

NGT moves to stop pollution in building sites

- Compulsory use of wet jets in grinding and stone cutting.
- Use of wind breaking walls around construction site.

In addition to these directions, it has also been explicitly mentioned in the order that if any person, home owner and builder is found to be violating any of the above mentioned as well as other conditions stated in the order, such person, owner, builder shall be liable to pay compensation of ₹50,000 per default in relation to construction activity at its site and ₹5,000 for each violation during carriage and transportation of construction material, debris on trucks or other vehicles. It has also been specified that these penalties are in addition to any other action that the concerned authority may take against such builder, owner, person and transporter under the laws in force.

While NGT has issued these directions and prescribed penalties to protect the environment against air pollution, compliance depends on the willingness to follow these and awareness about the rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders.

The protection of environment is a social responsibility. If the rapid development activity is carried out without paying any attention to the adverse impact then it may lead to disastrous consequences not only on the environment but also on the public at large.

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ISTOCK

Builders will now have to cover construction material with tarpaulin sheets, not dump sand on roads and provide site workers with masks

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hstestates LEGAL REMEDIES

Rapid urbanisation and infrastructure development has led to unabated construction activity. Massive projects are being undertaken for infrastructure, commercial and residential development. In residential colonies, single-storey houses are either being converted to multi-storey flats or being renovated.

It is common practice to pile waste and construction material on the road which obstructs free flow of traffic leading to traffic congestion. Dust emissions from construction material and con-

struction and demolition waste also pollute the air.

Recently, the National Green Tribunal (NGT), in a matter filed before it, dealt with the issue of dust emissions emanating from building construction, transportation of construction and demolition (C&D) waste materials.

NGT then passed an order giving directions to be followed by all those carrying out any construction activity for preventing and controlling air

pollution resulting from emission of dust in the atmosphere. A few of these directions are as follows:

- Builders or home owners have to put tarpaulin sheets on scaffolding around the area of construction and the building.
- No person, including builder or owner can be permitted to store any construction material, particularly sand, on any part of the street, roads in any colony.
- Construction material of any kind at the site has to be fully covered in all respects so that it does not disperse in the air in any form.
- All construction material and debris shall be carried in trucks or other vehicles which are fully covered and protected to ensure that the construction debris or material does not get dispersed in the air or atmosphere, in any form whatsoever.
- The dust emissions from the construction site should be completely controlled and all precautions taken.
- All workers at the construction site and involved in loading, unloading and carriage of construction material and construction debris shall be provided with masks to prevent inhalation of dust particles.
- Every owner and or builder

shall be under obligation to provide all medical help, investigation and treatment to the workers involved in the construction of building and carrying construction material and debris relating to dust emission.

It shall be the responsibility of every builder to transport construction material and debris waste to construction site, dumping site or any other place in accordance with rules.

Builders should take appropriate measures and strictly comply with rules by fixing sprinklers and creating green air barriers.