

KARNATAKA PSIA



**Total Sanitation Campaign**  
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Ecological  
toilets are  
safer for  
groundwater  
than other toilets

# Ecosan Approach

The approach of Ecological Sanitation breaks with the conventional flush and pit toilet systems. Instead, ecological toilets (Eco-Toilets) turn faeces and urine into soil conditioner and fertilizer. This benefits both people's health and the environment by preventing germs from spreading and turning harmful human waste into something useful as well as saving lots of water. Ecological toilets are safer for groundwater than other toilets because they sit above ground or use shallow pits. They reduce the amount of water needed for sanitation purposes as well as they produce fertilizer. Unlike pit toilets they can be used for many years. Although these toilets need more maintenance than pit or flush toilets, it is easy to summarize how they work: Ecological sanitation turns waste into a resource.

Rich, healthy soil needs organic matter what is left when plants and other living things die and decompose. This natural process of organic matter breaking down into soil is called composting. Around the world, farmers compost their wastes and add them into the soil. This keeps the soil full of nutrients for growing crops. Just as people need nutrients from food to grow strong and healthy, plants need nutrients in soil to grow strong and bear fruit.

Both urine and faeces carry nutrients that can improve soil. But faeces can also have many germs that cause disease. For this reason, making fertilizer from faeces takes more care than composting animal manure and food scraps. Faeces should never be used raw. But once they are made into fertilizer, it can safely help to grow food, trees, and other crops without chemical fertilizers. Urine carries far fewer germs than faeces and has more nutrients. This makes it safer to handle and very valuable as fertilizer. But because it does carry some germs and is too strong to use directly on plants, it also needs special handling.