



Septic Tanks Meet Norms: MoDWS

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Union Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MoDWS) has said that Septic tanks and single pits are safe sanitation technologies that meet the standards prescribed by the Sustainable Development Goals.

Union Ministry was responding to a report on National Annual Rural Sanitation Survey (NARSS) 2018-19 on use of Septic Tanks.

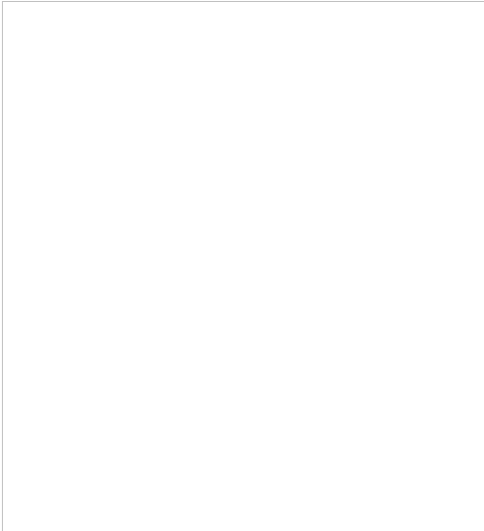
Findings of the Survey

- National Annual Rural Sanitation Survey (NARSS) 2018-19 has concluded that Only 26% of rural toilets use twin-leach pits and rural toilets [that do not use twin-leach pits] could create a new “sanitation nightmare.”
- Not using twin pit can be harmful to health and the environment, and can push a new generation into manual scavenging.
- Septic tanks are the most popular option, with 28% of toilets connected to a septic tank with a soak pit and 6% to a tank without a soak pit.

Union Ministry’s Response

- Ministry responded that Septic tanks and single pits are safe sanitation technologies that meet the standards prescribed by the Sustainable Development Goals(SDG).
- The twin-leach pit toilet is among the most economical and safe sanitation technologies, and has been promoted and extensively adopted.
- Ministry accepted, there is a manpower challenge to empty and clean such tanks, given the social context of the country and caste prejudices against such cleaning work.
- It is preparing technological and entrepreneurial solutions to the problem.

National Annual Rural Sanitation Survey(NARSS) 2018-19



It was conducted by an Independent Verification Agency under the World Bank support project to the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen).

Twin-pit and Single-pit system

- Two pits are dug with honeycombed walls and earthen floors which allow liquid to percolate into the surrounding soil.
- When one pit is filled and closed off, waste flow is transferred to the second pit, allowing waste in the first pit to be converted into manure after a year or two.
- It is an in-situ sanitation system which claims to bypass thorny issues such as caste purity, as owners will be dealing with manure, not excreta.
- In case of single pit system, once this single pit is filled, there is an immediate emergency to empty excreta not manure(it needs long time for conversion of excreta into manure).