



NetWaste

A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

LITTER

Anything that we deposit in the incorrect place is litter. This may be anything from a lolly left on a bus seat to an old car tyre left on the side of the road. Litter is not only unsightly and often smells, it can also be dangerous and cause injury to people and animals.

Litter that is discarded on land often ends up in our precious waterways. Everything that gets washed down our stormwater drains or washed away with the rain ends up in a river, creek, dam and lake.



Litter is extremely dangerous to animals and wildlife in general, as it can result in poisoning, choking, suffocation or strangulation. Animals and wildlife often mistake carelessly discarded litter as food. This can result in them having a belly full of items such as plastic bags that cannot be digested and which can cause a great deal of pain and potentially death.

Litter is detrimental to the general health of a waterway. People who litter often believe it is acceptable to throw an apple core or orange peel out of the car window because it will breakdown on the side of the road. Organic matter such as this does breakdown, however, if it finds its way to a watercourse and starts to decay it may affect the nutrient and dissolved oxygen levels of the waterway. This in turn affects the general health of the waterway and the flora and fauna that depend on it.



What you can do:

1. Take a bag with you on outings to place your rubbish into and dispose of it when you get home.
2. Never leave a piece of rubbish lying around, no matter how small it is.
3. Never throw anything out of the car window - including cigarette butts.
4. If you see litter while you are out and about, pick it up if it is safe to do so and dispose of it appropriately.
5. Encourage others to dispose of their rubbish appropriately.
6. Pack a litter-free-lunch to reduce unnecessary packaging waste. Pack reusable containers and bottles.
7. Secure and cover your load when transporting materials to ensure they do not blow off.
8. Participate in annual Clean Up Australia Day activities...organise your own site to clean up or join in somewhere and help the efforts of others.

Waste Hotline 1300 725 415





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Who Litters?

- Men and women are equally likely to litter
- People under 15 are least likely to litter
- People between 15-24 have a slightly higher rate of littering than other adults
- Social contexts affect littering eg people may litter when alone but not in public

Where and When.

- Most littering happens within 5 metres of a bin, especially cigarette butts
- Bins are used mostly between 11.00am to 2.00 pm but littering is most likely to happen at about 4.00pm
- The more litter is present the more people are likely to litter so please help keep the environment litter free

Behaviour.

There are a couple of litter behaviour types:

- 1:Wedgers- who hide litter in cracks
- 2:Buriers- who bury items particularly on the beach
- 3:Foul shooters- who try to basketball shoot it into the bin
- 4:Inchers- who gradually distance themselves from litter items

Source: DECC August 2007 <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/litter/index.htm>

Butt.... it really is a problem!


- ⊗ Cigarette butts take up to 5 years to break down.
- ⊗ A cigarette butt can smoulder for up to 3 hours causing a grass fire or bushfire.
- ⊗ Cigarette smoke contains up to 4000 chemicals.
- ⊗ Cigarette butts contain dangerous poisonous chemicals including arsenic, lead and cadmium which can leak into water within 1 hour of contact.

The top ten litter items:

1. Cigarette butts
2. Chip and confectionary bags
3. Plastic bottle caps and lids
4. Glass alcoholic beverage bottles
5. Glass pieces
6. Small paper pieces
7. Plastic water and soft drink bottles
8. Metal and aluminium alcoholic beverage containers
9. Plastic packaging
10. Plastic straws

Source: Clean Up Australia www.cleanup.com.au

Did You Know?

-  The most common reasons for littering are: 'too lazy', 'no ashtray' and 'no bin'.
-  Cigarette butts are the most littered item making up half of all litter.
-  Approximately 7.2 billion cigarette butts are littered in Australia every year. If laid end to end, the line of butts would circle the earth 3.6 times.
-  Littering at places like football grounds and theatres may be seen as acceptable as someone is paid to clean up!

Facts courtesy of the Victorian Litter Action Alliance.



Litter Links

Want to know more about Litter? Look at these websites to find out what you can do to keep the environment litter free!

Clean Up Australia - Clean Up Australia Day - www.cleanup.com.au

Keep Australia Beautiful - Litter Index and Plastic Bag Reduction Award - www.kab.org.au

NSW Police - Litter Laws - www.policensw.com/info/gen/l1a.html

NSW Government - Litter Prevention Program <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/litter>

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