



GLADSTONE
REGIONAL COUNCIL



ILLEGAL DUMPING & LITTER PREVENTION STRATEGY

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1.0 Background

1.1 Setting

The strategy covers the entire Gladstone Region, an area of 10,488 square kilometres from Raglan in the north, to the Rosedale in the south.



1.2 Stakeholder Identification

The stakeholders that are considered integral in the development, implementation and support of Council's Illegal Dumping and Litter Prevention Strategy have been identified below:

- Major industry
- All Council Departments
- Ratepayers & Residents
- Councillors
- Community Groups
- Government agencies
- Visitors to the Gladstone Region
- Real Estate Agencies

1.3 Definitions

Littering is usually small in individual particle size and therefore is less than 200 litres in volume per item. Common types of waste include:

- Cigarette butts
- Drink bottles
- Fast food wrappers
- Material from a trailer that is poorly secured
- Grass clippings swept into the gutter
- Paper, tins and bottles left in an open or public space
- Any objects left lying in open or public spaces that make an area untidy with rubbish
- Building site packaging waste or unused products made of material such as paper, polystyrene, webbing or plastic.

Litter builds up next to roads, can block gutters and finds its way into creeks, rivers and onto beaches.

Illegal dumping is the unlawful deposit of waste that is greater than 200 litres in volume or size of articles that are not delivered to waste management facilities provided by Council.

Illegal dumping includes items such as bags of rubbish and garden waste. It also includes larger scale dumping of building (construction and demolition) materials, household goods (such as whitegoods, mattresses and furniture), abandoned cars and car parts, scrap tyres and hazardous waste.

1.4 Environmental Considerations

Potential environmental impacts of illegal dumping and littering can include:

- Contamination of land, including degrading plant and animal habitats;
- Pollution of local bushland, reduction of biodiversity values and inhibiting natural revegetation;
- Runoff from illegal dump sites may contaminate soil and water sources, such as lakes, dams, creeks and adjacent oceans;
- Dumped items can alter the normal drainage course of runoff and make areas more susceptible to flooding and erosion when waste blocks creeks, stormwater drains and gutters;
- Dumped materials could catch fire either by spontaneous combustion or arson, which can damage property and bushland and pose threats to human life; and
- Illegally dumped items are a lost resource.

Many items can be recycled at Council's Waste facilities for free; particularly organic green waste material, beverage containers, fridges, computers, tyres and car bodies.

1.5 Social Considerations

Potential social impacts of illegal dumping and littering can include:

- A reduction in the aesthetic amenity deters people from visiting areas where there is frequent illegal dumping
- Dumped items pose physical and chemical hazards, such as protruding nails or sharp edges and harmful fluids or dust
- Dump sites may attract rodents and other vermin that pose health risks
- Dump sites attract further dumping and other anti social behaviour such as graffiti and vandalism, which can decrease community pride and further exacerbate the problem

1.6 Financial Considerations

The financial costs for local government dealing with illegal dumping are principally associated with staffing resources, including:

- Responding to customer service requests and complaints;
- Enforcement of offences;
- Collection / transportation / disposal; and
- Education / engagement.

2.0 Existing Related Operational Programs

2.1 Street sweeping

Council undertakes sweeping of the regions streets in an effort to reduce the amount of litter and road debris that enters the stormwater systems. This activity is coordinated through the Engineering Services Directorate.

2.2 Mowing Operations

The mowing of parks, open space, easements, drainage reserves, roadsides and Council owned land is managed through Parks & Environment, Engineering Services and Contract providers. All of the operators are required to pick up litter that is on the area to be mowed prior to the mowing operation being undertaken. The current contract provider is very diligent with this activity and the resultant clean roadsides and parklands within their operational areas reflect this commitment to the environment. Council staff also undertakes litter collection prior to mowing when operating in parks, open space, drains and easements.

2.3 Waste services

Waste Services provide transfer stations throughout the region in response to local needs and waste management practices. These stations have various opening hours and are of different volume capability to reflect the needs of individual locations. Refer to Councils website at www.gladstone.qld.gov.au and click on Engineering Services / Waste for specific site information.

Contracted collections of household garbage and recycled bin services are provided to households in the majority of the regions towns and urban areas. These services deliver waste to the Benaraby Waste Management Facility and also take recycled materials to the Rockhampton Material Recycling Facility for future use. The use of the Rockhampton facility is a multi region agreement to maximise the facility and promote the reduction of material going to landfill in Gladstone, Rockhampton and other adjacent local government areas.

