



Media Release

Strictly embargoed until: 1:00am - Thursday 14 August 2008

Community, Government and Industry Working Together to Reduce Litter

The Keep Australia Beautiful National Litter Index released today has recorded a decrease in the number of litter items across Australia.

Australian Environment Minister, Peter Garrett welcomed the findings of the report and urged all Australians to continue to take action to reduce litter and waste. "These are welcome findings, but it also shows that litter remains a significant challenge for us all. Not only is litter unsightly, it can have a significant impact on the health of our waterways, the environment and our native birds and animals and we all have a responsibility to prevent it."

"Tackling waste and waste management is one of my priorities and I expect a thorough discussion of these issues with my state and territory colleagues at our next Environment Protection Heritage Council meeting in November."

National Chairman of Keep Australia Beautiful, Don Chambers, added:

"State and Local Government now have clear indications of which site types to focus on with a worrying litter increase reported in residential areas. We also call on industry to redouble their efforts against litter and to keep the community informed of their progress with current projects to discourage litter."

Stan Moore of the National Packaging Covenant Industry Association added that companies that are part of the National Packaging Covenant can use the National Litter Index as part of an evidence based approach to help reduce the resources lost to litter. The NPCIA jointly funds a number of litter reduction initiatives such as the Clean Schools Challenge in Tasmania, litter reporting database and litter education as part of a coordinated education, enforcement and infrastructure approach.

Jenny Pickles of the Packaging Stewardship Forum said: "The research provides government and industry with information on where litter is occurring in our environment and where we need to focus our efforts to change behaviours".

In NSW and Victoria, the Packaging Stewardship Forum initiated a roadside anti-litter campaign along the Hume Highway between Melbourne and Sydney in partnership with McDonalds. During peak travel times in school holidays road users were reminded of the need to 'Do the Right Thing' with their used packaging. Research during the project showed strong community understanding that 'Do the Right Thing' is an anti-litter message (8 out of 10 people) and 75% of those surveyed said the message caused them to think about what they do with their packaging once its contents have been consumed.

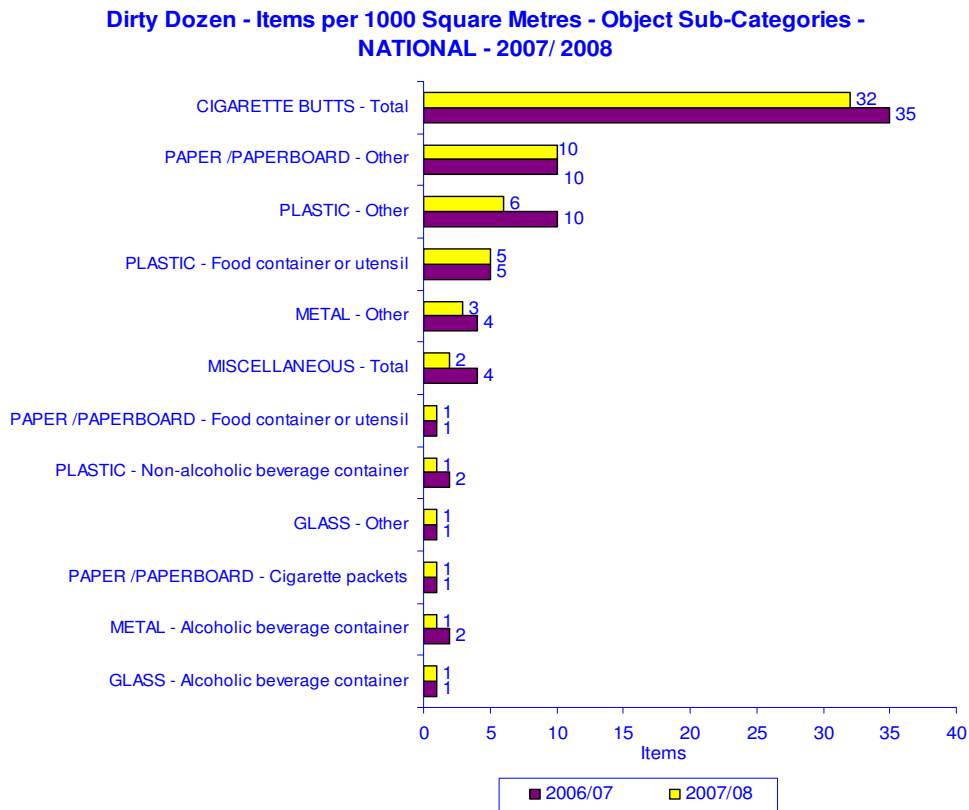
Full research results at www.kab.org.au/nli

