

Clean Up Australia Day
4 March 2012
Business Clean Up Day
28 February 2012
Schools Clean Up Day
2 March 2012



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VICTORIA NEEDS TO CLEAN UP ITS RIVERS, CREEKS AND PARKS
- Ian Kiernan AO, reveals the Victorian 2011 Rubbish Report and calls for action

Melbourne, Wednesday 1 February: It's official: Victoria needs to clean up its rivers and creeks and take a good look at the state of its parks.

Victorians are generally proud of the natural beauty of their state so it comes as a big surprise that over half of the rubbish removed from Victoria by Clean Up Australia Day volunteers came from its waterways and parklands. The most polluted sites in the state were rivers and creeks with 32% and parks with 20% of the total waste surveyed.

The 2011 Rubbish Report has highlighted some alarming facts about the state of rubbish in Victoria. Once again cigarette butts took out the number one spot making up 10% of total waste removed. But what is more alarming is the increase of plastic which rose from 27% of surveyed rubbish in 2010 to 38% in 2011.

Ian Kiernan AO, Chairman and Founder of Clean Up Australia, spoke about the findings; "Victorians love to enjoy the great outdoors, spending time in your wonderful parks and by waterways. It is such a shame to see these spaces fall victim to littering creating an eyesore for humans and endangering wildlife."

"It is also extremely worrying to see such a high increase in the prevalence of plastics in the environment when they are not biodegradable and can so easily be captured and recycled.."

"Beverage related items took out 3 of the top 5 (25%) and six of the top ten (37%) most common rubbish items in this state in 2011. This is a disgrace when a viable solution, such as a container refund scheme that will turn these beverage containers from rubbish into a resource, is staring us in the face."

"I urge all Victorians to say enough is enough, and join a winning team on Sunday 4 March."

Last year an estimated 96,797 volunteers removed over 3,012 tonnes of rubbish across 1,369 registered sites in Victoria. The hard work put in by the volunteers on the day was extremely impressive and exhibited the pride that Victorians have in their shared spaces.

While cigarette butts continue to top the list of rubbish items found in Victoria they have reduced significantly from 27% of total waste in 2010 to 10% in 2011. Ian Kiernan applauds Victorian residents: "While there are still some lessons to be learnt about how we dispose of our rubbish, the residents and visitors to Victoria seem to be becoming more responsible about disposing their cigarette butts".

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“Our 2011 Rubbish Report highlights the amazing achievement of all our Clean Up Australia Day volunteers. They do a fantastic job of cleaning up their own local areas. We want every person in Victoria to register for the Clean Up effort and show the rest of the nation how they can lead by example.”

“Over the last 22 years an estimated 237,500 tonnes of rubbish have been removed from our environment on Clean Up Australia Day. But with every Australian still producing approximately 2 tonnes of garbage a year, we still have a long way to go. We are a resilient nation and through community effort we can preserve our landscapes and oceans. It is vital that volunteers continue their great effort by joining the team and registering to clean up.”

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY 2012

WHAT: Australia’s largest community participation event. Get a group together and register your chosen Clean Up Site online.

WHEN: Clean Up Australia Day – Sunday 4 March; Business Clean Up Day – Tuesday 28 February; Schools Clean Up Day – Friday 2 March

WHERE: Your local park, waterway, school, beach or street.

WHO: Everyone is welcome – friends, family, kids, community groups, work colleagues or anyone else.

HOW: Register for Clean Up Australia Day now at www.cleanupaustraliaday.org.au or call 1800 CUA DAY for more information.

-ENDS-

For any further media information or an interview, please contact Tracey Wigg, Gaia Communications on 0419 141 266 Email: tawigg@bigpond.com

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