



Media Release

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Australians continue to litter despite increased awareness of the need to protect our environment

Keep Australia Beautiful's most comprehensive litter report released today shows many Australians are still littering, despite increased awareness about the need to protect our environment.

The National Litter Index is Australia's only national, annual, quantitative measure of litter by type, location and volume, with five years of data for all states and territories.

According to the National Chairman of Keep Australia Beautiful, Don Chambers, "The National Litter Index (NLI) helps define the scale and distribution of litter and identifies key problem areas and litter items so that government, industry and community can refine their approaches to litter prevention and resource recovery."

"It also highlights where consumers are not doing the right thing., At the end of the day it comes down to individual behaviour. Individuals need to take responsibility for the rubbish they produce and where it ends up."

This year for the first time the NLI includes a specific report on packaging and on regional highways. The raw data is published alongside the report so stakeholders with a particular interest in certain litter items such as illegal dumping, cigarette butts or beverage containers can extract the information they need to make informed decisions on how to best address the issue.

"Combined with the Keep Australia Beautiful Branded Litter Study, published in 2008, we now have a rich source of data publicly available to help address litter issues in Australia," Chambers added.

Cigarette butts continue to be the most numerous form of litter, whilst plastic litter objects account for the biggest litter volume. The results also highlight how each state and territory compares against the national average and how they have performed over the past five years. See table 1.

Table 1

	Items per 1,000m ²					Volume (litres) per 1,000m ²				
	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10
NATIONAL	70	74	68	63	66	8.86	9.68	8.59	7.73	7.55
ACT	-	68	56	56	51	-	7.04	6.06	4.77	3.31
NSW	80	71	77	65	75	14.95	14.69	11.90	12.13	13.43
NT	-	64	60	84	70	-	5.32	7.24	6.00	5.09
QLD	89	86	76	59	76	7.66	7.59	7.44	5.60	5.65
SA	60	61	68	57	54	7.23	11.08	9.55	8.02	7.13
TAS	59	70	61	64	86	5.15	6.68	5.90	9.20	9.04
VIC	71	80	48	43	50	7.87	7.74	4.19	2.87	4.91
WA	60	83	85	87	71	8.57	12.19	13.06	11.93	9.44

The release of the National Litter Index coincides with renewed emphasis on litter reduction by the Environment Protection and Heritage Council which has called for action on litter and packaging waste, whilst the Australian Packaging Covenant has also outlined its intention to introduce measures to reduce the incidence and impacts of litter.

The Keep Australia Beautiful Network of State and Territory offices are all active in using the NLI to inform a broad range of programs focussed on education, infrastructure and enforcement resulting in reduced litter and increased recycling.

The Keep Australia Beautiful National Litter Index is funded half by Government (all State and Territory Governments) and half by Industry (Australian Packaging Covenant Industry Association)

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Editor's Notes:

To view the full national, state and territory reports visit: www.kab.org.au/what-we-do/litter-research/

Dirty Dozen by Litter Count

Cigarette Butts – total
Paper/Paperboard – other
Plastic – other
Plastic – food container or utensil
Metal – other
Miscellaneous – total
Paper/Paperboard – food container or utensil
Glass – other
Plastic – non-alcoholic beverage container
Paper/Paperboard – cigarette packets
Paper/Paperboard – Publication
Metal – non-alcoholic beverage container

Dirty Dozen by Litter Volume

Illegal Dumping – total
Plastic - other
Paper/Paperboard – food container or utensil
Plastic – non-alcoholic beverage container
Plastic – alcoholic beverage container
Glass – alcoholic beverage container
Metal – non-alcoholic beverage container
Metal – alcoholic beverage container
Paper/Paperboard – non-alcoholic beverage container
Plastic – plain water container
Paper/Paperboard - other
Plastic – food container or utensil