

Clean Up Australia Day

3 March 2019

Business Clean Up Day

26 February 2019

Schools Clean Up Day

1 March 2019



Change starts with you.

There has never been a better time to take to our streets as New South Wales rubbish counts exceed national averages

For immediate release - February 2019: The 2018 Clean Up Australia Rubbish Report, compiled each year from data submitted by Clean Up volunteers, found that plastics, single-use packaging and cigarette butts were reported in higher quantities in NSW than the national average.

Plastic was once again the #1 type of rubbish reported, comprising 42% of the major sources of rubbish - an increase of 4% over the previous year, and 3% over the national average of 39%.

Terrie-Ann Johnson, Managing Director of Clean Up Australia, warns that plastics, with their inability to decompose, will, unless we take action today, continue to impact our environment, our natural heritage and ultimately human health well into the future.

“Thirty years ago, Ian Kiernan AO predicted the problems that single-use plastics would pose. Since then we have seen ever-increasing dependence on plastic as a throw-away item – and that needs to change. The choice is simple – take action or plastics will continue to be a problem well into the future,” said Terrie-Ann.

Litter directly associated with single use food packaging made up 66.5% of the rubbish reported by NSW Clean Up volunteers, nearly 5% above the national average. Of this, food wrappers and containers came in 5.2% higher, beverage rubbish was 2.5% and plastic bags 0.3% above national recordings. What is also disappointing to note is that food packaging as a percentage of all rubbish reported across NSW increased by 7%, beverage containers by 7.9% and plastic bags by 1.4%.

The 2018 Report directly supports the need for us all to think about how we can switch from single use packaging.

“Change starts with you – and we need to make smarter choices every day,” said Terrie-Ann.

We need to reduce the amount of rubbish we produce as individuals and take simple actions such as carrying our reusable bags, replacing single use beverage cups and containers and choosing products that are not over packaged.

Smokers also need to get smarter with cigarette butts coming up as the item most counted by Clean Up volunteers at 15.7% of the individual item count. That’s 1.5% higher than the national figure.

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Most smokers are unaware of how cigarette butts impact our environment.

“Smokers need to understand that the core of most cigarette filters is a form of plastic called cellulose acetate which is very slow to degrade, taking anything from 18 months to 10 years to break up. These filters are also full of toxins, which can leach into the ground and waterways, damaging living organisms that come into contact with them,” said Terrie-Ann.

Plastic straws made an unwelcome return, at number 2 in the individual item count, representing 6.4% of surveyed rubbish and 15.3% of all plastics. This is 2.3% higher than individual item national counts and 4.6% higher as a percentage of reported plastic across the nation.

“It’s really easy to say “NO” to a straw, or if you must have one, bring your own re-useable straw or choose a paper option,” said Terrie-Ann.

“As Australians we all need to take responsibility for our choices.”

While municipal roadways were the most popular site surveyed in 2018, parks recorded the highest percentage of total waste and outdoor transport sites yielded the highest average number of items across the state.

“We still have a way to go to Clean Up Australia, so remember change starts with you!”

To register or join a 2019 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 please contact Tracey Wigg on 0419 141 266.

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 NEW SOUTH WALES RUBBISH REPORT

- The 28th Annual Rubbish Report is a snapshot of rubbish removed by volunteers across New South Wales during 2018
- Data = that returned by volunteers as part of their End of Clean Up Report, recording counts across 82 items
- In 2018, 242 reports were returned, providing valid data across 338 locations [11.4%]
- 988 bags were sorted by volunteers [39%] of rubbish reported at surveyed sites
- Clean Up Australia shares the data from the rubbish report with the CSIRO which uses it to help map litter hotspots reflecting the influence of weather and other events.

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