

MEDIA RELEASE

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Significant Decrease in SA LITTER

The May 2009 KESAB Litter Count shows a significant decrease in litter items counted over the past twelve months at over 151 sites throughout South Australia.

Data shows increasing the deposit on beverage containers from 5c to 10c has had an immediate impact by reducing drink cans and bottles to under 3% of total litter.

Whilst banning plastic shopping bag legislation was only introduced in May 09, early data shows that a reduction in plastic bag litter has already impacted.

As the KESAB Litter Index is a longitudinal study the August and November counts will more clearly show trends in plastic bag reduction (or otherwise).

Releasing the litter count and volumetric data for the May '09 Litter Index coincides with the Keep Australia Beautiful National Litter Index (KABNLI) which compares State and Territory litter pollution performance.

Cigarette butts continue to enter the environment at an alarming rate with South Australia showing some success by reducing butts from almost half of total litter (49%) two years ago down to 33% in the latest count.

“Butt Free City” butt reduction campaigns delivered by KESAB in partnership with the Butt Littering Trust, councils and other key stakeholders is changing some smokers behaviour although there is still much to be done”, said John Phillips Executive Director of KESAB.

“Councils have invested thousands of dollars installing butt bins and supporting campaigns and possibly the message is getting through. Stronger enforcement by authorities as demonstrated in Victoria would make even greater improvement”, he said.

“However litter is more than just butts and consumers need to be aware of poor disposal behaviour including confectionery and fast food wrappers, junk mail, straws, beverage bottle tops and illegal dumping and construction materials, some having increased in the latest count”, Mr Phillips said.

The KABNLI highlight South Australia “recorded a steady decrease in litter items” compared to the 2008 litter count and is sharing the trend of count findings in NSW, Victoria and QLD.

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