

## **Huge growth in Dubai construction waste**

11<sup>th</sup> of May 2008

Construction and demolition waste generated in Dubai registered a record 163 per cent growth last year as compared to the previous year, a report said.

In 2007, a total of 27.7 million tonnes of construction waste was removed from various construction sites of the

city whereas it totaled only 10.5 million tonnes in 2006, said the annual report of Dubai Municipality's Waste Management Department.

Construction and demolition waste makes up 75 per cent of the total solid waste generated in Dubai every year, it said.

Dubai Municipality recycles, by means of a public-private joint venture initiated last year with Al Rostamani Group, some eight million tonnes of construction waste at the Emirates Recycling Plant located in the Al Lusaily area on the Al Ain-Jebel Ali road. The remaining goes to landfill.

In the meantime, the volume of domestic solid waste generated in Dubai rose by 13.7 per cent in 2007 as compared to 2006 with a total of 3.34 million tonnes. According to the report, the agricultural waste generated in Dubai during last year was 142,816 tonnes registering a 14 per cent growth over the previous year whereas the total volume of liquid waste (mainly consisting drainage water carried from areas that are connected to the sewage network) was 76,456 tonnes.

The report pointed out that Dubai Municipality's endeavours to recycle various types of waste are yielding good results as the gap between treated and non-treated waste is narrowing every year even when the total volume of waste, generated in the city, is going up astronomically.

The municipality treated last year over 31 million tonnes of general solid waste, 83 million gallons of liquid waste, and 347 tonnes of hazardous waste. Apart from the recycling plant for construction and demolition waste, the civic body has entered into several other joint ventures with groups like Tadweer, Zenath Group and Al Serkal Group to recycle domestic waste, medical waste and waste edible oil. These joint ventures are currently run on a BOOT (build, own, operate and transfer) basis.

Tadweer, which was opened in March 2006, treats a total of 4000 tonnes of solid waste daily. A Dh500 million (\$136 million) facility, Tadweer is one of the biggest investment projects in the region and is a unique one for Dubai.

Zenath Group, the recycling and waste management arm of ETA Star Group, is currently building UAE's largest and first vertical medical incinerator plant for safe treatment of medical waste. The incinerator, which will be located in Jebel Ali close to the existing incinerator of the municipality, will have a treatment capacity of 20 tonnes per day and will be fully operational by the end of this year.

This project assumes much significance as Dubai Municipality handled 1188 tonnes of medical waste in 2006 compared to 579 tonnes in 2002. By 2017, this quantity is estimated to reach 4030 tonnes, especially with the full-scale functioning of facilities like the Dubai Health Care City which will have nine hospitals with about 1,100 beds, in addition to some 300 health care operators by end-2008, it said.

At present, all medical wastes generated in Dubai are treated and disposed of at the Jebel Ali Medical Waste Treatment Facility. Since 2001, the facility has been using a medical waste incinerator with a throughput capacity of 500 kg/hr.

Al Serkal Group's Dh10 million waste treatment facility in Al Awir is dedicated to recycling waste edible oil from hotels, restaurants and food processing factories. The plant now has an optimum capacity to treat and process 50 cubic meters of grease and other wastes. In its second phase, capacity will be expanded to 100 cubic meters, the report said.