

KAB WA and City of Perth tackle cigarette butt litter

Keep Australia Beautiful WA (KAB) and the City of Perth are working in partnership to trial a week-long KAB BIN YOUR BUTT program at Council House and the City of Perth depot.

The aim of the education program, which runs from May 26 to 30, is to increase awareness of the environmental and aesthetic impacts of cigarette butt litter and to encourage behaviour change.

Cigarette butts are the most littered item in Western Australia. As well as being unsightly, butts can start fires, chemicals such as cadmium, lead and zinc can leach from discarded butts, and animals can mistake them for food.

City of Perth staff will be educated on the impacts of cigarette butt litter through daily email bulletins, posters and displays.

Enforcement officers will hand out ashtrays providing information on the environmental impacts and issue warnings to smokers who do not dispose of their cigarette butts appropriately.

Keep Australia Beautiful Council chair Mel Hay said the BIN YOUR BUTT campaign aimed raise awareness among city workers of the environmental damage caused by cigarette butts.

“There’s a common perception among many people that because cigarette butts are small, they have little impact on the environment,” he said.

“Unfortunately the reverse is true. Butt litter attracts butt litter and, while cigarette butts may seem small and benign, with an estimated 7.2 billion butts littered in Australia each year, the toxic chemicals being leached into the environment add up.”

Cigarette butt littering is an offence under the Litter Act 1979 and can attract an on-the-spot fine of \$75.

The trial at Council House and the depot will fine-tune the campaign for a potential wider roll-out to other organisations in the city in 2008-2009.

To register your building’s interest in participating in a BIN YOUR BUTT education program, please contact Anna McGlynn of KAB WA on 6467 5547.

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