

Case study: Hunter arterial roads campaign



Ranger vehicles on display with EPA stickers.

Roadside service stations were keen to support litter reduction programs.

Hunter region arterial road litter reduction campaign

A campaign to reduce littering along major roads in the Hunter region resulted in a 69% reduction in litter. The initiative was designed after the *Hunter Region Regional Litter Plan 2016-21* identified arterial roads as a priority.



EPA bollard signs were used to highlight the message that littering leads to fines.

What was the problem?

- Takeaway containers and drink containers discarded along arterial roads were identified as high priority litter items.
- The litter reduction campaign used highway service centres to engage with motorists to reduce litter thrown from vehicles on arterial roads.

What did we do?

To highlight the litter problem Hunter Councils Inc:

- established partnerships with six highway service centres and five local councils to conduct litter awareness campaigns targeting motorists
- produced educational materials in a wide variety of formats with a mix of messaging designed to increase the perceived risk of being fined for littering, increased the number of people considering reporting litter from vehicles, and support the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) *Hey Tosser* and *Don't be a Tosser* campaigns
- installed campaign materials at six service centres and conducted advertising through three local radio stations, Facebook and media releases
- identified six monitoring sites and conducted Local Litter Checks and repeated litter clean-ups at the sites to obtain baseline data and campaign period data



EPA bowser signs warned about tossing litter.

- conducted surveillance and observation sessions at the highway service centres and additional arterial road clean-ups.

What did we achieve?

Results from the Hunter Councils Inc campaign included:

- 69% reduction in litter at monitoring sites in the January campaign period (target was 20%)
- 85% reduction in litter at monitoring sites in the April campaign period (target was 20%)
- 673 residents in the region registered to report littering from vehicles during the main project period January-July 2018, adding 22% to the 2,994 already registered by December 2017. From the 2014/15 baseline of 537 registrations, the increase to July 2018 has been 683% (target was 75%).

Awareness of litter was raised as a significant issue across the community.



EPA anti-littering banners in a service station dining area.

How was the project evaluated?

Data was collected from roadside monitoring sites where an initial site clean-up was undertaken to remove accumulated litter and provide a blank slate. After a baseline data period (prior to the start of the campaign) a baseline litter count and clean-up was undertaken.

The campaign activities, and regular litter counts and clean-ups, were undertaken from January to May 2018.

What did we learn?

- Service centres provide a good location to engage motorists about littering from vehicles. Centre management and onsite businesses were keen to support litter reduction programs. The sites offer many opportunities to place signage and information.

Local Litter Check

The EPA's easy-to-use Local Litter Check is a free tool to help understand your local litter problem. Details can be found on the EPA website.

- Roadside litter clean-up and monitoring presents significant challenges with safety and the unpredictable impacts of weather and site maintenance (e.g. mowing/slashing, construction). Large monitoring sites are required to provide enough data for confidence in the results.
- Some roads perceived to be litter hotspots may have less litter than land managers assume. These sites can look heavily littered because the litter is very rarely or never cleaned, and the items do not move or degrade.

What is the project's legacy?

The project has established partnerships with several service centres and demonstrated the benefits of a proactive approach to these businesses and the participating councils.

There is potential to continue to build the partnership. Awareness of litter as a significant issue has been raised within the community and the Hunter Joint Organisation member councils, with extensive local advertising and 673 new registrations to report litter from vehicles.

Photos

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