

litterpreventionprogram.com

Second Annual

PROGRESS REPORT



2014

Ontario's litter problem:

In whose hands does it rest?

By Sheila White

FOREWORD

Two years ago the Toronto-based Litter Prevention Program embarked on a mission to have littering laws reviewed in Ontario. This seemingly simple request met with surprising resistance. So, our quest for action continues.

We continue to assert that Ontario's pervasive littering problem ought to be addressed in a thoughtful and focused manner. The provincial government has not conducted a litter review since 1977. Government, its agencies and corporate producers, generally speaking, deny responsibility for the uncontrolled growth in littering and dumping, prompting the title of this report: In whose hands does it rest?

Ultimately a decision to litter or not to litter rests with the individual. However, by doing nothing and showing no interest, the provincial government makes it nearly impossible to nudge a societal change that would make littering by these individuals less commonplace.

The Litter Prevention Program is dedicated to lowering the overall rate of littering through education, awareness and advocacy. Our newsletter, "This Week In 'Litterland'", is read around the globe. The litterpreventionprogram.com website is the world's most comprehensive compilation of news and information on litter and littering. We take an "edu-tainment" program on litter into schools and speak to all interested parties about the role they can play in preventing litter and reducing the overall rate of littering.

The goal of this report is to elevate litter's status in the public dialogue to enable a cultural shift to ensue that will lower the frequency of littering behaviours.

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« 2014 In Review

The Litter Prevention Program counts the following among its accomplishments:

Three-year renewal of agreement to perform in TDSB schools

LED litter messages, Ontario's first, on some highway road signs

Appearance credit in "Dark Side of the Chew" (TVO) documentary film by Andrew Nisker

Develop and launch Ontario's first attitude surveys on littering

Opinion poll for Toronto mayoral candidates and provincial party leaders

Take aim at Pfizer Canada's quit smoking ad depicting littering

Article published in national ad council's newsletter about littering in advertising

Appeared on CBC's The National commenting on its news documentary, *Trashing Canada*

Subject of a Yahoo! Canada feature profile

Continuing media availability on radio talk shows

"Litterland" weekly newsletter, read globally, surpasses Issue #100

www.litterpreventionprogram.com go-to source for litter info

Further built the case for upper-tier attention to littering

Our 2013 report, *Litter Control In Ontario: No Time To Waste*, looked at litter by type, reported on the dearth of enforcement and made 11 concrete, relatively inexpensive recommendations toward building awareness of littering as a serious social issue. It provided evidence that littering can serve as a "gateway" to escalating levels of costly, anti-social, criminal behaviours that affect the environment and shared, public spaces. It positioned littering as a tax drain that brings decline to property values and quality of life, and as the entry point for higher-tier "green" crimes. Estimates say that 45 per cent of littering is accidental and 55 per cent is deliberate. The Litter Prevention Program Progress Reports focus on the latter.

This year's report hones in on problems that arise from a lack of attention to littering at senior levels. A most common refrain from the upper halls is that management of the litter file rests with municipalities. Routinely that shifts any responsibility for litter policy to local governments and their cash-strapped and understaffed solid waste departments or arms-length contract operators. This approach will not lead to a satisfactory reduction in occurrences of littering in society. Until a position is designated at the provincial level and a mandate given to work with all vested parties toward a solution to a runaway, littering culture, nothing will ever really change.

« Global Bright Spots

Ontario lags behind on litter awareness when compared outside Canada.

Internationally, the anti-litter scene is exploding with initiatives.

The **British Parliament** activated nationwide committee hearings on litter in tandem with targeted public outreach on Twitter. There is movement to hold producers accountable for part of England's £1 billion annual cleanup costs.

Australia invests in litter eradication plans and programs. There the packaging industry is on board specifically to support litter reduction efforts.

Similarly, **Scotland** has invested heavily in the vision of a litter-reduced landscape as part of its legacy from the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games.

Guyana announces its first-ever National Litter Index, copying the example of Australia.

Ireland's Litter League ranks cities and has them competing with one another. IBAL, Irish Business Against Litter, is consistent in its attack on littering.

India's Prime Minister made himself the figurehead of a celebrity-laced, national, five-year Clean India plan (Swachh Bharat) that launched October 2.

