

DELHI JAL BOARD: GOVT OF DELHI
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR (S&DM),
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Dy. Director (IT)
Delhi Jal Board, GNCTD
Dy. No. 1162 dt 01-07-2026

No: DJB/Dir(S&DM)/2026/ 379

Dated: 24/6/26

INSTRUCTIONAL ORDER

Subject: Mandatory compliance of safety protocols, statutory provisions and prior intimation to S&DM Cell before commencement of De-silting/Sewer related works in compliance of Hon'ble Supreme Court directions, PEMSR Act-2013 and Minutes of Meeting dated 23.04.2026 regarding achieving "Zero Sewer Deaths" – reg.

In view of the directions issued by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in W.P.(C) No. 324/2020 (Dr. Balram Singh Vs. Union of India & Ors.) regarding prevention of sewer and septic tank deaths and subsequent directions issued in the meeting held under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary, GNCTD dated 23.04.2026, it has been emphasized that "Zero Tolerance" towards unsafe sanitation practices shall be adopted to achieve the objective of "Zero Sewer Deaths".

It has been observed that works related to de-silting of sewer lines, sewer maintenance, cleaning of manholes and other allied sanitation activities are highly sensitive and hazardous in nature and any negligence/non-compliance of safety measures may lead to serious consequences including loss of human life.

It has further been observed that in certain cases works are being executed without ensuring complete statutory and safety compliances at field level, which is not acceptable. The safety of workers engaged in sewer related activities shall be treated as the **first priority** and no compromise shall be permitted under any circumstances.

Accordingly, all Chief Engineers/Superintending Engineers/Executive Engineers and concerned field officers are hereby directed to ensure strict compliance of the following instructions **before commencement of any de-silting/sewer related work:**

1. Prior Intimation and Verification by S&DM Cell

Before commencement of any de-silting/sewer related activity, the concerned Division shall mandatorily intimate the Safety & Disaster Management (S&DM) Cell well in advance regarding the proposed work, clearly mentioning the details of location, proposed date of execution, scope of work, name of contractor/agency, manpower deployment, machinery/equipment proposed to be used and safety arrangements available at site along with duly approved Work Permit.

The concerned Division shall ensure that all mandatory safety requirements, statutory compliances and prescribed protocols have been fulfilled before execution of work. **No de-silting/sewer related activity shall be commenced without ensuring compliance of applicable Acts, Rules, SOPs, Contract Agreement conditions and directions issued by the Hon'ble Supreme Court/Government/Department from time to time.**

The concerned EE/AE/JE shall be personally responsible for verification and implementation of safety measures at site.

2. Strict prohibition of unsafe sewer practices

Manual entry into sewers, manholes, and septic tanks shall be strictly prohibited. Mechanized cleaning, de-silting, and blockage removal shall be adopted as the primary method in all cases.

In exceptional and unavoidable circumstances where manual entry is absolutely necessary, it shall be permitted only after full compliance with Rules 3 to 8 of the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Rules, 2013, framed under the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013 (PEMS Act, 2013). Such entry shall be allowed only after adherence to all prescribed safety protocols, written Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), risk assessment, and deployment of trained personnel equipped with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), gas detection instruments, rescue equipment, and all other mandatory safety arrangements.

All de-silting, cleaning, maintenance, and blockage removal activities related to sewers, drains, septic tanks, and similar confined spaces shall be carried out in strict compliance with the provisions of the PEMS Act, 2013 and the Rules framed thereunder, ensuring that all prescribed safety measures and statutory precautions are meticulously followed at every stage of the operation.

3. Availability of PPE and safety equipment

DDC(IT)

Concerned EE/AE/JE shall ensure availability and actual use of following but not limited to before start of work at site:

- PPE kits;
- Gas detection equipment;
- Safety harness;
- Breathing apparatus;
- Ventilation arrangements;
- Rescue equipment;
- Other required safety devices;

Merely availability of safety items shall not be treated as compliance unless the same are actually used by the deployed workers. Record entry must be available at the site and maintain in site order book.

4. Deployment of trained manpower only

No worker shall be allowed to perform sewer/de-silting activities without:

- Proper safety awareness/training;
- Knowledge of emergency procedures;
- Use of prescribed PPE;
- Compliance of safety guidelines.

Proper record of workers engaged at site shall be maintained by the Division/Contractor.

5. Compliance of Labour Licence and statutory requirements

It has also been observed that although provisions regarding obtaining Labour Licence and compliance of applicable Labour Laws are incorporated in the Contract Agreement (CA), in many cases the executing agencies/firms commence and execute the work without obtaining the required Labour Licence from the competent authority.

This is an absolute violation of statutory provisions as well as terms and conditions of the Contract Agreement.

Therefore, all Executive Engineers shall ensure that no de-silting/sewer related work shall be permitted to start unless the contractor/agency has obtained valid Labour Licence (wherever applicable) and fulfilled all statutory compliances.

The concerned Division shall verify and maintain records regarding:

- Valid Labour Licence of firm/contractor;
- Compliance of Labour Laws;
- Details of deployed workers;
- Insurance should be including coverage of workmen compensation, material and insurance must be as per the actual site condition aligned with the provision of contract agreement.
- Insurance/ESI/EPF and other applicable statutory provisions;
- Safety training and PPE compliance records.

6. Responsibility of contractor and field officers

All contractors/ Firms executing sewer related works shall strictly comply with prescribed safety norms and legal provisions.

The concerned EE/AE/JE shall be responsible for ensuring that all safety measures mentioned in the agreement and statutory provisions are actually implemented at site.

7. Site safety checklist before start of work

Before execution of any de-silting work, the concerned site engineer shall conduct safety inspection and maintain records regarding:

- Site safety checklist;
- Tool-box talk/safety briefing;
- Equipment verification;
- Manpower details;
- Emergency response arrangement.

8. Emergency Response Preparedness

The concerned Division shall ensure availability of a proper Emergency Response Mechanism before commencement of any sewer/de-silting related work, including adequate rescue arrangements, first aid facilities, emergency equipment and proper coordination with nearby hospitals/medical facilities for immediate medical assistance in case of any emergency.

Details of emergency contact numbers, nearest hospital/medical facility, ambulance services and responsible site officials shall be kept available at the work site. The concerned EE/AE/JE shall ensure that all workers and supervisory staff are made aware of the emergency response procedure before execution of work.

9. Accountability for non-compliance

Any violation of above instructions shall be viewed seriously. In case any incident occurs due to negligence, non-availability of safety measures, violation of statutory provisions or non-compliance of Hon'ble Supreme Court directions, responsibility shall be fixed upon the concerned officers/officials and contractor/agency as per applicable rules.

All concerned officers are directed to circulate these instructions among all field staff and contractors and ensure strict compliance **in letter and spirit**.

The objective of the Department is **"Zero Sewer Deaths"** and therefore **Zero Tolerance** towards unsafe sewer/de-silting practices shall be strictly followed.

-Sd/-

(Bhupesh Chandra Patel)
Director(S&DM)

All CEs

Copy to:

1. Staff Officer to Chief Secretary, 5th Floor Delhi Secretariat.
2. CEO, DJB- for information please.
3. Member(A)/Member(Dr./WS)/Addl. CEO, DJB.
4. All Superintending Engineers - to monitor compliance in their respective circles.
5. All Executive Engineers - to ensure implementation before commencement of sewer/de-silting works.
6. Jt. Director (S&DM) Cell - for monitoring of safety compliance.
7. DD(IT)-to upload in DJB website
8. DJB Contractor Association

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01/07/2026

Director(S&DM)