

More than half of Beijing's household waste to produce energy

Beijing municipal government has set a goal of converting 57 percent of the city's household waste into energy.

This waste-to-energy conversion will be carried out at six garbage treatment plants to be opened this year, according to Beijing Municipal Commission of Urban Management.

Commission director Sun Xinjun said Friday that the commission's priority this year is to encourage residents to create less waste, improve waste sorting and boost waste-to-energy conversion.

The most common conversion process generates electricity or heat directly through combustion, while some also use industrial processing to produce combustible fuels like methane and ethanol. This supplies energy and reduces carbon emissions.

With 21.7 million permanent residents, Beijing's massive amount of household waste has a profound impact on the environment. Beijing aims to raise its garbage treatment capacity to 30,000 tonnes a day by 2020 – 24,000 tonnes being incinerated while the rest will undergo biological treatment. No untreated waste will be buried.

Lin Jinwen, another official with the commission, said Beijing will reduce waste sorting bins from three categories to two. One will be labeled "kitchen waste" with the other for the rest of household waste. The bins labeled "recyclable" will no longer be displayed to avoid confusion.

Lin said the city will distribute guidebooks and host training to help the public sort their daily garbage. As the campaign starts, there will even be helpers assigned to stand by community trash bins to help confused residents.

Waste sorting bins will spread from residential communities to companies, government offices, shopping malls and other public venues in the next few years.