The **European Commission** has pledged action on marine litter, annual conferences and targets for reductions among EU nations of plastic bags, and other items.

New South Wales government is set to usher in a Cash for Containers statewide beverage industry litter recapturing program using reverse vending machines to return a 10-cent deposit.

Victoria, AU continues its trailblazing ways as the least littered place globally with tougher laws and avid public online and Smartphone reporting, and four million dollars collected in fines for this financial year.

Keep **America** Beautiful continues to effectively harness corporate dollars to devote to litter prevention in that country. **Florida** unveiled the three-year, multi-million-dollar "Drive It Home: Don't Litter Our Paradise" roadside litter education campaign statewide.

The Canadian Scene >>

Pockets of progress here and there, highs and lows:

In September 2014 a survey by Calgary polling firm *Insights West* identified littering as the chief concern among people in Alberta and British Columbia in more than 90 per cent of respondents (92%, 94%). This was the first-ever attitudes survey undertaken in Canada to measure the irksomeness of illegal behaviours.

The City of Hamilton and nonprofit Fix Our World cooperated to produce a branded litter audit after student volunteer clean up activities in the spring of 2014. The top ten littered brands made up 20 per cent of the haul: Tim Hortons (8.3%), McDonalds (3.43), Coke (1.85), Pepsi (1.32), Nestlé (1.19), Starbucks (1.06), Wendy's (.79), Kirkland (.66), Great Value (.53), Sprite (.53), Other 80.36. Five thousand cigarette butts were picked up around the grounds of a single school.

Litter and Glitter, the brainchild of lawyer Neil Stephenson, this year landed a \$12,000 Scotiabank grant to expand his cleanup event beyond the Annex neighbourhoods. Local business, school, city staff and residents team up to clean up twice a year. Participants are treated like movie stars to an elegant meal, live music and many chances to win fine prizes, all donated.

London, east Vancouver and Cobourg are the only Canadian jurisdictions to collect and recycle cigarette butts using the TerraCycle butts-for-charity-dollars model.

Toronto's edgy ad campaign, "Littering says a lot about you", hit the skids over brand blowback and did not run. Will a replacement campaign follow, and when?

Although an Ontario law dictates that large entities recycle and also communicate "information to users" about their recycling progress on an annual or more frequent basis, we find no evidence that this is being done or has been done in the law's 20-year existence. (Reg. 103/94 2.1.3)

In March 2014 the Litter Prevention Program partnered with City of Toronto to produce a leaflet on cigarette butt litter awareness. ("Litterland", #6, Vol. 2)

As catalyst for action at the city level, LPP briefed the Toronto Litter Working group and presented to the city's Board of Health concerning tobacco littering and smoking bans.

Toronto's street bins include a place for butts and gum!

Litter by Category >>

Our first annual report covered the seven basic litter types. This year we add 'paper' and review industry's responses to product litter in each grouping.

Tobacco



- * Cigarette butts, top littered item
- * 5.6 trillion a year worldwide
- * 65% of smokers will litter
- * Most don't consider tossing the filter as littering
- * This mentality and the lack of campaigns and enforcement represent barriers to change.
- * Tobacco laws impede; bans push litter into neighbourhoods

E-cigarettes emerged as a new category in the litter waste stream in 2014. The year also marked the unfortunate airing of the Pfizer Canada television commercial that depicts a woman littering her cigarette (See *Hot Button Issues*, page 9). Kyoto University researchers completed and published a study of 144 municipal smoking bans enacted in Japan and found the motivation for their implementation was to curtail litter, surprisingly, not for reasons of health.

Canada's three major tobacco industry players have their own distinct way of dealing with butt litter.

Japanese Tobacco Inc (JTI) appears to have walked away from the issue after showing initially hopeful signs in a March 2013 letter from the VP of Regulatory Affairs.

Imperial Tobacco pays an undisclosed sum to TerraCycle to solicit the collection and handle the recycling of cigarette butts. The CEO did not respond to our inquiries.

Philip Morris International agreed to fund and then will evaluate a small butt litter mitigation pilot program in Toronto using the expertise of Keep America Beautiful.

