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Rubbish piles up with *stay-at-home order*

Domestic waste in the Klang Valley has multiplied since last year as more people rely on delivery service for food and essentials amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Local authorities say proper segregation and recycling practices are needed to prevent landfills from filling up fast. >2&3

KIWANIS CONVENTION

Kiwanis Malaysia District is organising a free online convention from 9am on Sept 11. The public can participate in webinar via Zoom by registering at <http://bit.ly/kmdcon-2021members>

COLOURING CONTEST

Perpustakaan Kuala Lumpur is organising a colouring contest for Kuala Lumpur residents in conjunction with National Day and Malaysia Day. Participants must download and print the drawing in A3 size paper. Each submission must carry name, address, telephone number, MyKad number and email behind the drawing paper. They must also attach a photo of them colouring the drawing as proof. Visit the library's official Facebook page to download the drawing. Submission closes on Sept 5. For details, call 03-2612 3573/3577.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Orbix Education Group Malaysia is holding a webinar titled "The Importance of Artificial Intelligence. Why study AI?" on Sept 10 at 2.30pm. Also open to non-Orbix students. Register through <https://forms.office.com/r/L0fXfEMcNz>. For details, visit www.orbix.edu.my/

DRAW CLASS

Drawing club -- Buds for Kids Organics -- will have free Zoom drawing classes with teacher Komeil, every Saturday at 3pm. It starts on Sept 4. Participants will learn to draw cartoons among other cool stuff. All abilities and ages are welcome. Participants



Alam Flora workers loading bags of household waste onto a truck at PPR Kerinchi in Kuala Lumpur.— Photos: SHAARI CHEMAT/The Star

'Community has role to play in proper waste disposal'

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 ...falls in difference towards cleanliness con

other cool stuff. All abilities and ages are welcome. Participants only need paper and pencil. Register once for unlimited sessions at <https://rebrand.ly/BudsforKidsDrawingClub>

AID FOR NEEDY

> Those who lost a loved one to Covid-19 can claim a one-off cash aid worth RM5,000 from Nadma. Applications can be made via email at bkccovid19@nadma.gov.my and WhatsApp at 011-1321 8056. Payment will be credited into the applicant's account within 30 days from the application date.

> Those in need of food can reach out to the Welfare Department by calling 15999, WhatsApp 019-261 5999 or go to the nearest district office. Operation hours are from 8am to 5pm.

PARK REOPENING

> Public and recreational parks under Selayang Municipal Council have reopened to public from 7am to 7pm daily. Only individual activities such as jogging, cycling and skateboarding are allowed, with a minimum of 2m physical distancing. Use of the playground and group activities exceeding two people are prohibited.

> All public parks under Shah Alam City Council are open from 6am to 8pm for those fully vaccinated. Jogging, physical exercises, cycling and tai chi are allowed with a minimum 2m physical distancing, but picnic, camping and public gathering are not. Use of children playground, outdoor gym equipment are prohibited.

> All public parks under Kuala Lumpur City Hall have reopened to those fully vaccinated. All parks open from 6.30am to 7pm, with the exception of Taman Metropolitan Kepong, which opens from 6am. All facilities, with the exceptions of the toilets, remain off limits.

By FARID WAHAB

faridwahab@thestar.com.my

SIXTY-YEAR-OLD retiree Maznah Hasnan has been badgering her 25-year-old son to buy a bigger rubbish bin for their kitchen.

The 20-litre pedal dustbin has served the family for years, but it is no longer enough to cater to their growing needs.

"My children have been ordering food via delivery platforms almost daily since they started working from home last year.

"We have more plastic containers and wrapping paper that fill up the bin more quickly," said the Wangsa Maju resident.

Since the series of movement restrictions began early last year, Kuala Lumpur households have been generating more waste than they previously did.

Data from Solid Waste Management and Public Cleansing Corporation (SWCorp) showed a three- to six-fold increase in the monthly collection of recyclable waste from January to July this year compared to the same period in 2020.

Recyclable waste includes paper, glass, scrap metal and plastic.

Collection figures hovered above 55tonnes a month this year, before surging to over 90tonnes in June when Phase One of the National Recovery Plan came into effect. (See infographic)

SWCorp Federal Territories director Mohd Zahir Shari said the increase was to be expected as people were spending more time at home.

"Many are also using this time to do spring cleaning, resulting in more items being thrown out."

He, however, said there was no need to increase the frequency of rubbish collection for now as the existing schedule was adequate.

"Residual waste such as kitchen refuse and leftovers are collected

Urban folk's indifference towards cleanliness can be overcome with support from RAs, says DBKL

Monthly collection of recyclable waste in Kuala Lumpur from January 2020 to July 2021



Source: Federal Territories Solid Waste Management and Public Cleansing Corporation

TheStar graphics

twice a week, while bulk waste like furniture and garden wastes are collected once a week," he said.