2.4 Litter crew

Parks & Environment operate a small two man litter crew whose responsibility is to collect litter that accumulates along roadsides within the urban boundary of Gladstone, respond to requests for disposal of illegal dumping activities, and provide assistance to Parks & Environment staff for major vandalism and graffiti clean up activities. This crew undertake cleaning and litter control in the Gladstone CBD area on four days per week. They commence in the morning with the CBD and then follow a schedule of litter collections through the inner city suburbs including Dawson Highway through to Chapman Drive Roundabout. Council litter crew operate within the 60km speed areas of the Gladstone City area, including parts of Red Rover Road, Hanson Road and Dawson Highway.

2.5 Parks Maintenance Crews

All Parks & Environment Maintenance crews undertake litter removal while servicing various areas throughout the region including parks, reserves, drainage easements, cemeteries and open space areas.

3.0 Strategy Goals & Objectives

The Illegal Dumping & Litter Prevention Strategy aims to address the many impacts of illegal dumping and litter production within the Gladstone Region. The strategy outlines existing actions and proposed new actions to encourage the community to prevent litter production and reduce the occurrence of illegal dumping.

3.1 Goal of the Strategy

To preserve, protect and enhance the appearance, health and natural environment of the Gladstone Region.

3.2 Objectives of the Strategy

1. To raise community awareness of the effects of littering and illegal dumping and thereby encourage positive community action.
2. To reduce the volume of litter and waste in the natural environment of the Gladstone Region.

4.0 Extending our Commitment

4.1 To raise community awareness of the effects of littering and illegal dumping and thereby encourage positive community action.

4.1.1 Existing Actions

- Undertake media releases where need arises.
- Gladstone News advertisement every few months as part of overall regulatory enforcement advertisements.
- Promotion of recycling capabilities at Gladstone Region Waste Facilities

4.1.2 Proposed Actions

- Develop a comprehensive, integrated communications, marketing, engagement and education plan that meets the strategy's objectives and identifies education resources to be utilised.

4.2 To reduce the volume of litter and waste in the natural environment of the Gladstone Region, both proactive and reactively.

4.2.1 Existing Actions

- Investigate and enforce illegal dumping and littering complaints
- Clean up illegal dumping sites where no offender can be identified
- Roadside collection of litter within 60km and under speed zone urban areas
- Street sweeping local roads throughout the region
- Participate in community programs like Clean Up Australia (CUA) Day and The Great Northern Clean Up
- Participate in Reef Guardian Program
- Illegal dumping hot spot hidden camera installations undertaken

4.2.2 Proposed Actions

- Continue with all existing actions identified in 4.2.1.
- Actively encourage participation in CUA Day and The Great Northern Clean Up to all Council employees, schools, business and residents of the region.
- Promote Reef Guardian Program to all schools within the region.
- Review land owner's responsibility for clean up of illegal dumping as well as developing partnerships with land owners and industries where dumping hot spots are identified.
- Review existing litter crew operational schedules and Customer Service Requests lodged to determine the need for an additional litter crews or resources.
- Train and up skill staff in appropriate techniques for illegal dumping and littering offences.

5.0 Implementation Plan

To enable the reduction of litter and prevention of illegal dumping activities within the Gladstone Region, the following table of prioritised implementation activities has been developed. These activities shall be reviewed regularly to enable update of the strategy document and to inform Gladstone Regional Council of the outcomes from the implementation plan. It is anticipated that data collected throughout the year will be collated and used alongside anecdotal evidence to benchmark the outcomes of this strategy.

Objective 1: To raise community awareness of the effects of littering and illegal dumping and thereby encourage positive community action.

Action	Priority/ Frequency	Resources	Lead Division	Support Division	Unit of Measure
Develop and implement an integrated communications, marketing, engagement and education plan	High / Quarterly	Existing budget allocations plus Gladstone Ports Corporation (GPC) sustainability funds	Communications and Marketing Unit	Parks and Environment Regulatory Services Engineering Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - views of media releases from website - impressions on Facebook site relating directly to planned activities - noticeable reduction of litter from environment by key staff - feedback from Councillors, staff and the community via surveys and anecdotal evidence

Objective 2: To reduce the volume of litter and waste in the natural environment of the Gladstone Region.

