

Cimatu: Solid waste management is everyone's responsibility

Stressing that solid waste management is everyone's responsibility, Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy A. Cimatu reminded the public to do their share in helping the government rehabilitate Manila Bay.

The DENR chief issued the statement after tons of trash were washed ashore on Manila Bay due to incessant rains brought by the enhanced southwest monsoon or "habagat."

"As the primary government agency responsible for the environment, we would like to remind all Filipinos that it is not solely the duty of the DENR to be the guardian of the country's environment and vast natural resources," Cimatu said.

He added: "We are all in this together. As stewards of nature, we must ensure that wastes are properly managed and disposed of."

The agency's solid waste management program is one of Cimatu's priority programs when he assumed office in 2017.

Data from the DENR-National Capital Region West Field Office showed that 12,187 sacks of solid waste were collected from the Baywalk area on July 16-29 after continuous rains inundated parts of Metro Manila and several Luzon areas.

Among the garbage that was collected were single-use plastic cups, plastic bottles, and personal items, such as bags, shoes, slippers, and clothes.

Health care wastes, bamboo poles and wooden planks, water hyacinths, and dead animals were also retrieved.

According to DENR Undersecretary for Solid Waste Management and Local Government Units (LGUs) Concerns Benny D. Antiporda, the DENR will "tightly and closely monitor the solid waste management operations of all local government units (LGUs) especially those that pollute waterways that flow to Manila Bay."

"Kaya ang mga LGUs, wag silang magpaka-kampante sa mga nakasanayan na nila. We have our eyes, ears and nose on you," Antiporda said.

Antiporda said all LGUs should have "an honest-to-goodness residual waste disposal system or face the penalties imposed by Republic Act (RA) 9003 or the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000."



Section 37 of RA 9003 "prohibits the use of open dumpsites for solid waste."

"Hopefully, more Filipinos will realize that we at the DENR are promoting behavioral change and responsibility because the national government through the DENR cannot do this alone," Antiporda said.
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