

## Tripura makes soak pits mandatory for every functional tap water connection



The Government of Tripura has issued a notification to all its districts, stating that all rural households that are being provided with a dedicated water connection under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) should also have a soak pit attached to it, to avoid water stagnation and the resulting vector borne diseases.

Referring to the functional tap connection and platforms that are being constructed in each household under JJM, the notification said that it was necessary to setup a mechanism for grey water management in every household. “It has been decided that a soak pit should be constructed, attached to every functional household tap connection (FHTC) in rural areas to avoid water and vector borne diseases,” it said.

SBM (G) Phase-II guidelines recommend treatment of greywater at the place nearest to the point of generation. The districts, blocks and GPs should, therefore, promote household-level treatment units like soak pits, leach pits, kitchen gardens for greywater management. Such decentralised systems involve low capital cost, low operation and maintenance cost and are also easy for members of households to maintain. Such systems do not require centralised spaces.

The Tripura Government notification further said that the Rural Development Department had prepared a type estimate for the construction of individual soak pit for households at the rate of Rs. 3444 for Model 1; and Rs.2800 for Model 2, enclosing a copy for ready reference.

For each district, the State has listed the number of habitations which have been covered with 100 per cent FHTCs. It has asked the districts to undertake a special drive to construct soak pits for all households in the 100 per cent FHTC covered habitations under their jurisdiction, adding that the expenditure for construction of soak pits could be met from MGNREGA as per their requirements.

As per official data of April 8, 2022, all the eight districts of Tripura have the following habitations with 100 per FHTCs: Dhalai – 171; North Tripura District – 215; Sepahijala District – 176; Gomati District – 108; Unakoti District – 84; South Tripura District – 131; Khowai District – 209; and West Tripura District – 347.

A soak pit, also known as a leach pit, is a covered, porous-walled chamber that allows water to slowly soak into the ground. Both individual and community soak pits can be built on a small land area with locally available materials. They use a simple technique and have low operation costs. It is an excellent way to manage grey water and recharge the ground water table. They can ensure that there is no trace of stagnant water around houses or on the streets or in the drains.