers must wear protective gear," said an environment department official.

The construction companies have also been asked to submit reports on the current status of construction and steps being taken by them to comply with the ministry of environment

and forests guidelines, 2010, on prevention of dust and garbage accumulation on their construction sites.

"It has been found that companies obtain prior environmental permission but fail to get the mandatory consent to operate from the Delhi Pollution Control Committee. Environment minister Asim Ahmed Khan has also directed the officials to submit a report on steps that could be taken to reduce air pollution caused by open construction activity in the city," the official added.

The department is also taking up the matter with the PWD and other concerned departments to draw up a joint comprehensive plan comprising of aware-

ness programmes and punitive measures to check the growing sources of air pollution due to construction activities.

The official, however, said that most construction works were taking place in NCR and the Central government needed to come up with a policy to reduce pollution there because it affected residents of Delhi too.

The DPCC is responsible for checking emission of dust from construction activities at sites having more than 20,000 square metres built up area. For construction on the sites for the built up area less than 20,000 square metres, municipal corporations are responsible to keep the pollution under check.