

Media Release
August 22, 2011



NSW Latest Litter Figures Released

Keep Australia Beautiful NSW released today its annual National Litter Index results for 2010/2011 during the launch of Keep Australia Beautiful Week at Taronga Zoo.

According to figures released today in the annual Keep Australia Beautiful National Litter Index, the total amount of litter by item and volume recorded a drop overall nationally and in some states or territories.

In NSW, the overall average number of items per 1,000m² across all of the 151 sites surveyed within the state was 69 (down from 75 items in 2009/10), while the overall average estimated volume per 1,000m² was 10.72 litres (down from 13.43 litres in 2009/10).

Peter McLean, CEO of Keep Australia Beautiful NSW is pleased to see that littering has improved slightly from last year but he insists there is still a lot more to do.

“Littering in NSW is still a huge problem, we can’t look at these results and say everything is alright because we are still above the national average. Let’s put some actions in place to further reduce litter” Mr McLean said.

The most littered sites in NSW remained industrial sites which were associated with both large numbers of litter items and large volumes of litter per 1,000m². A large number of litter items per 1,000m² were also associated with retail sites and car parks.

Cigarette butts were the most frequently identified item, with 33 butts per 1,000m² (down from 35 butts in 2009/10) recorded within NSW for the year 2010/11.

Each year, large amounts of litter are also found on our waterways and have devastating effects on marine and wildlife. Often considered as a forgotten pollution, packaging (plastic bags, bottles, containers), fishing material, rubber and glass items are carried by currents or river streams and end up floating at the surface or submerged.

This not only poses a greater environmental risk in terms of marine pollution but has also a greater impact on the health of swimmers, surfers, fishermen and anyone who make use of the ocean and the beach.

The Hon. Richard Torbay MP, Chair of Keep Australia Beautiful NSW, said despite the slight improvement from last year and the organisation’s best targeted efforts to reduce litter, the results showed more needed to be done to crack down on NSW litterbugs.

“Keep Australia Beautiful is keen to continue to work with the NSW Government to develop new strategies to tackle this serious problem” said Mr Torbay.

The organisations' action points include:

- To re-establish the NSW litter alliance which gathers the mayor stakeholders together
- To introduce a community reporting scheme to allow members of the public to report littering from motor vehicles and infringements notices to be instantly issued like in VIC, WA and TAS.
- To work in partnership with organisations and undertake a mass public awareness and litter prevention campaign.
- To allocate a community grants program specifically focussed on litter prevention.
- To re-establish the adopt a roads and adopt a spots programs across NSW.

Peter Mc Lean, CEO of Keep Australia Beautiful NSW added: "NSW has long been a leader in litter prevention, education and compliance and we urge the NSW Government to ramp up its program of funding, education, enforcement and compliance to reverse this worrying trend."

To access the full National Litter Index 2010/2011 report, please visit <http://www.kab.org.au/litter-research/what-we-do/national-litter-index/>

For further information on Keep Australia Beautiful NSW and its programs, please visit www.kabnsw.org.au

****END****

For media information, please contact Marie Nicolas, Communications and Media Manager, 02 9633 3380 or mnicolas@kabnsw.org.au

For interviews and comments, please contact Peter McLean, CEO, 0416 227 158