"Sheila White, this is Even Hurwitz, Senior Vice President of Philip Morris International. I'm calling in response to your letter of February 21 to Mr. Camilleri, CEO of Philip Morris International. I wanted to talk to you about following up with your meeting with our affiliate of Rothmans, Benson&Hedges. We're very interested in having further meetings with you. I thought a lot of the messages and comments you made to Mr. Camilleri were spot on, and I apologize for taking so long to get back to you. In any event, I wanted to see if we could have a meeting with some of our people from our offices in Switzerland, who are working on the issue of butt litter and thought it would be useful."

Phone message to Litter Prevention Program from May 2013

US chewing gum sales declined by 11% to \$3.7-billion over the past four years.



Gum

Gum is a stubborn, adhesive plastic. In 2014 we presented the world's top gum maker, Wrigley Canada, with a set of ideas dealing with gum, the next-to-most littered item on the planet. While heavily involved in programs in the UK, the chewing gum industry in Canada has no further plans regarding gum litter solutions. US-based Wrigley Foundation sponsors a green journalism contest for students. In Britain lawmakers are musing about a product tax on gum.

Report on the Government of Canada Stakeholder Consultations on the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, 2001

"Guiding principle # 6: The tobacco industry should be held responsible for the harm its products cause to public health and the environment, with each Party determining the scope of such responsibility within its jurisdiction."



coffee cups

Burger King/Tim Hortons merger

Year-end changes to the ownership and structure of Canadian coffee mainstay Tim Hortons in December spell the end of an era, if not a dynasty, in Canada's franchising history. Now that "Tims" is part of Brazilian holding company 3G Capital and another cog in the Burger King Empire, we watch to see if the new entity accelerates sustainable practices and embraces litter and waste reduction goals.

The old Tims had a long way to go on coffee cup recycling and reclamation, the parent claiming it had no control over waste management practices of its 3665 franchisees in Canada. Certain corporate stores in Canada do engage in cup to serving tray conversion. Tims will acknowledge litter is an issue for customers. Piecemeal support and product donations would be found locally for grassroots projects such as cleanups at the discretion of the franchise.

Toronto's most recent litter audit showed coffee cup paraphernalia as a rising litter category.

We rapped Tims for choosing and featuring as a "winner" in its coffee cup photo contest one of its disposable cups, empty and left resting on a moss-covered log in a forest.

While difficult at the best of times to gain corporate attention for litter prevention, Tim's Oakville headquarters showed more than a passing interest in litter. The company was approachable. Will the same be true with of its new owner - one with a hallmark of asset stripping after takeovers?

Government could place obligations on this consortium and all takeaway food purveyors to respond to litter issues as a corporate responsibility in Canada.

The larger these fast food chains grow internationally the greater the risk is that they become more remote and harder to reach on littering issues.

* not accepted for recycling in Blue Box (Toronto)

Busch Systems, a Barrie ON bin and cart maker since 1985, markets a Coffee Cup Collector separating system for coffee cups, lids and stir sticks. Bins aid drives aiming to reclaim and recycle.

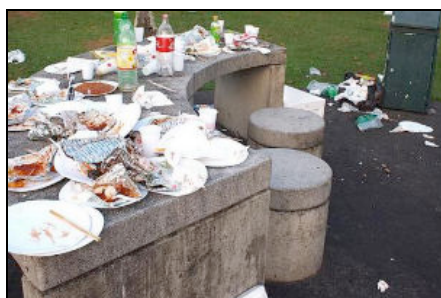
Single serving evolution

Coffee is part of the single serving and throwaway packaging phenomenon currently trending in food retailing.

The revolution of singly packaged portions may be great for convenience, but from a waste perspective, it has a big downside. It runs contrary to the idea of producing less packaging and away from the practice of organic composting and reuse.

For all their commercial success coffee pods,* for example, are symbolic of a single-use generation that places more emphasis on expedience than on environmental appropriateness, and is not keen on participating in recycling efforts. Perhaps reminders on packaging would help.

Plastic



Fast food



In Ontario, McDonalds Restaurants of Canada is funding a research paper at University of Waterloo on mitigating food waste litter.

