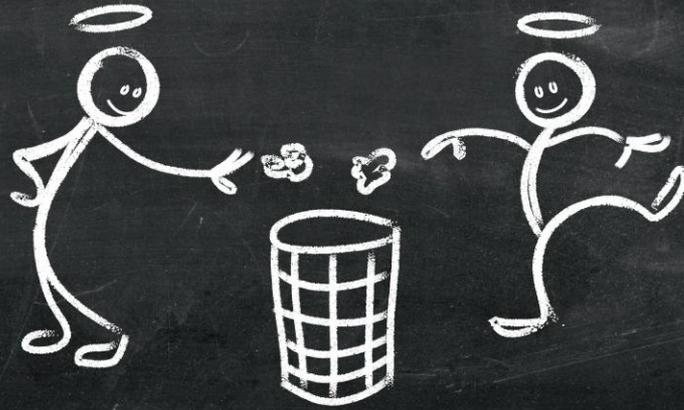


RUB OUT RUBBISH



ANTI LITTER:

SAFEGUARDING OUR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Every year an enormous amount of money, volunteer hours and energy is spent in cleaning up litter. Littering is unpleasant, unhealthy and against the law. A small investment of time and commitment on your part means we can all keep our city clean by disposing of rubbish responsibly.

Queensland is the most littered mainland Australian state according to the last National Litter Index compiled by Keep Australia Beautiful published in 2012. If every person in Queensland picked up just one piece of litter each year it would mean 4.5 million less pieces of litter in our community.

Litter builds up next to roads, can block gutters and finds its way into creeks, rivers and onto beaches. Plastic waste can choke and suffocate birds and marine life. Soil and garden waste spreads pests and weeds, including fire ants and lantana. Organic matter, such as dog waste, food scraps, leaves and grass clippings pollute our waterways, contributing to algal blooms and disturbing sensitive eco-systems.

WHAT IS LITTER?

Litter is defined as the deposit of waste at a place that is an amount less than 200L in volume.

Common types of litter include cigarette butts, drink bottles, fast food wrappers, material from a trailer that is poorly secured, grass clippings swept into the gutter and fishing line.

OUR LITTER LAWS

Littering is illegal. Laws to prevent littering and dumping of waste came into effect under The Waste Reduction & Recycling Act 2011. These laws include a range of offences for litter and illegal dumping, including:

- General littering
- Littering from a vehicle
- Dangerous littering
- Illegal dumping
- Failing to clean up waste

Local governments and the Department Environment and Heritage Protection (EHP) have a shared responsibility enforcing these laws. Authorised officers from council and EHP can issue on-the-spot fines and Compliance Notices for littering and illegal dumping offences.

DIRECTION TO REMOVE WASTE

A compliance notice can be issued for illegal dumping which may require the offender to collect, transport, store, treat or dispose of the waste and ensure that the person responsible does not impose a cost to the council for the waste to be cleaned up. A person who is requested to clean up their litter or illegally dumped waste and does not comply with this request, may face legal action and subsequent penalties of up to \$35,340.

LITTERING FROM VEHICLES

Littering laws provide everyone with the ability to report littering and illegal dumping from a car, trailer or boat. If you witness someone littering or illegally dumping waste from such a vehicle, you should report it to the DEHP and an authorised officer will investigate your report and may issue a fine.

Council officers also undertake regular littering patrols and can issue fines for littering and littering from vehicles. You never know who might be watching you and if you will get caught!

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU CAN'T FIND A BIN OR IT IS ALREADY FULL?

Everyone should take responsibility for their waste. For example, when eating lunch in a park, if there is no bin close by, or it is already full, take your rubbish with you and throw it away when you find a bin.

If there is insufficient litter bin infrastructure in your local park or community area, contact council's Customer Service Centre and lodge a service request.

PREVENTING LITTERING

There are a number of ways to stop littering from ruining our environment:

- Dispose of litter and rubbish in bins designed for that purpose. If you can't find a bin, take your rubbish home and dispose of it there.

- Do not throw your rubbish from a moving vehicle. Apart from endangering people you may face heavy fines.
- Remember that stormwater drains flow straight to our waterways. Don't throw any litter in the street or gutter as it may end up in our waterways and beaches.
- Dispose of unwanted chemicals responsibly; never pour them into gutters or drains. Paint, solvents, garden pesticides and herbicides are poisonous to wildlife. Council can advise you of the best way to dispose of these.
- Never dispose of plastic bags carelessly – they are one of the biggest killers of marine life. Use a reusable cloth bag when you are shopping, or choose cardboard boxes instead of plastic bags whenever possible.
- Create less rubbish by purchasing products with less wrapping or biodegradable packaging.
- Take a litter-bag with you when walking your dog and pick up after them. Droppings can wash into our waterways and contaminate them.

Further Information

 1300 878 001

 www.townsville.qld.gov.au

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