

Case study
August 2016
to
June 2017



Photography: WSROC President, Mayor of Blacktown, Stephen Bali at Rawson Ave, Auburn; WSROC

Reducing litter on Western Sydney's main roads

The Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC), which represents eight local councils, targeted littering by motorists on main roads. Our project aimed to educate motorists that littering can be reported and attract fines, and to increase reporting of littering.

What was the problem?

Litter, including coffee cups, cigarette butts, takeaway containers, tail lights, plates and shredded tyres, was piling up on major roads from motorists. New partnerships were needed with Road and Maritime Services (RMS), to collaboratively tackle roadside litter; as well as a new methodology to assess and track roadside litter.

Registrations on the Report to EPA program increased markedly, by 58%, during the campaign.

Cost Grant: \$139,828
Cash contribution: \$148,400
In-kind: \$19,014
Total cost: \$307,242

What did we do?

The program sought to educate road users on two key messages:

- you can be fined for littering
- you can report vehicle littering to the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

The program's key targets were to:

- increase by 5% awareness that littering from vehicles can be detected and reported, and
- increase by 5% the number of registered incidents on the 'Report to EPA' program for the region.

To achieve these goals, WSROC:

- worked with RMS to measure litter and clean 12 main sites (two of them controls)
- delivered 'Hey Tosser!' messages on roadsides using billboards, bus sides, and advertising in car parks
- organised local site enforcement activities with councils
- developed a new roadside litter assessment methodology consistent with Local Litter Check.

What did we achieve?

- Commercial drivers and visitors were, respectively, 31.3% and 16% more likely to report littering by motorists. However, resident reporting rates changed little, decreasing very slightly, by 2.7%.
- Litter reporting rates to the Report to the EPA program increased by 3% for the WSROC region, with a council average increase of 6%.
- Report to EPA program registrations increased by 58% during the campaign period.
- Social media directed 666 clicks to the Report to EPA program.
- Overall, litter decreased 36%, on average, with 100% reductions at some sites.



Before: Great Western Highway, Kingswood

After: Great Western Highway, Kingswood

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How we evaluated our project

- Litter consultant Knowwaste and RMS staff measured improvements at project sites, before and near the end of the campaign, using the new roadside litter check method.
- Iris Research undertook telephone, in-person and online surveys of road users to measure attitudinal and behaviour change.
- Data from Report to EPA program registrations and user reports allowed us to measure usage of this reporting by Western Sydney residents.
- We also used social media analytics to measure click-through rates.

What did we learn?

- By modifying the Local Litter Check for use on roads and to account for safety issues, we could deliver localised litter information.
- The program's high visibility gained recognition from council senior management and councillors, increasing councils' understanding of litter management.
- Roadside locations with pedestrian activity improved less than major road or highway locations. To reduce pedestrian litter, we need more education and infrastructure.

Legacy

- WSROC developed important relationships with RMS that will continue beyond this project. Councils value these relationships highly.
- Our modified roadside litter check methodology is available to all councils and interested users.

Photos: WSROC

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WSROC

Advocating for the people of Western Sydney