No surprise that the takeaway food industry, single servings, non-reusable containers and the drive-thru contribute to fast food waste eating up a large chunk of the litter pie. One Australian estimate puts the amount of litter related to food waste at 70 per cent.

PacNEXT, representing Canada's packaged goods industry, is light years behind UK and AU packaging bodies, which sponsor conferences on litter now and are very mindful of the issue. The first Pack2Go session took place in Brussels in November 2012. Clean Europe Day began in 2014.

In Canada the hunt is on for ways to create less packaging. Canadian packagers want to develop biodegradable wrapping as one answer to litter. The tobacco industry found after its 20 years of R&D that the biodegradability of its filters made no discernible difference to butt litter levels.

Industry shouldn't put all its litter prevention eggs in one R&D basket. Participation in campaigns and across-the-board policies for franchisees belong on the Corporate Social Responsibility menu too, so as not to be overlooked.

The Canadian Plastics Industry Association (CPIA) supports plastic to fuel conversion projects, markets branded apparel and other recycled plastic goods and welcomes reclamation of its members' products, retrieved from coastlines, beaches, oceans and lakes as well as recycling programs. Good news, plastic recycling is at a ten-year high. To its credit, CPIA's website has a section on litter, but it needs overhauling and updating.

2014 was the Year of the Plastic Bag Ban, especially in California, where 124 jurisdictions including LA had ordinances banning plastic carrier bags. Such moves encountered vociferous opposition from the US plastics industry. In September Governor Jerry Brown signed SB270, a statewide ban on plastic grocery bags. Lobby group Californians Against Waste gauges bag use there at 10 billion a year.

EU has a target for reducing plastic bag usage among member nations. This year saw a continued outcropping of programs to cull massive amounts of litter from the sea. In the UK, Fishing For Litter is one such effort. Around the world, Canada included, there are organizations like this devoted to the urgent issue of marine litter.

Consumers need to realize that industry wants its plastic back. It is far cheaper and more sustainable for manufacturers to use recycled plastic over virgin, raw materials, not to mention better for the environment.

Walmart Canada and SCJohnson say they will revive the retailer's in-store plastic and film return program for ZipLoc and all other plastic packaging. The idea is for customers to save their plastic packaging and return it to a special bin at the Walmart store. The program is not fully operational yet, nor is it widely known. It is supposed to be available in all but three of 400 Canadian Walmart locations.

Beverage containers



Paper



An abundance of free newspapers and careless recycling of them contributes to litter creep. Shoddy delivery methods combined with wind can and do cook up a potent formula for scattering paper throughout streets and neighbourhoods. The Dallas Morning News, when confronted by the city with the problem of newspaper litter complaints, performed two street-by-street audits of the entire city of Dallas to identify the exact location of the problems needing rectification – 729 out of 110,000 subscriber addresses in all – and fixed 45% of them within six months. This was in addition to usual audits.

In Ontario the newspaper industry pays a share of Blue Box recycling. Questions arise as to whether this industry pays its fair share and does enough to educate consumers. Twelve steps are all a person with littering tendencies will walk to place litter in a bin, the research says. News media and publishers should have an avid role in continuing education and the running of Public Service Announcements.

Waste Diversion Ontario is sitting on a plan from the industry-funded Canadian Beverage Container Recycling Association (CBVRA) that, if implemented, would significantly reduce littering of cans, bottles and drink boxes. Submitted in 2013 this Industry Steward Plan for away-from-home recycling proposes a \$40 million annual investment by industry in bins and public education across the province. It replicates the successful Recycle Everywhere program that CBCRA launched in Manitoba in 2011. Involving a container-recycling fee of two cents at point of sale, Manitoba's diversion rates rose impressively under the system, from 42 per cent in 2011, to 61 per cent in 2014 and on track to hit 75 per cent in a few years. The amount of beverage container and other litter is down, studies from that province show. Another study, prepared for America Recycles Day and released in November, points to an emerging trend and concern that people ages 18 to 35 are not recycling. For litter prevention to work, people have to recycle. Canada, where the Blue Box concept originated, arguably has the best recycling infrastructure in the world.

