



Tips for Preventing Litter in Your Community

When was the last time you saw someone littering? It may be hard to remember. But litter just doesn't appear—it's the result of careless attitudes and waste handling. Is there anything you can do? Knowing more about litter and where it comes from is a good place to start.

Why People Litter

Research by Keep America Beautiful, Inc. found that people litter because:

- * they feel no sense of ownership, even though areas such as parks and beaches are public property.
- * they believe someone else—a park maintenance or highway worker—will pick up after them.
- * litter has already accumulated.

"Litter-known" Facts

Motorists and pedestrians are often blamed for litter. There are actually seven primary sources:

- * household trash handling and its placement at the curb for collection
- * dumpsters used by businesses
- * loading docks
- * construction and demolition sites
- * trucks with uncovered loads
- * pedestrians
- * motorists

Litter is blown about by wind and traffic or carried by water. It moves until trapped by a curb, building or fence. Once litter has accumulated, it invites people to add more

Litter and Your Taxes

Litter is a costly problem. Highway departments spend millions of tax dollars and many hours annually picking up litter—money and time needed for more important services. Local, state, and federal governments also spend money removing litter left by careless park visitors.

Clean communities also have a better chance of attracting new businesses than those where litter is common.



To find out more about how you can help prevent litter, visit our website at www.kab.org

What Can I Do?

- * Set an example for others, especially children, by not littering.
- * Carry a litterbag in your car.
- * Make sure trash cans have lids that can be securely fastened. If you have curbside trash collection, don't put loose trash in boxes.
- * Tie papers in a bundle before placing them in a curbside recycling bin.
- * If you own a business, check dumpsters daily to see that top and side doors are closed.
- * If you or a member of your family is involved in a civic group, scouting, or recreational sports program, encourage the group to "adopt" a spot in your town and maintain it on a regular basis.
- * Make litterbags for your bicycle, and give them to your friends, too.
- * Report areas where people have illegally dumped garbage and debris to your local highway, public works, or conservation office, and ask that the material be removed.
- * Volunteer to help organize a cleanup.



Can I Do More?

- * Ask the organizers of a festival, fair, or other outdoor event in your community to make it a "litter-free" event. This can be done by giving out litterbags at entrances and making sure that everyone who attends knows that it is a "litter-free" day. Affiliates of Keep America Beautiful have organized litter-free concerts, fairs and minor-league baseball games.
- * Cover open loads on all trucks
- * If you are a contractor, ask your chapter of the National Association of Home Builders about the "Build America Beautiful" program.
- * Encourage a school to start a "clean campus" program. This could include placement of trash receptacles, litter pick-ups, and projects in which students track litter's origins.
- * Ask marina operators if your Boy of Girl Scout troop or civic group can pass out litterbags to boaters. Public boat ramps are also good spots to give away litterbags.

