



NHAI To Take Proactive Measures to Mitigate Air Pollution on Highways in Delhi-NCR

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Keeping its commitment to create cleaner and healthier surroundings for National Highway users and nearby communities, NHAI has taken proactive steps and issued comprehensive Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to its field offices in Delhi-NCR to mitigate air pollution caused by National Highways construction and allied activities. The guidelines outline a systematic approach to address air pollution generated from vehicular emissions, road dust, and construction activities and are applicable to all completed and under-construction Highway stretches in Delhi-NCR that are under NHAI's jurisdiction.

The comprehensive SOP provides detailed framework to cover areas such as '*Mitigating Pollution on Constructed National Highways*' through deployment of mechanized road sweeping machines, greening of median as well as loop interchanges through regular plantation and implementation of Miyawaki method of plantation for forest creation along the Highways, use of tarpaulin sheets to cover construction material during transportation and regular inspections & regular road maintenance to ensure pothole-free roads to reduce additional dust generation.

The guidelines also cover measures for '*Mitigating Air Pollution at National Highway Construction Sites*' to minimize air pollution caused by construction activities through regular use of anti-smog guns, continuous water sprinkling through the day at construction sites and covering of construction material with green net to prevent airborne particulate pollution. In addition, the SOP also includes regular monitoring of air quality indices at project sites and adherence to guidelines issued by Commission of Air Quality Management (CAQM) and Central / State Pollution Control Boards. The guidelines also encourage use of 'inert materials and Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste' to reduce environmental impact and support sustainable construction practices.

The SOP defines responsibilities of NHAI field officers as well as Authority Engineers, Contractors and Concessionaires for monitoring and ensuring strict compliance by undertaking regular audits and inspections. It also provides directions to organize training & awareness programs for contractors and workers as well as provide redressal to complaints related to NHAI projects on 'Green Delhi App'.

Recently, a meeting was Chaired by Shri Alok Deepankar, Member (Technical), NHAI to review the ongoing efforts and ensure effective on-ground implementation of the SOP. The meeting was attended by senior officials from NHAI field offices in Delhi-NCR along with representatives of contractors and consultants.

NHAI Member (Technical) directed all field officers, contractors, and consultants to undertake immediate and decisive measures for controlling dust and vehicular pollution on a war footing. Contractors were also instructed to mobilize adequate manpower, equipment, and resources for dust mitigation. Reaffirming NHAI's commitment to environmental protection, NHAI Member (Technical) urged all stakeholders to work collectively and expeditiously towards achieving a measurable reduction in construction-related and traffic-induced pollution across National Highway projects in Delhi-NCR.

These proactive measures provide a structured framework for mitigating air pollution arising from the National Highway operations, strengthening NHAI's commitment towards adopting eco-friendly practices for balancing infrastructure growth with environment sustainability.

GDH/DS

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