Polystyrene foam



2014 saw some moves taken to ban plastic foam food and beverage packaging. The most notable is New York City, whose ban on polystyrene foam packaging for food and drink in coffee

shops and restaurants will take effect July 1, 2015. This lightweight product is easily airborne, very slow to deteriorate and a massive occupier of landfill space. Portland, Kaieteur and Ghana were among the jurisdictions to contemplate bans, evoking fierce pushback from the industry. Clean, foam polystyrene is recyclable, but is often mishandled in manners that prompt litter, such as overfilling a bin or depositing small, loose piece in the bin that will fly away. When Dunkin' Donuts/Baskin Robbins announced a complete conversion away from foam packaging in 2013, it also said it would launch a chain-wide, in-store program to recapture used containers.

Hot Button Issues >>

Keeping an eye on developments by looking through a litter lens

In the following few pages this report examines the impact of emerging issues that may contribute to an increased prevalence of litter and littering in Ontario. We find frequent examples where there is no thought whatsoever placed on littering, therefore no remedies offered when litter surfaces as one of the consequences.

PanAm Games Toronto 2015

Last year's report said the Pan-American/Parapan-American Games, Toronto 2015, needed a litter prevention plan before tourists descended on southern Ontario this coming July. Scotland, more than two years ahead of the 2014 Commonwealth Summer Games in Glasgow, advanced a full litter prevention strategy with backing and funds from government, which put the country on a lasting, litter-free path and legacy. Do PanAm organizers intend to provide more bins and more frequent emptying? What is the plan for cycling races and water bottle/ energy bar litter? Who pays for the event aftermath cleanup? The Ontario government is funding contractors to tidy up 30km of highway upon which athletes, VIPs and dignitaries will travel, presumably an image investment to look good for the global media. Using star athletes as figureheads, the Games presented an excellent opportunity to promote a litter-free Games and less littering generally.

Littering in advertising

In 2014 awareness was raised about portrayals of littering in advertising. Depictions of littering in advertising (and movies) are problematic because they convey a tacit acceptance of littering as an act of no consequence. Two high-profile disputes are reported here, over ads that depicted acts of littering. Litter Prevention Program registered a complaint with Advertising Standards Canada. Our target was one out of a package of national television ads for smoking cessation products sponsored by Pfizer Canada. The offending ad showed a woman in the final frame sitting on a staircase in front of a high school extinguishing her cigarette by grinding it on the step. While smokers may disagree, this is littering. Pfizer promised to take our stated concerns about that in mind when producing its campaigns for 2015 and beyond. However, the company refused to re-cut or pull the original ad, and in fact extended its run one year longer than originally planned, offering the following in its response on behalf of CEO John Helou:

"As discussed earlier this year, Pfizer agrees with your position that used tobacco products should be discarded in proper receptacles and containers. In the ad, we don't see the woman abandoning her cigarette on the ground after she butts out and we hope viewers will interpret that she then threw it in the garbage, despite the fact that this image is not shown."

Pfizer stressed it was not its intention to promote littering. A company official said the idea of littering was not in anyone's thoughts during the ad's development and vetting. Now it is.

In Australia the Telstra mobile phone manufacturer found itself with an irate public and Keep Australia Beautiful on its back for a beachside commercial that had an enthusiastic new phone buyer unwrap and strew the box and packaging on the ocean sand. The final frame shows a hermit crab living in the empty cell phone box on the shoreline.

Just as clear acts of littering send the wrong message, so do omissions of disposal images in commercials concerning takeout food and beverages. Time and time again one will see advertising showing carefree people with their disposal cups, but never an image of responsibly disposing of the cup. One recent exception of note is a television commercial for a Chevrolet vehicle that portrays a father putting trash in a bin before driving away. Advertisers and their agencies need to be better sensitized to the idea that portrayals of littering in advertising appear to condone an unwanted behaviour that is broadly offensive. The Canadian Code governing advertisers should add 'littering' under Unacceptable Depictions and Portrayals, Clause 14 d).

Canada Post Community Mailboxes

Canada Post announced the stoppage of door-to-door mail delivery and a complete move to community mailboxes over the next five years. This program brings with it the prospect of the dumping of ad mail at designated mailbox sites. The City of Vaughan ran a community mailbox litter education program in 2014 to try to stem the tide of litter attributable to the presence of the mailboxes. Cancelling home delivery and installing mailboxes across the nation will compound an already known problem on the ground locally. Canada Post should help municipalities with this.

