



MEDIA RELEASE

11 FEBRUARY 2020

WHAT A LOAD OF RUBBISH!

Clean Up Australia has today released its annual Rubbish Report, confirming that as it moves into its 30th year of action, plastic remains the major type of rubbish reported by volunteers.

However, it's not all doom and gloom with the 2019 report revealing that while still number one, plastic rubbish has decreased by eight per cent from 2018. Moreover, plastic straws dropped from number four to number six in the top 10, indicating that Australians are taking steps to address single use plastics.

Pip Kiernan, Chairman of Clean Up Australia, said she was happy to see more Australians taking note of important conversations about the environmental impacts of waste.

"While there is still considerable work to be done, it is encouraging to see that this year there were notable declines in the volume of plastics, food packaging, and chip and confectionary packets," Ms Kiernan said.

"It reflects the work that Clean Up Australia is doing year-round to reduce the amount of waste and packaging in the environment - and not just clean it up when waste is discarded.

"We need to band together as Australians to tackle the issue of waste and safeguard the environment for future generations, we want Australians to Step Up and think about the positive changes they can make for the environment every day.

"Even simple changes such as remembering your reusable coffee cup, refusing excess packaging and cashing in your empty bottles and cans plays a big part in helping clean up Australia," Ms Kiernan said.

The 2019 Clean Up Australia Rubbish Report found that once again discarded plastic was the main culprit (31 per cent) closely followed by miscellaneous rubbish (25 per cent), largely comprised of cigarette butts.

Throughout the year, more than 700,000 volunteers joined forces to clear litter from parks, creeks, schools, beaches, waterways and shopping malls. More than 1.5 million hours were dedicated to the undertaking with an estimated 17,000 ute loads of rubbish being removed.

Australians can make a commitment to the cause and join their community clean up event this Clean Up Australia Day on Sunday 1 March. If you are unable to join on that date, you can also make a donation to support Clean Up efforts all year round.

Funds raised go towards vital educational resources and clean up materials provided free of charge to community, school and youth groups across the nation, throughout the year, educating the next generation on the importance of Clean Up.

To register or volunteer at a Clean Up site, go to www.cleanup.org.au.

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About Clean Up Australia:

Founded by Ian Kiernan, AO, Clean Up Australia is one of the country's most recognised and trusted environmental organisations, inspiring and empowering communities to clean up, fix up and conserve our environment. More than 17.7 million Australians have participated in a Clean Up activity over the past 30 years and over that time 35 million hours of volunteer time have been donated to Clean Up activities benefiting our environment.

Clean Up Australia Day

1 March 2020

Business Clean Up Day

25 February 2020

Schools Clean Up Day

28 February 2020

About the 2019 Rubbish Report

The Rubbish Report is a snapshot of rubbish removed by volunteers during a calendar year. Since 1991, the Rubbish Report has proven to be an invaluable resource in identifying trends in the types and spread of rubbish throughout Australia. It continues to demonstrate the importance of refusing, reducing, re-using and recycling rubbish.

Sites Surveyed

- 1,935 End of Clean Up Reports were returned from 1,798 sites nationally. Of these, 729 recorded valid data for analysis across 1,002 locations
- A total of 445,251 rubbish items were reported
- Content from a total of 2,484 bags, representing 36.2% of rubbish at survey sites, was counted
- NSW returned the highest number of valid surveys (248), followed by Queensland (172) and Victoria (133)
- Parks were the most popular sites surveyed by communities in 2019 followed by rivers & creeks, residential roadways, beach and coastal areas, bushland, school



grounds, other [non-identified] locations, shopping malls, outdoor transport locations and dive sites.

Rubbish Sources

Plastic was the most common rubbish type, representing 31% [39% in 2018] of all rubbish items removed.

This is the 25th year that plastic has dominated the 'Major Types of Rubbish'.

In 2019, non-food packaging, beverage containers and food packaging were the top three plastic items reported.

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