

## Litter Free Roadsides in Cessnock

### What was the problem?

- Roadside litter is a large area of concern for Cessnock residents. Due to the high volume of tourists visiting the area, the need to make a good 'first impression' and to present litter-free roadsides is seen as paramount to both Council and the local community.
- Local Litter Checks were undertaken at two target roadside areas. The results showed that road slope and verge mowing were the main factors contributing to the accumulation of litter in these areas. The main types of items identified were food and drink containers.
- The main behaviours to be addressed were throwing litter from vehicles and the creation of more litter (or appearance of this) from roadside mowing (i.e. one piece of litter becomes many after it is slashed).

### What did we do?

With assistance from the NSW EPA Litter Prevention grant program, Council undertook a roadside clean-up project that included:

- creating new 'Hey Tossers' material with localised photos for road signs and press ads to highlight the issue that litter prevention matters in Cessnock
- engaging with Council roadside staff to change mowing practices



Wine Country Drive hotspot

### Project features

#### Approaches used

- |   |                         |
|---|-------------------------|
| ✓ | Cleaning and clean-ups  |
| ✓ | Improved infrastructure |
| ✓ | Education and awareness |
| ✓ | Enforcement             |
| ✓ | Community involvement   |

### Project details

#### Project length and timing

Autumn and Winter 2014

#### Cost

\$25 000 plus project management

#### How was effectiveness/results evaluated

- EPA's Local Litter Check results before and after program implementation
- Quantities of materials distributed

#### What was the result?

- Hotspot litter reduced by 75% based on before and after Local Litter Checks
- 700 kg litter removed from 5 kms of roadside
- 3000 reusable vehicle litter bags and postcards distributed

- offering litter bags and postcards to drivers as part of roadside clean-up activities
- door-knocking adjoining households and offering postcards with instructions on how to report litter from vehicles
- engaging with local service stations and takeaway shops to distribute reusable vehicle rubbish bags
- Council rangers performing 'undercover' and uniform surveillance on hotspot roads
- installing new 'Hey Tosser' signage to encourage road users to self-report littering from vehicles.

### What did we learn?

- Changes in Council staffing means that projects agreed to at grant application stage cannot always be undertaken when received.
- Local business support was greater than expected and encouraging. Everyone was happy that Council was trying to do something to improve this issue.
- The community strongly associates roadside litter with fast food outlets; although data from litter checks does not support this.
- Developing new practices with roadside maintenance crews is vital to ensure that large littered items are picked up prior to mowing.

### Legacy

The community has suggested that additional road signs be placed in other areas.



Locally tailored litter campaign material

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