

## **Michelle O'Byrne, MP**

Minister for Environment, Parks and Heritage

Thursday, 6 August 2009

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### **Tasmanians urged to stop littering**

Tasmanians should stop treating their state as an open air litter bin, Environment Minister Michelle O'Byrne said today.

She was commenting on results from the annual Keep Australia Beautiful National Litter Index that show an increase in littering in Tasmania over the past year.

"I am appalled by these results," she said.

"There is no excuse for littering. It is everyone's responsibility to do the right thing.

"The index found that industrial locations are the most littered sites in Tasmania and that is not good enough.

"I call on businesses and industries in those areas to take some pride in their environment.

"We live in the most beautiful place in the world and we should treat it with respect by disposing our litter appropriately.

"The Government's new Litter Hotline will make a difference as it is used by more people.

"In Victoria where it has been operating for more than a decade it has had a marked impact.

"In Tasmania it is already making a difference with 1,154 reports to the Hotline to the middle of June, resulting in 461 Infringement Notices, 99 Written Warning Notices and one Abatement Notice.

"I call on Tasmanians not to hesitate to use the hotline to do in litter bugs."

The Keep Australia Beautiful National Litter Index found cigarette butts were the most frequently identified item across all surveyed sites in Tasmania but paper and plastic objects also contributed large amounts to the state's litter stream.

This trend is supported by data from public reporting to the Tasmanian Litter Hotline, with littering of cigarette butts from motor vehicles the most frequently reported offence.

Keep Australia Beautiful Tasmanian Chair Ken Stewart said while the index shows some increases in litter, the KAB is very supportive of the State Government's initiatives, particularly the Litter Hotline.

"The KAB understands that the Victorian Litter Hotline is one of the main factors behind the excellent results shown by that state this year," Mr Stewart said.

"The Hotline has been in place in Victoria for more than a decade and we believe ongoing and increasing support of that initiative locally will lead to far better results in Tasmania in the future."

Ms O'Byrne said the number of reports to the Litter Hotline has steadily increased since it was introduced in Tasmania early last year. As well, a public education campaign entitled *Look Who's Littering – on the Road*, funded by the National Packaging Covenant, promotes the litter laws and has been supported by the Department of Infrastructure Energy and Resources with roadside signs at 92 locations throughout the state.

“Raising awareness about litter prevention is just as important as enforcement and the Environment Division supports this in a variety of ways,” Ms O'Byrne said.

“These include publicising the efforts of community litter champions, working with communities and local councils on targeted litter prevention programs and developing website resources.

“Individuals can also become involved in a number of litter prevention and reduction programs including the Keep Australia Beautiful Tidy Towns initiative and the Sustainable Cities and Clean Beaches awards.”

National Litter Index counts are conducted in November and May each year and cover 983 sites across Australia. The sites are divided into different types, including beaches, car parks, highways, industrial sites, recreational parks and residential and retail areas. Full details of the National Litter Index can be found at [www.kab.org.au](http://www.kab.org.au)

· Members of the public can report a littering offence via the litter hotline number on 1300 135 513 or by visiting [www.environment.tas.gov.au/litter](http://www.environment.tas.gov.au/litter) to report littering online.

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