



Rob Stokes MP

Minister for the Environment
Minister for Heritage
Minister for the Central Coast
Assistant Minister for Planning

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday August 7 2014

Illegal Dumpers beware - new RID Squad hits the streets

A new 10-council squad dedicated to stamping out illegal dumping in the Hunter and Central Coast regions is now operational following funding of over \$2 million from the NSW Government and the member councils, Environment Minister and Minister for the Central Coast Rob Stokes announced today.

The Hunter - Central Coast Regional Illegal Dumping (RID) Squad is led by Lake Macquarie City Council, and includes:

- Wyong Shire Council
- Cessnock City Council
- Newcastle City Council
- Muswellbrook Shire Council
- Upper Hunter Shire Council
- Singleton Council
- Maitland City Council
- Dungog Shire Council; and
- Gosford City Council.

Rob Stokes said the squad will reduce illegal dumping throughout the Hunter and Central Coast through compliance, education and enforcement actions.

“Illegal dumping is a serious problem for local communities given the associated environmental, economic and health costs,” Mr Stokes said.

“Illegal dumpers are on notice. You are in the sights of a dedicated illegal dumping squad, and if you get caught, you will pay the price.”

The squad will investigate and clean up illegal dumping, undertake prevention measures at dumping hotspots and run information campaigns about appropriate rubbish disposal with support from the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

Member for Swansea Garry Edwards said the EPA’s support for the new RID Squad would provide a huge boost to tackling illegal dumping in the Hunter and Central Coast areas.

“The fact that the EPA and councils have joined forces to stamp out illegal dumping is great news for our environment and our community. Illegal dumping is not on in our community,” Mr Edwards said.

The Hunter – Central Coast RID Squad is the fourth of its kind in NSW, and will be able to build on the efforts of RID squads in Western Sydney, the Inner West and the Illawarra and Southern NSW.

New laws introduced by the NSW Government last year increased fines for illegal dumping and ensure that anybody caught illegally dumping within five years of a prior illegal dumping conviction can find themselves behind bars.

The NSW Government has committed \$58 million to combat illegal dumping as part of the \$465.7 million *Waste Less, Recycle More* initiative. More information is available here: <http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/waste/wasteless.htm>

To report illegal dumping, please call the EPA's Environment Line on 131 555.