Mohd Zahir suggested that residents make use of their extra time at home to separate their waste.

"Recyclables that have been separated can be placed next to the rubbish bin for landed homes or inside the recycling bins for stratified residences," he said.

The waste collection and public cleaning services in Kuala Lumpur are carried out by Alam Flora Sdn Bhd, a third-party concessionaire appointed by SWCorp.

Stinking attitude

For those living in low-cost flats, the longer stay-at-home period has shone light on the lack of civic-mindedness among some of the residents.

At the Intan Baiduri people's housing project (PPR) in Kepong, frequent dumping of rubbish in the corridors and lift lobby has left many of the residents dismayed.

Its residents association chairman Rashid Samad said although the problem was not new, it had become more pronounced during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Usually, these irresponsible peo-

ple will leave their rubbish at a different floor, not on the level where they live.

"When we find such bags, we usually open them to find documents or anything else that could indicate the unit owners so that we can confront them.

"If they cannot be identified, we will put up a photo of the bagged waste with a notice at a common area," he said.

Rashid said residents had no excuse for not disposing off their rubbish properly as each block was equipped with its own refuse chamber.



Occupants of stratified residences are required to dispose off rubbish at designated facilities within the premises.

“Some people are just lazy to go to the facility on the ground floor, so they take the easy way out by dumping rubbish in common areas.

At PPR Seri Aman, also located in Kepong, irresponsible residents toss their rubbish in the stairwell and lift lobby.

The PPR's residents association chairman Mohamed Nawaz Koya said some would even throw rubbish from the upper floors, damaging cars parked on the ground floor.

He said two such incidents occurred last month, resulting in cracked windshields from the impact of falling objects.

“We have asked those affected to lodge a police report, and we will submit a copy of the report to Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) for

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 “People have been ordering food via delivery platforms more frequently during the lockdown period, causing more waste to be generated,” said its residents association chairman Zainal Abidin Abdul Wahab.

He said cleaners at the flats would usually pick up rubbish found in common areas but it was not a widespread problem.

However, he added, there had been an increase in the amount of rubbish at the flats as a result of the enhanced movement control order from July 3 to 16.

Improving awareness

Residents associations and the community could play a role to address the lackadaisical attitude towards cleanliness and proper

Selangor sees increase in household rubbish

By GRACE CHEN and EDWARD RAJENDRA
 metro@thestar.com.my

SELANGOR is seeing an increase in the quantity of domestic waste since the start of movement restrictions last year.

With more people housebound and working from home amid the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a major shift in the amount of waste generated — from commercial to residential areas.

Statistics from KDEB Waste Management (KDEBWM) showed an increase in the amount of rubbish between 2019 and 2020, said Petaling Jaya City Council (MBPP) Solid Waste Management and Public Cleansing Department director Lee Lih Shyan.

“In the first six months of 2021, the increase was from hawkers in Petaling Jaya,” he said.

However, with the lockdown, single-use plastics from residential areas and low-cost flats were one of the main contributors to this increase.

This, he added, was caused by the vigorous promotion of takeaway food by restaurants and delivery companies.

Not surprisingly food waste has been the highest contributor to the increase, at 44.8%.

Despite this, Lee said MBPP would not increase its frequency of collection as current truck capacities were still able to accommodate the amount of household waste.

Yearly comparison of rubbish collected by Selayang Municipal Council (in tonnes)



Statistics on domestic waste – Petaling Jaya City Council



Yearly comparison of domestic waste from homes and markets (in tonnes)

Year	Homes	Wet markets	Total
2019	152,525.71	6,601.93	159,127.64
2020	152,782.26	7,276.34	160,058.60
2021 (Jan - July)	92,871.29	4,469.16	97,340.45
Total	398,179.26	18,347.43	416,526.69

Food waste turned to compost (in kilogramme)

Recycled waste by year (in kilogrammes)

further action.

"We hope stern action will be taken against the culprits as such behaviour endangers the safety of other residents," he said.

Nawaz proposed that another refuse chamber be built, in addition to two that were currently servicing the flats.

He said the four-block flats generated more rubbish these days as majority of the residents were working from home.

"We also hope the authorities will increase its collection frequency to cater to the higher volume of waste," he said, adding that rubbish tended to pile up during weekends.

At the Sri Sabah Flats in Cheras, heaps of rubbish at the refuse chambers and chutes were a common sight in the late evening and at night.

the amount of household waste.

"We will do constant monitoring. If there is a high level of waste, MBPJ will take action by either increasing the frequency of trips or call in backup trucks according to the needs of a certain location."