Police Body Cameras

Enforcement agencies worldwide, Toronto Police Services included, are turning to body cameras as an added evidence gathering and accountability measure. Not surprisingly CCTV is a choice tool for litter enforcement. In the UK and elsewhere pole mounted cameras are used to monitor roadsides. Officers wear cameras when dispatching fixed penalty notices for littering. Singapore mounts them on apartment buildings to nab high-rise littering. In Ontario, Canada the role of police in ticketing for littering is unclear, appears to be at the discretion of individual officers and not an internal policy driven strategy. Body cams have a place in litter enforcement as do police blitzes like ones done for seatbelts, distracted driving, winter road safety and drinking and driving laws. We would support a Toronto littering enforcement team retrofitted with body cameras. We would like cameras used to screen for littering, vandalism and other disorderly behaviours.

Smoke Free Ontario

Smoke-free policy makers and advocates sidestep the link between smoking bans and increased littering. In Ontario where a ban on smoking expands to include patios, sports fields and playgrounds as of January 1, 2015, scant attention is given to the idea that pushing smokers further into the streets adds to the number of butts littered in a community. Ontario's Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has no plans at this time to communicate anti-litter messages specific to tobacco litter. Nor is the health ministry responsible for tobacco litter around hospital properties. This falls under the purview of independent hospital administrations. Enforcement of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act falls not to municipal enforcement officials, but to inspectors appointed by the Minister under the Act, who work in local Public Health Units.

Ontario's smoke-free regulations do not focus specifically on the environmental impact of cigarette butts. The government is not currently reviewing the impact of expanded smoking bans on cigarette butt litter, but contends that there will be reduced litter in the locations where smoking tobacco is now banned. In March 2014 a senior Toronto public works official wrote to the Ontario Minister of Environment and Climate Change asking for a levy to be placed on tobacco companies to help with butt litter clean up.

No ashtrays in cars

With so many smokers littering cigarette butts from cars we would like to see automakers start building ashtrays into their vehicle designs as a standard feature again like they once did.



The enticing Fumo smoke pole ash receptacle from loglo, The Netherlands, performs a light show, a tune or funny side effect to reward smokers who use it for depositing their cigarette ends. List price: approximately \$20,000.

Balloon releases

Please Stop Littering!
Claiming your balloons are “biodegradable” & “shatter into small pieces” does not justify tossing your celebratory trash to pollute the countryside.

PROOF
Found intact: Ludington State Park, Michigan
Found intact: Princeton, Kansas

Balloons marketed as “biodegradable latex” can travel thousands of miles and last years in the environment, polluting the Earth & endangering wildlife.
Balloons Blow...Don't Let Them Go! BalloonsBlow.org

At left, a reprinting of University of Nebraska Lincoln’s poster on the inadvisability of releasing balloons into the atmosphere and the science behind the environmental caution. The campaign is *Balloons Blow ... Don’t Let Them Go*.

Bereavements and celebrations are occasions that fall victim to people releasing balloons into the air even though the practice is horrible for the environment. Balloons are a serious source of pollution, which is why event planners opt instead for balloon sculptures, flower seed and tree plantings, dedicated park benches and other earth friendly alternatives. The recent birth of royal twins in Monaco gave rise to a balloon release. Heightened awareness about the environmental harm done from balloon litter could cause people to realize this is a wholly inappropriate expression of joy or remembrance.

Contracting out solid waste services

The lucrative waste management trade benefits from decisions to contract out solid waste collection services. Cities could write litter performance clauses into new contracts and haul these companies into a cooperative implementation of strategies that puts litter prevention squarely in the public eye.

The Beer Store decentralized beer sales

The major beer companies who own The Beer Store distribution system in Ontario handle the province’s deposit-return program for wine, liquor and spirits, ODRP. Introduced in 2007, it paralleled the beer industry’s longstanding and highly successful deposit system. The Beer Store is an incredibly efficient recycler with an enviable track record for returns of beer bottles and cans, plastic rings, bags, boxes and liquor returns. A concern held here is that one-stop, near-total recycling of alcohol bottles will be jeopardized if the purchase and sale of alcohol through the government-owned Liquor Control Board of Ontario is privatized and decentralized. Standards will vary. “Even better environmental performance can be achieved by making use of The Beer Store’s deposit return infrastructure that is already in place and has been very successful over the years,” says Ontario’s bagitback.ca used to promote ODRP.

