

IIT-Gn shows the way in conserving water

Sewage treatment plant at the institute saves nearly 3L litre water per day which is used to water plants and maintain green cover in 400-acre campus

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The plant is spread across 1,000 sqm. The system uses canna plants that are easily available in the city

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At a time when the state is starting at a severe water crisis, Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar (IIT-Gn) has been saving nearly 3 lakh litre water per day. And it has been doing this since 2015.

Thanks to the institute's initiative to have a sustainable campus, a sewage treatment plant installed in 2015 allows it to use recycled water to maintain green cover in the campus. IIT-Gn consumes up to 5 lakh litre water per day to service 2,000 people on the campus including students, faculty members and their family and administrative staff.

IIT-Gn Director Sudhir Jain said installation of sewage plant was part of the overall plan while conceiving the design of the campus. "We wanted to have an energy-efficient sewage treatment plant that did not require high

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-Sudhir Jain, Director, IIT-Gn

maintenance. So, we went for Root Zone treatment plant. In this system, plant or saplings absorb the filth in the water and it requires no equipment or mechanical assistance in treating the water. The plant has the capacity to treat 6 lakh litre sewage water per day," he said.

The plant does not use electricity, has zero operational or maintenance cost and does not require major manpower. IIT-Gn has also developed rain water harvesting system for the purpose of conserving drinking water. In this

system rainwater is treated and gets collected in overhead tank, Jain said.

"Water usage should be sensible as water scarcity is one of the cruellest challenges before the mankind. We are in the business of educating and grooming young minds. The next generation will learn only when we practice good things in front of their eyes," he said.

Advisor to IIT-Gn, LP Srivastava, who oversees the system said the sewage treatment plant is spread across 1,000 square metre area. "The system uses canna plants that are easily available in Ahmedabad. Sewage water is treated in three stages—first in the settler, then in the anaerobic billy reactor bacteria and lastly the roots of the canna plant suck the filth. The entire system does not emanate foul smell and the water treated can be used for horticulture," he said.

IIT-Gn's campus in Palaj is spread across 400 acres. The campus houses academic buildings, hostels, and residential facilities for faculty members.

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