

## NEWS

# Grubby stats say get off our butts

<p><b>Brian Williams</b> ENVIRONMENT REPORTER QUEENSLANDERS are a dirty lot, chucking more rubbish on to roadsides than residents in any other state and territory except Tasmania. Queensland and Australia's worst litter item remains cigarette butts, according to the National Litter Index released yesterday by Keep Australia Beautiful. Other items include plastic bags and bottles, paper, cardboard, metals and glass. KAB Queensland chief executive Rick Burnett said Queensland littered at a rate 15 per cent higher than the national average, showing it was time for a new awareness campaign to change the culture. "It is a lazy and thoughtless habit, that has farreaching consequences for the environment," he said. "Cigarette butts are Queensland's disgrace. We are nearly 20 per cent</p>	<p>above the national average for butts being dropped on the ground. "It's estimated Australians smoke 7 billion cigarettes a year and it's estimated one in 10 butts end up on the ground, to be washed into drains and into our waterways and oceans. "That's 700 million butts threatening sea-life and birdlife. "Queensland has the best beaches and coast lines and we should be the best performer, not the worst," Mr Burnett said. Figures showed general litter on Queensland beaches was up in volume by 100 per cent on last year. Food and drink packaging remain the most discarded larger items. KAB chairman Don Chambers said research showed some smokers thought butts were so small they did not matter, some were embarrassed about dropping them on the ground and others simply did not care.</p>	<p>Another issue was businesses providing infrastructure that encouraged smokers to use bins. "Individuals need to take responsibility for the rubbish they produce and where it ends up," he said. The Environment Protection and Heritage Council has called for national action on litter and packaging waste. The litter survey looked at beaches, car parks, highways, industrial, parks, residential, retail and shopping centres.</p> <p><b>What a state we're in</b> Litter items per 1000sqm Victoria 50 ACT 51 South Australia 54 National average 66 Northern Territory 70 Western Australia 71 New South Wales 75 Queensland 76 Tasmania 86 Source: Keep Australia Beautiful</p>
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