

10. Littering of Roadside Verges

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Vision, mission and values

Appropriate management of litter is in keeping with the Council mission of creating the ultimate living environment.

Local Government Act 2002 – The four well-beings

Cultural Protecting native bush and the native wildlife

Economic Beneficial to the Operational Litter Control Budget

Environmental Reducing litter within water tables and isolated areas is beneficial to the environment

Social Sense of pride

Summary

Cleaning litter from roadside water tables and other isolated areas is currently costing Council an estimated \$50,000 per annum and having a negative impact on resident's and visitors' appreciation of the district. An education campaign, based on signage and communication, is recommended to help reduce its occurrence.

Background

Council and the community have raised the issue of litter on roadsides and in waterways, particularly in arterial routes. The litter varies from drink vessels to takeaway wrappers and other random items like cigarette packets, plastic bags and confectionery wrappers (Photo 1 below) thrown from car windows.

The bulk fly tipping, or dumping of large amounts of rubbish, is predominately domestic rubbish, but can also include old washing machines, fridges and offal (Photo 2 below).

During the last financial year 657 Customer Request Management (CRM) calls were made to Whangarei District Council requesting the cleaning up of fly tipping. Litter can have a range of impacts including being a risk to wildlife and plants, polluting the waterways, attracting rodents, being a fire hazard and also it can reduce the attractiveness of the district to residents and visitors.

The Waste and Drainage Department spends approximately \$4000 per month cleaning up this litter.



Photo 1: Whg Heads Rd litter



Photo 2: Litter dumped in lay-by Corner SH14 and Otuhi Rd

Options to reduce the litter problem

Ways to reduce the occurrence of littering are generally aimed at changing the mindset of the people doing it. The solution is to educate, inform and promote alternative behaviour.

Council staff have reviewed ways to achieve this within the district.

Public amenity signs

Billboards are recommended to highlight the littering problem and promote ways to report offenders and also give a sense of ownership of the problem. This campaign would be supported with an article in the Leader and follow up reports. Examples of possible billboards are provided as attachments 1, 2 and 3. The billboards (1.2m x 2.4m) will cost approximately \$800 to fabricate and install, the cost is dependent on the size of the sign and the location of the installation.

Strategically placed billboards are proposed at the start of the following roads:

- Whangarei Heads Rd, Whareora Rd, Mangakahia Rd, Harris Rd, Ngunguru Rd, Whananaki North Rd, Russell Rd, Pipiwai Rd, Maungakarama Rd, Mangapai Rd and Cove Rd.

The opportunity to place similar signage on waste collection trucks, such as those operated by Northland Waste Ltd, has also been discussed. The message would be strengthened by linking litter thrown from vehicles with rubbish collected from kerbside.

The cost for the signage on the trucks is approximately \$100 per square metre.

Web site

Running alongside the poster campaign it is proposed that Council's web site could be utilised as a way to report people seen throwing litter from vehicles. A live counter, such as that presented in attachment 4, could be used to show the amount of reports received to date, with the facility to report new offenders.

Promote alternative behaviour

At beach car parks "Litter Packs" will be prepared to be given out to beach visitors. A similar pack was used under the 'Lock it or Lose it' campaign run by Community Services last year at some public car parks. The pack would contain an educational pamphlet on litter, a bag to keep within the car to be used as a rubbish bin and also a small window sticker displaying the 'Keep Whangarei District Tidy' message with phone number to report any offenders.

To reduce costs a joint operation with Community Services could be run this year.

Council currently funds an educational programme to advise of the impacts of litter associated with stormwater through its arrangement with Mountains to sea Trust. It is recommended that Council continues to support this programme.

Fines

Council also imposes fines under the Litter Act 1979 on litterers to ensure a deterrent exists. Fines currently range from \$100 to \$400 and this level of fines was set through a Council resolution in June 2009. Council has fined approximately forty people to date. To date Council have focussed on litterers near transfer stations and where evidence of owners have been found in dumped rubbish.

Funding

It is proposed that any work undertaken be carried out within existing budgets

Conclusion

Council and the community recognise that littering in the district is an ongoing problem. A number of options have been considered that will help reduce the occurrence of it. It is recommended that Council's Waste and Drainage Department is permitted to pursue the proposed programme of installing roadside billboards and signage on the Waste trucks promoting the anti littering messages and encouraging people to report offenders to the WDC.

Recommendation

1. That the information be received.
2. That Council staff implement the proposed litter reduction programme based on items raised in this agenda item.

Attachments

- 1 [Keep Whananaki Tidy](#)
- 2 [When you litter it ends up here](#)
- 3 [Taken from 'Keep Britain Tidy' site](#)
- 4 [Keep Britain Tidy](#)

Attachment 1



Attachment 2



Attachment 3



Attachment 4



Please complete the following details to report Litter being dropped from a vehicle.