

Local

Stop the waste



Local Spotlight

By Muna Al-Fuzai

muna@kuwaittimes.net

StopTheWaste is a global movement to fight food waste. You may wonder how desperately we need such initiatives. The answer is simple - because we produce enough food to feed everyone, yet one in nine people goes to sleep hungry every night and one-third of food produced for human consumption is lost or goes to waste.

This is why this campaign to stop wastage of food by the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) is a call out of necessity, concern and fear of this human attitude that can and will eliminate the natural resources we need for survival on Planet Earth. This is why I believe such a move needs support and action.

When we were young at school, we were taught about the food chain, which represents a series in which food and energy are transferred from one organism in an ecosystem to another. The food chain clearly shows us how energy is passed from the sun to plants and animals and eventually to us humans.

I am not a scientist, but I believe that working to preserve the earth's natural resources must begin by changing human behavior and some misconceptions that are harmful to the environment. The reality is that the eye does not eat and the soul is greedy and not satiated. We do not have to listen to such gossip because it is wrong and reflects extravagance, as not everyone is rich and can provide large quantities of food for guests.

If we are invited to a party or a meeting of friends, we do not take food that was cooked yesterday even if it is edible, because we believe that if we want to visit anyone, we must take or buy something fresh.

There is enough food to feed the world's seven billion people. But, I believe that human behavior is a matter of concern. We are moving towards drying up our natural resources by our own misguided actions and thoughts. After all, it's not just about the food and energy, but money, labor, land, seeds and plenty of water that go into producing food.

The UN listed some tips on how to reduce food waste, and here are some examples:

When you go to a restaurant, ask for smaller portions - you can always ask for more!

Love your leftovers as you can use them for tomorrow's meal! I think this is part of being grateful and blessed for the food you have, as there are many people who cannot even afford a piece of bread, especially those who live in civil conflict and war zones.

I love such campaigns because their primary goal is to raise awareness among the public to be more conscious of food waste and have a better awareness of global hunger. The StopTheWaste campaign will run until the end of October, but I hope the end of the initiative wouldn't mean we go back to our bad old habits. This is why I hope such campaigns never stop.

PHOTO OF THE DAY



Kuwait's sky is orange during sunset with a view of Liberation Tower in the background. — Photo by Mohammad Alotaibi/KUNA

The ghost addresses in salmiya

Renters cannot renew ID because address doesn't exist'

By Nawara Fattahova

Illegal constructions or negligence by the landlord can result in serious problems for tenants. Robin is one of hundreds if not thousands of tenants who have faced a problem registering their new addresses. "Two months after I moved from my old building in Salmiya to a new building - also in Salmiya - my residency was expiring. So during the renewal process, I took my new rental contract to the Public Authority for Civil Information (PACI) to change my address. When I handed the application form to the staff, after checking the system, she said that there is no fifth floor for this building. So I took back the application and said I will check the issue," Robin told Kuwait Times.

He then realized there was something wrong with his building. "I went to the haris to ask him what to do and what was wrong, but he simply suggested changing the number of my flat in the application to one on the first or second floors. He didn't explain anything, and gave an excuse about delayed paperwork. So I ended up keeping my old address although I live in a different place," Robin said.

The new building where Robin now lives also doesn't have a PACI number plate. As this address is registered at PACI for a building consisting of three floors, this either means that the new building was built in this place illegally or the landlord didn't bother to register it at the municipality. In both cases, tenants are facing a problem and can't resolve the situation.

According to Ahmad from the public relations department of PACI, the tenant has to provide a valid official rent contract signed by the landlord and the ID number of the building. "The tenant is not allowed to change their address without the identification number of the building. The correct procedure is that the landlord registers the building at the municipality immediately after completing construction works. PACI will then enter the data in the system including the exact address and the number of flats," explained Ahmad.

PACI is not responsible if the building is not registered by the landlord. "We don't have the legal authority to enforce the landlord to do so. We also can't register the address of any tenant of a building that doesn't have an identification number. We can only advise the tenant in such cases to complain at the municipality, as they are in charge of this matter," added Ahmad.

Renters, especially expatriate renters, have little recourse for resolving the matter. They rarely understand or can find out the legal requirements for a rental contract, especially if they don't speak Arabic or relatively new to Kuwait. Moreover, once the contract is signed and deposit and rent paid, they may not be in a position to move and most never meet the building landlord but deal only with the haris (caretaker).

The municipality didn't respond to Kuwait Times' queries regarding this matter.