

THIS WEEK IN "LITTERLAND"

www.litterpreventionprogram.com

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FAQ: Is a banana peel litter?

A frequently asked question concerns items like banana peels, apple cores and peanut shells. Is organic waste a form of litter? For those of us in the know, this is a no-brainer. Of course these discarded food scraps are litter just like any other item of wrongly disposed trash would be. The argument that organic material is "biodegradable" and will compost is lame. As any avid gardener will verify, composting takes time, at least a month for a banana skin. It doesn't just magically happen overnight and was never intended as a sidewalk activity. Decomposition rates make the unequivocal case: Paper bag - 1 month; Apple core - 8 weeks; Orange peel - 2 years; Cigarette end - 18 months to 500 years; Plastic bag - 10 to 20 years; A plastic bottle - 450 years; Chewing gum - 1 million years. [\(Source: Keep Britain Tidy\)](#)



[There's good news and bad news in survey from Northern Ireland](#)

It costs every ratepayer in Northern Ireland £58 a year to clean up after people who don't pick up after themselves. That was a bit of bad news from a survey showing one in seven streets and parks fall below the litter benchmark. Of 1,100 sites, "widespread" litter was documented in 15 per cent of streets and parks across 11 councils that together spend £43 million annually on litter cleanup. Good news comes from low-density neighbourhoods where rankings ranged from 'clean' and 'very clean' to 'totally free of litter.' Dog fouling reports are down as well. Industrial estates pose the greatest challenge. One-third of them fall below standard, the Keep Northern Ireland Beautiful survey found. Seven of the 11 districts operate the *Live Here Love Here* anti-litter initiative. The survey results reflect a sampling of 100 sites per district between August and October, 2016.

DID YOU KNOW?

Street smokers outside Shibuya Station in Tokyo may be in for a harsh reminder about littering laws. Authorities are ready to take [action](#) against second hand smoke and butt flicking in the busy area around Hachiko statue. Despite three large warning signs and the closing of a designated smoking corner in the busy area the smoker problem continues.

HEADLINE LITTER GRABBERS (JAN 29 - FEB 5)

Some of what made our News Reel this week

App encourages reporting littering from cars (2/1)

South Australia launched its offensive against litter with a new law and a new app for reporting drivers who litter. The state EPA's *Dob In a Litterer* [smartphone app](#) had its unveiling Wednesday as the Local Nuisance and Litter Control Act 2016 took effect. For the first time motorists can send photo evidence directly to the Environmental Protection Agency, which will track down offenders based on vehicle registration information.

Every city should have one of these (1/30)

Thurrock, England has a litter councillor who delivers a yearly report to council on the general state of affairs litter-wise. Cllr Pauline Tolson made a 17-minute presentation to her colleagues this week.

Seemed like a good idea at the time (1/23)

A rule in place since 2012 to make litter bags mandatory in all Bhutan's taxi cabs isn't working. Cabbies complain that passengers misused the bags or stole them, and bags are no longer provided free.

Giving coffee cups the heave-ho (2/2)

Fewer carelessly tossed coffee cups in Kerry is one of the hoped-for results of a five-year council approved plan to crush the cup-chucking habit. The strategy employs wardens and enhanced technology - cameras and apps - to reduce littering overall in Killarney. Coffee shops and petrol stations will be asked to entice customers into using reusable cups or recyclable ones.