

Littering Factsheet

Littering is the unlawful deposit of any type of waste material that is less than 200 litres. These wastes can be of various types such as cigarette butts, drink bottles and fast food packaging, food scraps like apple cores, green waste such as palm fronds and grass clippings, fishing tackle, balloons, etc. The following type of activities would be considered as littering:

- Leaving items beside an overflowing bin
- Leaving items under your seat at a sports stadium
- Leaving a newspaper on public transport
- Releasing balloons at celebrations at a school
- Material falling off a trailer because it was uncovered or poorly secured.

Dangerous Littering

Dangerous littering means depositing waste that causes or is likely to cause harm to a person, property or the environment. Examples of dangerous littering are –

- Throwing a lit cigarette into dry grass in extreme danger conditions
- Smashing a bottle and leaving the broken glass on a footpath
- Leaving a syringe in a public place other than in a container intended for receiving used syringes.

The Law

Littering is an offence under the *Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 (the Act)*.

- Council has delegations under *the Act* for waste management (including litter management) through the provision of street bins, street cleaning operations, landfill operation, stormwater litter traps, as well as anti-litter awareness and education program.
- Should a person be found littering of any sort, Council has power to investigate the matter and undertake enforcement actions including issuing of infringement as well as compliance notice for the clean-up of the waste.
- If a person fails to comply with a compliance notice, they may face further penalties.

Potential Harm

- Littering pollutes our environment and significantly diminishes the use, enjoyment and value of our public places – making our communities appear dirty and uncared for, unpleasant to be in, and less likely to be used and enjoyed.
- Littering dropped in street, along the side of the road, or in bushland can be washed or blown into creeks and rivers, polluting land, waterways and ocean environments.
- It is also the cause of great harm and suffering to the animals that get tangled in, injured by or ingest littered items, along with facilitating the spread of disease and pests.
- syringes.

Be a Good Citizen

- Keeping your waste with you until you can dispose of it in the appropriate bin.
- Organise and or volunteer for community events for education and awareness against littering.
- The Act allows for individual within the community to report offences and provide witness statements in relation to littering/ illegal dumping offences.

Dealing with the issue of littering and illegal dumping is everyone's business. Only through empowering and engaging the community will we achieve long-term behavioural improvements towards littering and illegal dumping.

For further information please contact:

Environmental Health Services at Mount Isa City Council on 4747 3200