

THIS WEEK IN "LITTERLAND"

www.litterpreventionprogram.com

November 22, 2015

Butt flicking causes 39 balcony fires in Toronto this year . . . so far

Smokers tossing lit cigarette butts from the balconies of Toronto high-rises caused 39 fires in 2015, according to Toronto Fire Services. There were 39 such fires in 2014, 30 in 2014, 47 in 2012 and a five-year low of 30 in 2013. *Litterland* delved into the issue of balcony fires after receiving two complaints, both involving elegant condominium buildings. The fire department will make presentations to condo owners and tenants at the request of building owners and property managers. An official warning letter is available for distribution to residents. Firefighters are not empowered to issue tickets or lay charges for littering, a spokesman said. Toronto Fire responded to 33,100 emergency fire calls last year.



Photos: Courtesy of Frances Tsoi

DAMAGE DONE. Above left, a charred wooden planter pot after a Toronto balcony fire. Above right, Toronto Fire Fighters deal with a dumpster blaze, again the result of smokers in high-rises flicking or tossing cigarette butts over the balcony rails.

OUTSMARTING SEAGULLS IN WALES

Keep Wales Tidy funded an online game for children, "Don't Feed Simon", using a share of the 5p plastic bag fee paid by customers of retailer Tesco. The game challenges a player to pick up as many discarded chip bags as possible in 30 seconds before Simon the Seagull gets to them. Via Twitter and Facebook's #DontFeedSimon, players post their scores and some win prizes. Wales established a fee for plastic bags in 2011.

HEADLINE LITTER GRABBERS (NOV 15 - 22)

Some of what made our News Reel this week

Don't feed the birds here (11/19)

A woman was fined £50 for littering in Swansea after she and her son left crumbs of a leftover hotdog bun on a bench and on the ground for the pigeons.

Litter free Dhaka by March 2016 (11/15)

With all mayors joining to pledge a litter-free Dhaka by 2016, a move is afoot in the Bangladeshi capital to draw mass media into promoting the effort as a corporate social responsibility obligation.

Anti-litter marketing an election pledge (11/16)

You don't need to vote Conservative to warm to the party leader's campaign promise in the provincial election in Newfoundland and Labrador. On the trail this week Paul Davis vowed to tackle littering to boost tourism if his government is re-elected. He's pledging a 'Pristine NL' marketing campaign.

Fewer Arizona drivers are littering (11/16)

Arizona motorists have become less loose with their litter, a survey for Don't Trash Arizona shows. Seven out of ten respondents said they had not littered in the past year, an improvement of 10% from 2014. Forty per cent fewer drivers admitted to tossing small wrappers out of the car window. See it all at www.dontrashaz.com.

Fiji's not fooling around (11/17)

The government of Fiji will publicly name and shame to curtail littering, its environment minister Parveen Kumar told a weeklong conference last Saturday.

Tear-offs banned from downhill racing circuit

Downhill cyclists can forget about using tear-off lenses for their goggles. This season the British Downhill Series has banned them for litter reasons. The tearaway tabs are problematic.



NOW PROHIBITED

DID YOU KNOW?

Exactly three years ago, on November 22, 2012, the author of this publication formally co-filed a 105-page application calling for a review of littering in Ontario. Evidence supporting the need for attention to littering continues to amass. Astoundingly the Ontario government and its Ministry of Environment and Climate Change do not see littering as part of their collective mandate.