

Clean Up Australia Day

3 March 2019

Business Clean Up Day

26 February 2019

Schools Clean Up Day

1 March 2019



LET'S CLEAN UP OUR ACT

Clean Up Australia Chairman Pip Kiernan encourages Australians to get involved following the release of the latest National Rubbish Report

February 2019: *The 2018 Clean Up Australia Rubbish Report, compiled each year from data submitted by Clean Up volunteers, found that plastics and food packaging are still the #1 problem items across the country.*

Plastic was once again the major type of rubbish reported by volunteers, comprising 39% of rubbish surveyed, up 4% on last year reflecting our increasing reliance on single use plastics.

Pip Kiernan, new Chairman and daughter of Clean Up Australia's founder, Ian Kiernan AO, urges all Australians to take up the challenge and continue her father's legacy.

"The work our volunteers do under the banner of Clean Up Australia is more important than ever. Our increasingly throwaway society, over packaging and some people's expectations that others will clean up after us are issues we can't ignore," said Pip Kiernan.

"Thirty years ago my dad predicted the problems that single-use plastic would pose. Since then we have seen ever increasing dependence on plastic as a throw away-item – and that needs to change. There has never been a better time to band together to reverse our dependence. The choice is simple – take action or plastics will continue to be a problem well into the future."

Litter directly associated with single use packaging continues to be a major source of rubbish reported by volunteers. In 2018, it was as high as 88% of all reported items. Of this, food packaging represented just under 19%, non-food packaging over 26%, beverage containers 18%, beverage rubbish 11.8%, chip and confectionery wrappers recorded 7% and plastic bags 4.5%.

"It's time to take action and make the right environmental choices every day. We need to reduce the amount of rubbish we produce as individuals and take simple steps such as having our beverage of choice in re-useable cups and choosing products that are not pre-packaged."

Plastic straws made an unwelcome return to the Top 10 individual items coming in at number 4, representing 4.1% of all surveyed rubbish and 10.7% of plastic items.

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“Plastic straws are such an easy item to say ‘No’ to. They are non-recyclable and have dire consequences for much of our marine life. If you need one, go for the paper option or even bring your own re-useable one,” suggested Pip.

“We all need to really think about how our choices impact on the environment. “

Parks were the most popular site surveyed in 2018, also recording the highest percentage of total waste across the country. Dive sites just outranked outdoor transport areas, recording the highest average count per site type with nearly 1,600 items.

The good news is that volunteers reported that waterways, parks, municipal roadways, bushland and shop/malls all decreased their average item count.

Disappointingly, average counts from school grounds, outdoor transport and dive sites each more than doubled their numbers – with school grounds increasing by 112% and dive sites by 118%.

While this is testimony to the efforts of volunteers, it also shows that rubbish is accumulating in areas where it is not only unsightly, it is causing harm. And we need to stop that happening.

“Remember, one person can make a difference, so get involved in Clean Up Australia Day – Change starts with you!”

To register your Clean Up site go to: <http://cleanupaustraliaday.org.au>.

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To access the latest Clean Up Australia Day Rubbish Reports, more information, photos and arrange interviews with Pip Kiernan please contact Tracey Wigg on 0419 141 266.

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CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA

Clean Up Australia is a not for profit community based organisation founded by Ian Kiernan AO in 1989 to inspire and work with communities to clean up, fix up and conserve our environment.

Clean Up Australia is dedicated to developing sustainable solutions and addressing the critical issues that face us in the areas of waste, degrading waterways and landscapes. It provides a practical framework and support for all individuals to make a positive and effective contribution to the health of our environment.

For 30 years Australians have joined together to Clean Up Australia. During this time over 16 million Australians have donated more than 33 million hours, removing the equivalent of 350,000 ute-loads of rubbish from more than 178 thousand locations across the country.

Since 1993 millions of people around the globe have also heeded the call under the banner of Clean Up the World, the global initiative the United Nations asked Kiernan to create and oversee. This year-round campaign engages an estimated 35 million volunteers in 130 countries annually, making it the largest community-based environmental campaign in the world.

THE RUBBISH REPORT

- The 28th Annual Rubbish Report is a snapshot of rubbish removed by volunteers across Australia during 2018
- Data = that returned by volunteers as part of their End of Clean Up Report, recording counts across 82 items
- In 2018, 2,087 reports were returned from 8,304 sites nationally [25%]
- Of these 658 provided valid data across 895 locations [10.8%]
- 2,690 bags were sorted by volunteers [37%] of rubbish reported at surveyed sites
- NSW returned highest # of completed surveys [338] followed by QLD [208] and then VIC [153]
- Clean Up Australia shares the data from the rubbish report with the CSIRO who use it to help map litter hotspots reflecting the influence of weather and other events.

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