

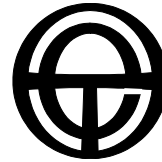
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Litter results reveal recycling challenge

The National Litter Index reveals an ongoing problem with litter, Total Environment Centre said today.

“It’s the tip of the iceberg of how we need to do a lot more on recycling of packaging. And it’s unfortunate that in their single minded opposition to container deposits, the Food and Grocery Council seek to pervert the message the Index gives,” said Jeff Angel, Director of the Centre.

“The beverage litter problem was initially caused by the introduction of one-way containers by the food industry. Shifting the blame entirely to consumers and suggesting, as the producers do that litter is the main problem, is absurd.”

“The aim of a litter program or waste collection service should be to increase recycling, that is recovery and reprocessing to save resources and reduce the pollution and energy used in manufacture of new packaging and other materials. Just because litter may be reported as down does not mean it is being recycled. Hopefully if the data is correct, it is being put into a bin. Unfortunately this usually means extensive contamination and loss of recyclable materials to landfill,” Mr Angel said.

“Container deposit systems (CDS) reduce litter and massively increase recycling. They also form the backbone of a second tier recycling system to kerbside with hundreds of local hubs that can receive other problem materials such as e-waste and batteries. It’s a far better system than so-called public space recycling bins.”

“The recent economic study into container deposits commissioned by the country’s environment ministers revealed that a CDS would cost an insignificant half a cent a container. It would be a far more sustainable system than ad hoc grants, litter police and other such programs that are victims of government budget fluctuations. ”

“The AFGC don’t get it. However local councils in Victoria, NSW and elsewhere do and they support container deposits as an essential part of the solution to the waste–litter–recycling challenge.”

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