No demand for accountability

While laws like 103/94, 2.1.3 requiring big corporations to provide mandatory updates on their recycling and diversion programs sit on the books, government bureaucrats express no appetite for enforcing this provision. If ever implemented, the regulation would be helpful to the cause of litter prevention communications because it would routinely put recycling targets into the public domain.

« Types of Litterers

British research identified five classifications for people who litter.

Litterers	% of the litter dropping population	Excuses for dropping litter	Opinion if caught littering	Opinion of litterers
Beautifully Behaved	43%	Don't see littering as a problem, brought up not to drop litter and blame poor parenting	Embarrassed and would pick up the item immediately	Thoughtless
Justifiers	25%	Everyone else is littering, and there is a lack of bins	Would be embarrassed and would pick up the item	Lazy
Life's too short and am I bothered	12%	Have more important things to do than use a litter bin, unaware of consequences of littering and even if they were, they wouldn't care	Would not feel guilty about littering, and would not pick up the item, they may be rude and aggressive.	Rude if dropped in front of them
Guilty	10%	Knew littering was wrong and felt guilty, but carrying litter around is inconvenient so they litter secretly	Would feel guilty if they were caught and would offer to pick up the item immediately	Lazy and inconsiderate
Blamers	9%	Blame the council for inadequate bin provision and fast food operators for over-packaged food	Would be embarrassed and would pick up the item, whilst making excuses about their behaviour	Lazy, but if bins were full or overflowing it is okay

*Source: ENCAMS Publication, "People Who Litter" 2007
Courtesy: Dr Nic Groombridge, St. Mary's University, Twickenham*

Based on this study from the outreach arm of Keep Britain Tidy we see a standard set of excuses presented for littering. But 88 per cent of people will take corrective action if spoken to about it.

Let's keep 'litter' in the conversation, but nicely.

Communications >>

It is tough in Ontario to get attention paid to littering.

Decision makers are looking away instead of looking down.

Buck passing and dodging, a refusal to look at the big picture, undermine efforts to solve the problem of littering. Be it due to lack of time, resources or interest, the important issue of litter in society routinely receives the short shrift in upper government circles.

Littering carries a heavy monetary and environmental cost, yet is ignored. Illegal and anti-social, littering occurs at a frequency higher than most social problems and illnesses.

Our attempt to kick-start a conversation included outreach to the Premier of Ontario, Minister of the Environment, new Minister of the Environment and Climate Change and the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario - all of whom have washed their hands of the issue. This is also the position of Smoke Free Ontario on tobacco-related litter. No interest.

MTO, the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, does have a role in litter prevention and confirms that roadside litter is an issue of concern, including the delicate matter of masses of urine-filled bottles littering Northern Ontario routes. MTO contracts out the cleaning of provincial highways and oversees the performance of contractors, paying a set rate regardless of how much or how little litter they collect. A resource-challenged division, it does not involve itself in litter prevention education to instill broader awareness. However, we were pleased to provide the impetus in 2014 for a litter message prevention message to be introduced by MTO on selected LED highway signs. Now a change is needed to the MTO's CentreLine publication, which is sent to all Ontario drivers at the time of their licence renewal. A reminder about Ontario's littering laws belongs on this form. We continue to advocate for this simple measure.

We circulated a provincial leaders survey on littering to Ontario's four main political parties in May 2014. It yielded one response (Green) and one deferral (PC). A survey targeting Toronto mayoral candidates' attitudes toward litter garnered ten responses.

Ontario is wrong to disconnect itself from littering. The province will reap benefits from even a small showing of initiative. Its Waste Diversion Office and stewardship agencies seem inert. In a state of flux, they struggle to manage as it is and have been painfully slow to process Industry Stewardship Plans such as the one brought forward by Canada's beverage industry in 2013. These agencies have no mandate over corporate litter management protocols because "litter" is not captured in the "waste at the end of its life" definition contained in Ontario's waste management law. Under that legislation waste must be in a bin for it to be deemed the producers' responsibility.

