



# Litter Management in designated outdoor smoking areas

From 31 July 2006 smoking is prohibited in all enclosed public places including those on licensed premises throughout Western Australia. Appropriate action must also be taken to prevent an increase in cigarette butt litter in the surrounding areas of enclosed public places such as pubs, sporting clubs, nightclubs and restaurants following the ban.

This brochure provides information to employers and building managers on the effects of cigarette butt litter and advice on managing it in designated outdoor smoking areas.

## CIGARETTE BUTTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

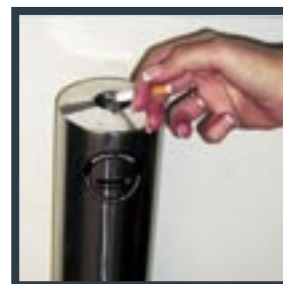
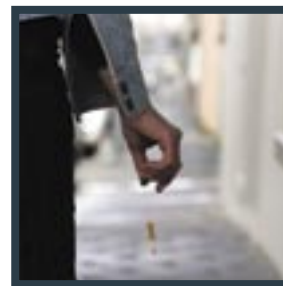
Not only are littered cigarette butts aesthetically displeasing they also have an adverse impact on our environment. Cigarette butts dropped in the streets are carried by wind and rain into the stormwater system and travel into our waterways. Here they harm animal and marine life through water pollution and also when they mistake them for food. Cigarette butt litter is unsightly and can encourage smokers to add their butts to the existing litter. The number of cigarette butts in the litter stream must be significantly reduced to protect the health, safety and visual quality of our environment.

To avoid environmental damage:

- Always sweep up butts and place them in a bin
- Provide a cigarette butt receptacle
- Never sweep butts into gutters and drains

## CIGARETTE BUTT LITTER STATISTICS

- Approximately 7 billion of the 24 billion filtered cigarettes sold every year in Australia are littered
- 6 out of 10 Australian smokers in outdoor settings litter their butts
- Cigarette butts comprise 42 per cent of the Western Australian litter stream
- Cigarette butts have consistently made the top 10 items picked up in the Clean Up Australia Day rubbish report since it started in 1990
- 95 per cent of the litter on beaches comes from suburban streets through the stormwater system
- Butts have been found in the stomachs of young birds, sea turtles and other marine creatures



## KEEPING IT CLEAN

### Clean is good for business

Dirty areas in and around buildings will not only lead to increased rubbish but will also impact upon your business reputation. Keeping your business surrounds clean is good for the health and safety of your staff, patrons and for the presentation of your business.

### Clean equals clean

- Clean areas tend to stay clean as people respond positively to them
- Clean areas look cared for and invite looking after
- Clean areas reinforce the message **'KEEP IT CLEAN: NO LITTERING HERE'**

### Things to consider

Who is responsible for keeping this area clean?

Will a shelter from weather conditions be provided?

Are additional butt litter receptacles required?

How do we engage people using the area to help keep it clean?

### HOW TO KEEP AN AREA CLEAN

1. Start with it clean and keep it clean with regular maintenance.
2. Set clear expectations of users with bins and signs.
  - Provide appropriate receptacles that are easy to use.
  - Provide visual prompts such as stickers or signs telling people what to do.
3. Promote personal responsibility.
  - Encourage and reward people who do the right thing in this setting.

<sup>1</sup> The only exception to this is the Burswood Casino's International Room.



## SMOKER ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

Research into smokers' attitudes and behaviours has found that many smokers have no idea of the environmental impacts of cigarette butt litter, and in fact do not consider dropping butts is littering until they stop and think about it.

Other reasons given by smokers to explain their actions are that there aren't enough bins, or the right type of bins, that the bins are too far away, or that someone will come along and clean up butt litter. Often smokers won't place the butts in a general purpose bin because they are (quite reasonably) afraid of setting fire to the bin.

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND SIGNAGE

### Things to consider about butt litter bins:

Is the butt bin easy to use and suitable for the area?

Is it effective in containing the butts?

Is it the right size?

Is it clean?

Who will service and maintain the bin?

Is it in good condition – not shabby, no paint peeling, no dents?

### Types of appropriate cigarette butt litter infrastructure

- Butt bins, wall mounted ashtrays, free standing poles or ashtrays
- Personal ashtrays
- Windproof ashtrays
- Signage and/or stickers

For information on appropriate cigarette butt litter infrastructure please visit the KAB WA website at [www.kabc.wa.gov.au](http://www.kabc.wa.gov.au)

*The good news is that when smokers are provided with appropriate butt litter bins, and are made aware that butts are litter and do cause environmental damage, many are prepared to change their behaviour.*



## CIGARETTE BUTT LITTER AND THE LAW

The WA Litter Act 1979 provides for:

- Offences relating to littering by individuals
- Litter abatement notices to prevent litter entering the public domain
- Orders to clean up litter

The Litter Act covers both public and private property. To protect yourself from a notice, fine or prosecution you may need to consider litter prevention on your site. Remember that the Keep Australia Beautiful Council, Department of Environment, Western Australian Police and your local council are all empowered to take action to protect the environment from litter.

Council local laws may also impose obligations on businesses to take steps to prevent or reduce litter. Local laws vary so contact your council for specific information.

### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Visit [www.kabc.wa.gov.au](http://www.kabc.wa.gov.au) or contact Keep Australia Beautiful Western Australia on (08) 6364 6461.

*This publication has been adapted for use by Keep Australia Beautiful Western Australia from a Victorian Litter Action Alliance publication of the same name.*