

THIS WEEK IN "LITTERLAND"

www.litterpreventionprogram.com

March 19, 2017

Environment under attack in United States

The environment appears to be on the chopping block under a Republican presidency in the new U S of A. "Litterland" is not political by nature. The bad habit of littering is non-partisan, crosses all party lines. But when a government moves to gut Great Lakes protection and neuter its Environmental Protection Agency, there is an obligation on the part of this publication to decry such actions and to wonder aloud what planet these decision makers are on. At right, an American poster promotes responsible behaviour, but how far will any of these efforts go without an environmentally strong leader?

They are singing for a change for the better

A gospel group is trying to make a difference using their vocal cords as tools for change. "The Well", an a cappella quintet from Chitungwiza, Zimbabwe, launched a new song at a concert Saturday to dovetail with the nation's anti-littering campaign. Titled "Zimbabwe", the song encourages the Christian masses to keep the environment clean for the good of the country. The group is about to release its fifth album.

Firm paid bonuses for tickets

Kingdom Security, a private UK firm that farms out litter enforcement services to municipal councils, is under fire in North Wales for paying its employees a performance bonus based on the number of fixed penalty notices they issued. The company says it has now stopped that practice, which critics said had led to overly aggressive and unreasonable ticketing practices. Kingdom and the council split the revenue derived from fines. Soon the £75 fine will rise to £100.

Woman didn't know littering is a crime

Karen Davies, 52, of Fforestfach, Wales, nicked with a Swansea court fine of £282 for flicking her cigarette and ignoring a fine payment notice, said she threw her smoke down because she didn't know littering was a crime. It is. Lesson learned!

Irish county feels warden's absence

Sligo County has witnessed a rise in dumping, particularly in rural areas, since its litter warden position became vacant. Interviews to fill the post are slated to begin soon. Meanwhile, four CCTV cameras have been purchased and will be trained on litter hotspots in Rusheen and Drumfin.

DID YOU KNOW?

Surfers Against Sewage publishes [a website](#) dedicated to litter in oceans - the problem and solutions. The Cornwall-based, registered non-profit has dedicated 2017 to the goal of plastic-free coastlines. It provides updates on marine litter issues in England and Wales.

TAKE THE PLEDGE



HEADLINE LITTER GRABBERS (MAR 12 - 19)

Some of what made our News Reel this week

Chinese worker's waistcoat says it all (3/9)

Talk about wearing one's heart on one's sleeve, a litter cleaner in Xi'an City, capital of Northwest China's Shaanxi Province, uses his vest to communicate to passersby while he works. His waistcoat is the backdrop for various humorous, awareness-raising messages that change from time to time. "To see you litter, breaks my heart", reads one of them.

Ouch, my head! Was that a bottle that hit me? (3/14)

A video making the rounds captures a confrontation between an irate street cleaner and an inconsiderate litterbug, who deliberately tossed a bottle and refused to pick it up as directed by the angry cleaner. In the heat of the impasse the video shows the cleaner retrieving the bottle himself and hitting the litterer over the head with it.

Beverage company numbers don't add up (3/16)

A beverage bottle contains only 6.6% recycled plastic, a Greenpeace UK study of five major drink makers has revealed. This is far less than the 25% figure Coca-Cola claims in Europe. Coke did not participate in the study.

Resident wants lids on blue bins (3/14)

Tired of chasing down an unyielding bevy of windblown waste after windy recycling collection days, a resident of Milton, Ontario wants her town to start providing blue bins that have lids, a valid suggestion.



YOUR SPACE

Experts share their insights and tricks of the trade

“Litter – watching people in public spaces”

by Paul Cusack

I'd like to discuss an alternate way of looking at litter, instead of focusing on litter try looking at the people who carry it and the spaces they are in.

These types of observations will have you seeing items before they become part of the litter stream. This is a step towards identifying the origin and routes that your local litter has travelled, and with that knowledge you can then work out where to try and collect it, what with, messaging opportunities and even enforcement actions.

I was excited to read one of the articles in issue 6, volume 4 of Litterland, "Who's to blame for all that litter?" The good folks at Tobin Consulting have come up with some interesting observations.

Passing Pedestrians – 39.6%

Passing motorists – 19.7%

That's almost 60% of litter generated by PASSING people. That reinforces the importance of knowing where and how people are moving in public spaces.

To get a better understanding of people in motion I recommend a visit to an open space for some observations, to get an understanding of what people are doing, where they are walking, who they are with?

Here are a few things to look for:

- Where they are moving? footpaths, crossing points, park's, cycle/walking tracks, are they using designated paths/walkways
- How they move through spaces? on their own, as a group, as family's, business related, recreational, don't get stuck on vehicle litter here
- What are they carrying? work materials, tablets/phones, beverages, food packaged, food open, mobile smokers
- Where are they consuming? dedicated seating, parks, cafes or outdoor dining, walking, smoking areas, etc.
- How and where they disposing of litter in public?
- Is litter getting correctly or incorrectly disposed of?

The location is completely up to you; these observations are applicable anywhere, and because it's more about bodies in motion than what's on the ground you can even be mobile when you're doing them.

Once you've observed a location for a while, you'll start to form a picture of what types of potential litter is moving through the area. How the majority of litter was at some stage mobile. There is a whole bunch of activity from when the product was sold in a shop to the point that it was littered.

Please don't only look for dirty areas and try to establish fixes, that's reactive, look for clean areas and develop understandings and lessons that can be applied to other similar spaces.

The good, the bad and the ugly all have something to teach you.

Pedestrian movements in public spaces to a good degree are very predictable, if you are willing to use that and your observations to guide bin placement, cleaning strategies and other litter management efforts you will enjoy better-managed litter at no additional expense.