



Minister for Environment

Media Statement

22/8/11

Litter and waste reduction a priority for Keep Australia Beautiful Week.

Environment Minister Bill Marmion marked the start of Keep Australia Beautiful Week by welcoming the release of the National Litter Index 2010-11.

The index found that Western Australia had made a small improvement since the last survey 12 months ago, with the volume of litter per 1,000sqm down from 9.44 litres to 9.03 litres.

“While this marked a positive change, there has regrettably been an increase in the number of litter items found - this year recorded 75 items per 1,000sqm, up from 71 last year,” Mr Marmion said.

“WA is currently ranked second in the nation behind New South Wales for volume of litter per 1,000sqm and third for the number of litter items found per 1,000sqm. These figures show that as a community, we need to do more to reduce litter.

“The State Government is using a combination of legislative reforms and targeted programs to encourage West Australians to reduce, reuse and recycle waste, and to change littering behaviour.”

On January 1, 2010 the Government increased the landfill levy to provide an incentive to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill.

The Government has also recently changed the law so that the maximum penalties for illegal dumping are \$62,500 for individuals and \$125,000 for corporations and has committed to increasing penalties for littering.

“Through the funds generated by the landfill levy we’re also supporting smarter ways for communities to reduce waste and increase recycling,” the Minister said.

Since 2008, the Government has re-invested about \$15.6million from the landfill levy into the waste and recycling sector through a range of grants and programs, including Waste Wise Schools, the Community Grants Scheme and Household Hazardous Waste program.

“Better waste management translates to better litter management and this combination of reform and funding is working,” Mr Marmion said.

Since the increase in the landfill levy there has been a reduction of 12 per cent in household waste to landfill.

“The recently released ‘2009-10 Recycling Activity in Western Australia’ report indicates that last year alone, an additional 800,000 tonnes of waste was recycled compared to the previous year,” the Minister said.

“In total about 4.48 million tonnes of waste was recycled over the period 2008-09 through to 2009-10. The amount of recycled waste in 2008-09 increased by an impressive 46 per cent over the amount recycled in 2007-08.

“The report also shows a significant increase in the recycling rate of construction and demolition waste, with a total of 1.9 million tonnes recycled over the period 2008-09 through to 2009-10.

“This period saw a 186 per cent increase in the amount of concrete recycled and an 86 per cent increase in wood/timber recycling. The amount of cardboard and paper packaging recycled also increased by 137 per cent.

“It’s simple - more recycling and responsible use of resources will ultimately lead to less waste and less litter, which is why I’m encouraged by the continuing close collaboration between Keep Australia Beautiful WA and the Waste Authority.”

The Government contributes annual funding to the National Litter Index through Keep Australia Beautiful WA.

Keep Australia Beautiful Week continues until Sunday, August 28. For more information on clean up events across WA go to <http://www.kabc.wa.gov.au>

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