

## ABSTRACT

Over the last two decades Kelaniya has become an industrial city with the coming up of a few big industrial complexes and also many small scale ones. Some are state owned industries while the others are privately owned. The major industries being the Tyre Corporation of Sri Lanka, the Fertilizer Manufacturing Corporation, Petroleum Refinery, Dasa Synthetic Textile Mills, S.A. Perera leather factory and brass foundry works which is a popular cottage industry in Kelaniya area. Recovery of gold from scrap jewellery and jewellers waste is another industry conducted in private premises by a number of families in Kelaniya area.

These industries use various chemicals on their production processes. Some of them are heavy metals, compounds of heavy metals or organic compounds. These can enter the environment as emissions to the atmosphere or as discharge to water bodies. The materials discharged to the canals and streams eventually flow via Kelani river to the sea. Materials emitted into the atmosphere eventually returns to the earth as particulate fall out and may be absorbed by soil and eventually by vegetation, hence enter into the food chain.

The project was carried out with the intention of providing some information about the extent of contamination due to heavy metals and organic residues in the area.

This study showed that some industries have little effect on the environment while the others are big polluters. Reduction of volume and strength of tannery waste water should be an important consideration before the effluent is discharged. It is also shown that the gold and silver recovery and foundry works represent a significant health hazard where the work is essentially a cottage industry.