The city council has managed to keep its expenses for waste management under control with no need for additional allocation during the movement restrictions.

Lee said this was due in part to the council's campaign initiatives to raise awareness on reducing waste generation, by holding 3R-related (reduce, reuse, recycle) online sessions with residents.

"Since 2015, MBPJ has implemented a rubbish segregation programme for residential areas under its purview, with the participation of nearly 15,000 households. "House-to-house collection is made once every week and each participating household is provided with a 50litre barrel.

"This year, the council managed to collect 457kg of polystyrene waste that were recycled into picture frames," he said.

A spring cleaning programme, held four times a year in conjunction with major festivals, also sees discarded items being repaired and resold at low rates through the council's website.

"Apart from the above initiatives, there is MBPJ's 'Ecobrick' programme, a method to prevent plastic bags from ending up in landfills. "Plastic bags are compressed to the brim inside a 1.5litre drink bottle and are resold to the council at RM1 each," said Lee.

In **Selayang**, the volume of rubbish also increased compared to the pre-MCO period.

Selayang Municipal Council (MPS) Solid Waste Management and Health Department director Norhayati Ahmad said it covered all types of waste.

"In July this year for example, domestic waste collection for Zone

work as rat infestation and the outbreak of vector-borne diseases.

"Stagnant water among the rubbish piles can lead to a dengue outbreak," she said.

Dr Umi warned that improper waste disposal could cause problems such as rat infestation and the outbreak of vector-borne diseases.

The DBKL Health and Environment Department director said the associations could start by encouraging recycling among their members.

"Work with Alam Flora to place recycling bins in your housing area to encourage residents to separate their rubbish.

"You can also work with non-governmental organisations and the private sector to organise campaigns to improve awareness," she added.

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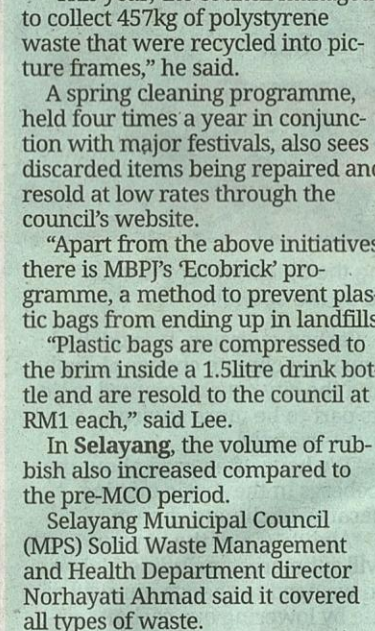
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Rubbish overflow is becoming a problem for high-rise dwellers as the refuse chambers are unable to take the large volume of waste

Year	Total
2019	65,531.15
2020	980,612.6
2021 (Jan -July)	616,119.1
Total	1,662,262.85

Year	Management	Tipping fees
2019	25,740,332.16	5,728,595.04
2020	26,137,815.86	5,762,109.60
2021 (Jan -July)	15,233,526.13	3,504,256.20
Total	67,111,674.15	14,994,960.84

Source: Petaling Jaya City Council

Year	Total
2019	141,379
2020	974,405
2021 (Jan -July)	613,372
Total	1,822,042.41

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TheStar graphics

"Recycle, think before you buy, bring your own container, use biodegradable packaging and reduce waste at source"

Norhayati Ahmad

15 was 643.1tonnes. Compared to the same period in 2019, collection was only 532tonnes. The increase in percentage was 21% for this area," she said.

Zone 15 covers Taman Selayang Mutiara, Kampung Selayang Permai, Templer Square, Bandar Baru Selayang and Bandar Baru Selayang Phase 2.

Norhayati said the council would conduct periodic monitoring of the waste collection schedule by KDEB Waste Management (KDEBWM).

"We will increase the frequency

of waste collection to counter any increase or out-of-control dumping," she assured.

The collection of bulk waste is carried out free on a weekly basis in residential areas and twice weekly for commercial areas in Selayang.

"Recycle, think before you buy, bring your own container, use biodegradable packaging and reduce waste at source," Norhayati advised.

Meanwhile, Worldwide Holdings Bhd corporate communications assistant manager Ismal Ishak said there had been a drop in construction and demolition debris at Selangor's landfills.

"Inert landfills that received construction, industrial and commercial wastes in the month of May this year and during the commencement of the lockdown again in June, had shown a significant decrease of between 23% and 42% due to the closure of construction and other non-essential economic sectors," he said.

The company manages three inert landfills in Dengkil, Kuang and Sungai Tua while another three are sanitary landfills in Jeram, Tanjung Dua Belas and Sabak Bernam.