Again, all this poses the question, in whose hands in Ontario do coordinated litter prevention and control lie?

Toronto Mayoral Candidates Survey 2014

In July, leading up to the municipal elections, we polled candidates for mayor of the City of Toronto on their attitudes toward litter and littering. Approximately one in four candidates responded to our survey.

What John Tory said:

What Olivia Chow said:

1. a) Agrees Toronto has a litter problem	Y	N
b) Litter education and prevention deserve more attention and coordination at the city level	Y	Y
c) Police are well positioned to enforce Toronto's littering laws	?	Y
d) Agrees that producers of commonly littered items such as cigarettes and chewing gum have an obligation to help fund municipal clean up of these discarded items	?	N
e) Agrees that the Province of Ontario could be doing more to help municipalities promote a culture of intolerance to littering	Y	Y
f) Agrees there should be a zero tolerance policy for city employees concerning littering	?	N
2. Agrees to a review of the enforcement protocol concerning littering	Y	Y
3. Agrees to a city campaign devoted to raising awareness about cigarette butt littering and the existence of the \$365 fine	?	?
4. Agrees in principle with Canadian beverage industry proposal to help fund away-from home recycling in Ontario	?	?
5. Agrees to remove legislative barriers that interfere with the ability to strategically place ash receptacles where they are really needed	?	?
6. Agrees with an Ontario-wide litter prevention and awareness campaign funded by the province and partners in industries	?	?
7. Has told a stranger not to litter	Y	N/A
8. Has ever littered accidentally or on purpose	N	N/A

Our thanks to these candidates for their participation and for their thoughtful responses:

Jeff Billard

Selina Chan

Olivia Chow

Matthew Crack

Chaitanya Kalevar

Dewitt Lee

Michael Nicula

Erwin Z. Sniedzins

John Tory (Mayor)

Tibor Steinberger

* Candidate Doug Ford did not respond.

A program to combat litter cannot succeed without leadership in all sectors of society. Community groups and volunteers do more than their share through cleanups to address the littering epidemic. Now it is time for political, corporate, social, media and cultural leaders to begin articulating discussion in an effort to reduce the occurrences of littering. No amount of volunteer energy and city maintenance dollars alone can reduce the frequency of littering. Until celebrated voices join in a campaign to reduce the overall rate it is unlikely that the necessary spark will be ignited to propel a positive change in direction. Again, we make the point in Ontario, and Canada, a designate is needed to pull all of this together. Ignoring this issue makes the problem worse.

Going Forward >>

This report assumes that at some point in the future littering will receive the respect and attention it warrants as a social and economic issue in the life of Ontario and its municipalities. For this reason, it offers and reiterates recommendations for action.

- Designate an authority to steer the litter file. Establish a panel to look at updating Ontario's approach to littering to achieve better results.
- Aim to establish an umbrella like "Keep America Beautiful" for Ontario, a structure for the flowing of corporate dollars to litter prevention programming: awareness campaigns and cleanups.
- Aim to update Ontario's approach to signage, enforcement and education.
- Conduct a Provincial Litter Index and involve businesses and brand owners.
- Consolidate provincial record keeping and reporting on littering; institute an organized system of data collection.
- Authorize use of "red light" cameras and body cameras for tracking littering.
- Include anti-littering message on Ministry of Transportation (MTO) in CentreLine vehicle licence renewal insert.
- Include clear information about waste management and litter prohibitions in citizenship courses.
- Enact/enforce helpful legislation.
- Use the Toronto Pan-Am Games as a platform for encouraging litter-free events and festivals and help affected cities defray the cost of cleanup.

ABOUT THIS REPORT: Opinions expressed are the views of Litter Prevention Program, an offshoot of WORDS Media & Communications Inc., Toronto. Please direct inquiries about this report to its author, Sheila White, President, WORDS, 14 Murray Avenue, Toronto M1S 2A2. Email words@rogers.com. Phone 416-321-0633. Twitter @white_sheila or via website at www.litterpreventionprogram.com, where a downloadable copy of this report can be obtained.

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