

DON'T BE A TOSSER

GETTING PEOPLE TO BIN THEIR BUTTS

Through the combined efforts of government, industry and smokers one of the most successful butt littering campaigns ever was carried out in Victoria during 2007 by Sustainability Victoria.

KEY OUTCOMES:

- ◀ Our goal of preventing the considerable increase in butt litter which was expected after the introduction of smoking bans after 1 July was surpassed
- ◀ Not only was there no increase in butt litter, there was a major increase in the number of smokers binning their butts, demonstrating that real behaviour change had occurred!
- ◀ Butt littering behaviour fell by almost half
- ◀ Without intervention littering was expected to rise to around 80%. The low littering rate of 33% exceeded all expectations
- ◀ 66% of smokers binned their butts – up from 42% prior to the campaign
- ◀ 73% of venues actively supported the campaign – exceeding the goal of 20%
- ◀ 68% of venue managers reported increased awareness and concern about butt litter as result of the campaign
- ◀ 66% of Victoria's local governments participated in the campaign
- ◀ The campaign was awarded two Sirens, Australia's premier radio awards, for 2008



THE SCENE

On 1 July 2007 licensed premises became smoke free when the Victorian Government introduced changes to the Victorian Tobacco Act 1987.

THE ISSUE

Experience, here and overseas, showed that the changes were likely to lead to an increase in butt littering in open spaces outside pubs and clubs.

To combat this, the issue of butt litter needed to be put on the agenda, especially for venue managers and smokers.

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THE SOLUTION

A collaborative campaign was developed focussing on changing smokers' behaviour at venues identified most at risk of increased littering.

These were in inner urban areas with no designated smoking area such as a courtyard or beer garden.

The campaign included:

- The participation of key partners in a Campaign Consultative Committee including the Australian Hotels Association, Butt Littering Trust, City of Melbourne, Clubs Victoria, Department of Human Services, EPA Victoria, Liquor Licensing, Municipal Association of Victoria and Victorian Litter Action Alliance
- Information and resources provided to industry and campaign capacity building for local government conducted by the Victorian Litter Action Alliance
- Public awareness and education about butt litter using advertising and public relations and local governments implementing activities at a local level
- Evaluation of all aspects of the butt litter prevention campaign

THE OBJECTIVES

Cigarette butts currently represent 56% of Victoria's litter stream. The long term goal of the campaign is to help meet Victoria's Towards Zero Waste litter target of a 25% reduction in littering behaviour by 2014, compared to 2003 levels.

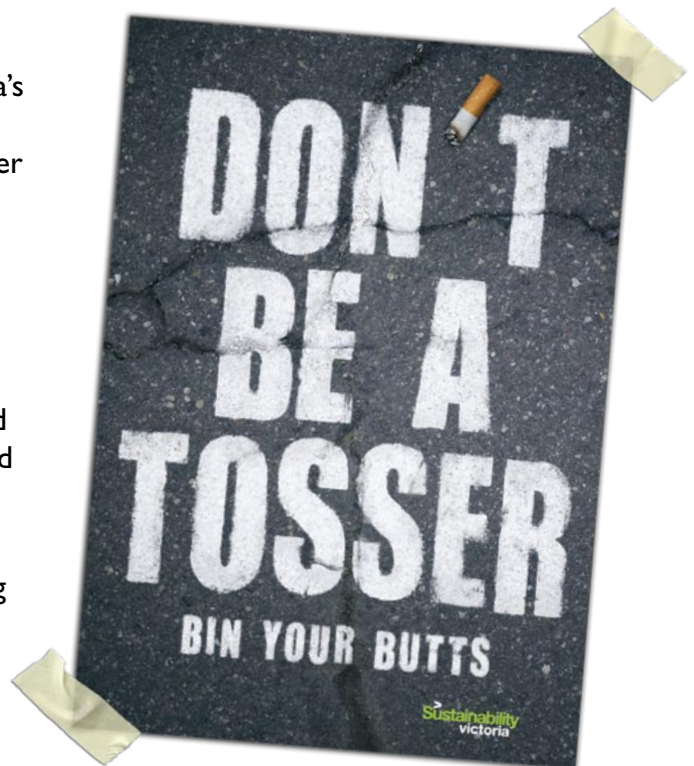
Behavioural targets for the campaign's evaluation were:

- At least 20% of licensed premises demonstrating very strong levels of support and implementation of the campaign's recommended actions by the peak of the campaign (end of August)
- To prevent an increase in cigarette butt littering by smokers at participating locations, with the target littering rate under 50%, with a stretch target of 40%

WHAT DID THE CAMPAIGN SAY?