Action	Priority/ Frequency	Resources	Lead Division	Support Division	Unit of Measure
Investigate and enforce illegal dumping and littering complaints (including issuing clean up notices where offenders are identified)	High / Ongoing	Local Laws Officers, Parks Litter Crew and Team Leader Parks Services	Regulatory Services	Parks & Environment	Number of Customer Service Requests lodged and actioned within relevant timeframes.
Clean up illegal dumping sites where no offender can be identified	High / Ongoing	Parks Services Litter Crew, Local Laws officer and equipment to lift illegally dumped heavy items	Parks & Environment	Regulatory Services	Record of tonnage collected reported annually and compared to previous periods.

Roadside collection of litter within 60km and under speed zone urban areas	High / Ongoing	Parks & Environment Litter Crew (2 people) and truck	Parks & Environment		Record of quantity of litter collected and reported annually
Street sweeping local roads throughout the region	High / Ongoing	Street Sweeping trucks (2)	Road Services		Schedule for servicing of roads maintained or increased and tonnage collected recorded and reported monthly
Participate in community programs like CUA Day	Medium / Annual	Environment Officers time, advertising promotion budget, waste facility fees allocation in annual budget; Gladstone Festival & Events Contract	Parks & Environment	Gladstone Festivals & Events	Record and report on tonnages collected and disposed of as a result of each event. Minimum of one per year. Record and report on number of groups registered and/or individual volunteers across the region who participate in CUA.
Participate in Reef Guardian Program	High / Ongoing	GREAN Committee: Parks & Environment; Regulatory Services staff and Engineering Services staff	Parks & Environment	Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA)	Review and record actions completed on a bi-monthly basis, with annual report submitted to Council and GBRMPA
Actively encourage participation in CUA Day, The Great Northern Clean Up to all Council employees and residents of the Gladstone Region.	Medium / Annual	Parks & Environment staff, Corporate Communications staff and Industry partners	Parks & Environment	Communications and Marketing Section	Record and report on number of volunteers participating and volume of litter collected from event. Minimum 2 events per year.
Promote Reef Guardian Program to all schools within the region.	Medium / Ongoing	Parks & Environment Conservation and Rural Land management staff	Parks & Environment	Communications & Marketing Section	Report on numbers of schools participating in program and include new schools to the program

Develop partnerships with land owners of dumping hot spots and major industry groups	Low / Ongoing	Regulatory Services staff	Regulatory Services	Land and industry owners	Record of letters sent recorded in ECM; replies to letters addressed.
Review of existing litter crew operational schedules	Medium / Annual	Existing crew of 2 staff and 1 vehicle are also tasked to assist with amenity cleaning activities due to 9 day roster overlap causing holes in servicing the Gladstone amenities	Parks & Environment		Report prepared including costs of existing two staff and a vehicle to service litter collection in 60 km speed zones in Gladstone, as per existing operational program
Determine the need for an additional litter crew or resources	Low / Annual	Additional crew of minimum 2 staff and support vehicle	Parks & Environment		Report prepared including costs of two staff and a vehicle to service litter collection in 60 to 80 km speed zones between Gladstone, Calliope and Boyne Island/ Tannum Sands main roads
Determine the need for an additional litter crew or resources	Low / Annual	Contractor Services to undertake Litter collection in road reserves between Gladstone, Calliope and Boyne Island/ Tannum Sands main roads	Engineering Services		Report prepared of costs associated with establishing a contract for litter collection services as described.
Illegal dumping hot spot hidden camera installations	High / Ongoing	Infra red cameras (2) initially, weekly servicing or as required when activity in area dictates investigation	Regulatory Services		Record and document instances of illegal dumping and report on occurrences of activities on monthly basis.
Train and up skill staff in appropriate techniques for illegal dumping and littering offences	Medium / Ongoing	Training budget allocation for investigation techniques and reporting of offences document preparation; computer access for officers; suitable recording equipment available	Regulatory Services		Staff are trained in investigation techniques within 6 months of commencement of employment. Report on number of breaches recorded and outcomes of investigation on quarterly basis.

6.0 Strategy Review

The Illegal Dumping and Litter Prevention Strategy actions will be reviewed and reported annually to Council in September to enable collation of information from various Council Lead Divisions activities.