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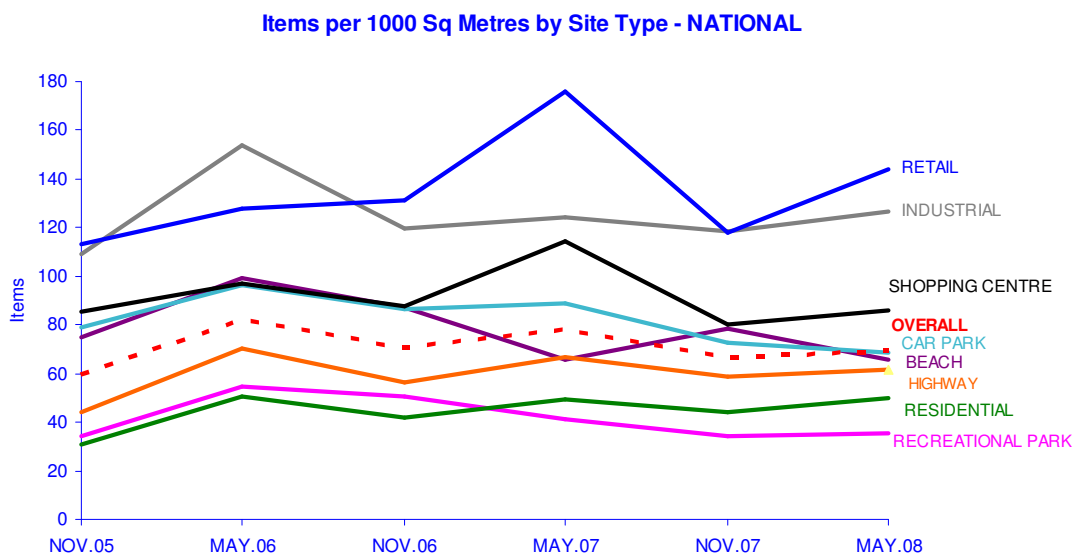
Media Contacts:

- Don Chambers, Chair KABNA, 0408 654 209 or 0420 906 361
- Scott Lyall, Executive Officer, KABNA, 0419 016 401
- Stan Moore, National Packaging Covenant Industry Association, 0414 656 746
- Jenny Pickles, Packaging Stewardship Forum, 0418 558 311

Worst Twelve Items, the Dirty Dozen, page 25 of the report



Worst Location Type, page 18 of the report



About Litter Research

The National Litter Index is Australia's only national, annual, quantitative measure of litter. It is based on field work in November and May each year at the same 983 sites. It measures what litter is found where and in what numbers and volumes. The 0708 report is being released in August 2008. The National Litter Index is currently funded by Australian, State and Territory Governments. Industry funds would be welcome to assist with future reports.

The Branded Litter Study is an extension of the National Litter Index and measures the brands and companies associated with litter counted during the National Litter Index. The first report, for 0708, will be released in September 2008. Future reports are proposed to be funded by a combination of government and industry support.

The Neighbourhood Litter Count is based on the National Litter Index methodology and can be used by local organisations wishing to compare their neighbourhood with the state and national averages.

Details of all three can be found at www.kab.org.au

About Keep Australia Beautiful

The Keep Australia Beautiful Network has been encouraging people all around Australia to care for their local environment since 1968.

Its awards programs such as Tidy Towns, Sustainable Cities and Clean Beaches target litter, recycling, packaging waste and graffiti.

Local participants are recognised for their achievements in helping to create sustainable communities.

The National Litter Index reports on litter by type, by location and by volume.

Keep Australia Beautiful Week coincides with the first week of spring and is a time for all Australians to think about how they can contribute to the Keep Australia Beautiful mission of 'positive environmental change through individual actions'.

These are just some of the activities that involve up to 3 million Australians each year.

Details at www.kab.org.au