Talking to smokers about their role in preventing butt litter outside licensed premises created an interesting challenge for the campaign.

Research indicated that socially many smokers already felt persecuted about their smoking. When targeting butt litter messages to smokers, the campaign needed to be mindful of this complexity.





The ‘Don’t be a Tosser – Bin Your Butts’ message was directed at smokers, without pointing the finger at them or laying blame.

A clear and direct call to action message was woven into all supporting collateral.

Message and media targeting were focused on areas of significant potential for littering, with relevance to a wide range of target audiences including venues and local governments.

WHAT DID WE DO?

Local government

The Victorian Litter Action Alliance provided practical assistance to local councils and regional waste management groups to help them take action against the growing problem at a local level, including presentations, issues papers, a toolkit and e-newsletters.¹

Licensed premises

Over 8,000 pubs, clubs, bars and full club licensed venues across Victoria were mailed a ‘Don’t be a Tosser – Bin Your Butts’ campaign toolkit to help them understand and tackle the issue of butt litter.

Rebates were made available to help premises install butt bins.

Awareness

An integrated advertising and public relations campaign was undertaken to raise awareness.

- Metropolitan and regional media launches kicked off the campaign
- Advertising consisted of washroom advertising posters and outdoor superlites on bus shelters as well as an award-winning radio advertisement
- A comprehensive public relations campaign included ongoing media publicity and promotions, a campaign website and e-newsletters and the use of a team of on-the-ground Butt Champs visiting venues to give away personal ashtrays

¹ Butt litter is the number one litter issue for local governments (Victorian Litter Action Alliance Litter Prevention and Capacity Building Survey 2006).

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BUDGET

Total: \$1.3m

- ◀ Sustainability Victoria budgeted \$1.2 million for advertising and public relations
- ◀ Victorian Litter Action Alliance funded local government resources and capacity building
- ◀ EPA Victoria funded butt bin rebates
- ◀ The Butt Littering Trust supported the licensed premises toolkit

EVALUATION

An independent evaluation² was undertaken to measure pre and post 1 July campaign awareness and adoption of the key campaign messages, together with site measures of litter and littering behaviour outside 60 landlocked 'at risk' venues.

This was supplemented by a licensed premises phone survey (44 venue managers) and a local government and regional waste management groups online survey (59 surveys).

KEY LEARNINGS

The campaign identified four key enablers to successful change:

- ◀ Partnerships – strong strategic alliances with the hospitality industry, local governments and state government to facilitate an integrated collective approach
- ◀ Place – venues acting on the campaign's messages and providing facilities for smokers to bin their butts (providing bins, having staff regularly patrol and clean up butt litter, having signage asking smokers to bin their butts)
- ◀ Promotion – supporting promotion of mainstream advertising and media publicity to raise awareness of butt litter generally
- ◀ Personal action – smokers going to the effort to bin their butts and not feeling ostracised or 'blamed' through the campaign

LET'S KEEP IT GOING

It's up to us to ensure that people keep binning their butts.

Campaign materials will continue to be available from Sustainability Victoria's website, www.sustainability.vic.gov.au, with support and toolkits also available from Victorian Litter Action Alliance's website, www.litter.vic.gov.au.

The campaign showed that venues that provide butt bins, display signage and keep smoking areas clean encourage smokers to do the right thing. Venues who take the lead get results and smokers responded positively.

²Community Change, independent researchers with experience in site and behavioural observation of litter and littering behaviours were engaged to conduct the evaluation.

Sustainability Victoria wishes to acknowledge the NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change which gave permission for the use of the 'Don't be a Tosser' tagline and Toyota which gave permission for the use of the 'Bin Your Butts' tagline.