

MEDIA RELEASE

11 September 2020

Don't Dump in our Backyard: Council launches campaign to raise awareness of littering and illegal dumping in Gladstone Region

The Gladstone Region is home to a vast array of flora and fauna, boasts many wonderful beaches and waterways, and is the gateway to the Southern Great Barrier Reef.

However, Council has unfortunately seen a recent and notable increase in the occurrences of litter in the region.

This led to Council applying for and being successful with securing funding from the Queensland Government's Department of Environmental Science, to implement prevention and awareness strategies and programs to combat illegal dumping.

Gladstone Region Councillor Desley O'Grady said Council previously implemented an Illegal Dumping and Litter Prevention Strategy in 2014-15, and the recently awarded funding provides an opportunity to prepare a revised community education campaign.

"The updated strategy aims to build on the foundational work and success of 2014-15 by increasing community awareness surrounding the effects of littering and illegal dumping, encouraging positive community action and reducing the amount of litter and waste in the region," Cr O'Grady said.

"Illegal dumping and littering is a concern for the Gladstone Region with over 134 offences being investigated since April 2019.

"Illegal dumping and littering pollutes our environment, harms flora and fauna, and detracts from the use, value and enjoyment of our public places.

"The message is simple – don't dump in our backyard."

Cr O'Grady said illegal dumping hotspots identified by Council are:

- Byelee Road, Callemondah
- Don Young Drive, Byelee
- Meegan Road, Callemondah
- Kirkwood Road, Kirkwood
- Surf Club Avenue, Seventeen Seventy
- Tannum Sands Road, Tannum Sands
- Booroo Road, O'Connell
- Haddock Drive, O'Connell
- Glenlyon Road, Toolooa.

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“Illegal dumping on private land, road reserves, parklands and national parks across the Gladstone Region is an ongoing problem,” Cr O’Grady said.

“Most offences occur in land located on the outskirts of urban areas where offenders are less likely to be seen by members of the public.

“The types of litter typically found at illegal dumping sites include general domestic waste, household and personal items, green waste, car bodies and batteries, tyres, whitegoods, old furniture, mattresses, bikes, steel, clothing and toys.

“General waste up to 240L (standard wheelie bin size), green waste, white goods (excluding air conditioners/fridges/freezers), car bodies (Benaraby Landfill disposal only with the tyres and oil removed), batteries and mattresses (steel springs separated from mattress) can be disposed of for free at waste transfer stations.”

Cr O’Grady reminded residents that illegal dumping and littering can lead to stormwater and ocean pollution, with Council seeing large amounts of plastics, sugar sachets and cigarette butts caught in stormwater traps and grates.

“Illegal dumping and littering including clean-up expenses, costs our community thousands of dollars each year in waste management, and penalties for illegal dumping offences are far more costly than landfill fees,” she said.

“All it takes is a few simple steps to ensure waste is disposed of responsibly, which will keep our region looking beautiful.

“Placing rubbish in bins or holding onto it until a suitable bin can be found, using local waste facilities and reporting illegal dumping if you witness it happening, are just some of the simple steps to take.”

Illegal dumping and littering statistics for Gladstone Regional Council area:

- April 2019 - June 2019 total illegal dumping investigations = 28
- April 2020 to June 2020 total illegal dumping investigations = 106
- 2020 period:
 - 31 incidents reported by the public
 - 75 incidents located by Council staff
 - Volume of waste located = 55,855 litres
 - Volume of waste cleaned up = 30,075L (either by Council or the offender – the remainder is located on private property and up to the property owner to remove).

Please visit www.gladstone.qld.gov.au/waste for more information about waste, waste disposal, waste facility fees and charges and handy tips to help our environment.

Visit www.gladstone.qld.gov.au/downloads/file/2050/waste-management for information on GRC’s 2020-21 Waste Management fees and charges. Call Council on 4970 0700 to report illegal dumping.

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