

2020-2025

LITTER & ILLEGAL DUMPING STRATEGY



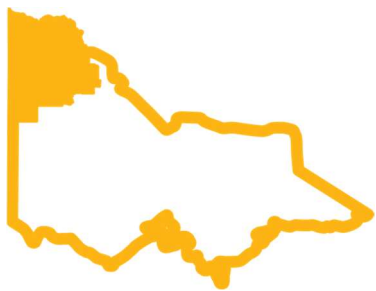
Mildura Rural City Council

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mildura Rural City Council (Council) would like to thank the following people for their contribution to the development of the Litter and Illegal Dumping Strategy 2020-2025:

- Community Survey Participants
- Stakeholder Workshop Attendees
- Emily Quinn Smyth, Waste Education & Project Officer
- Sarah O'Connor, Waste Management Coordinator
- Jenni Flanner, Team Leader Weighbridge & Reporting
- Jason Garraway, Team Leader Waste Facilities
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- Andrew Millen, Manager Development Services
- Matt George, Manager Parks & Waste Services
- Michael Lindeman, Officer for the Protection of the Local Environment – Mildura
- John Kendrigan, Team Leader Concrete and Drainage

Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land which now comprises the Mildura Rural City Council area, and to those of our neighbouring municipalities. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, we celebrate and respect their continuing culture and connection to the land.



22,300 Square Kilometres

Mildura Rural City Council covers almost ten per cent of Victoria



55,515 Population

We have the ninth largest city in Victoria



Do the right thing

Research shows 2/3 of people do the right thing and put their waste in a bin or take it to a transfer station or landfill



No of littering reports to EPA

In 19/20, EPA received 35 reports of littering in Mildura Rural City Council



Gross Pollutant Trap Waste

In 19/20, around 77 tonnes of litter waste collected in our gross pollutant traps



Public litter bins

In 19/20, around 500 tonnes of litter was collected from our public litter bin network

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VISION

An integral part of Council's vision of 'making this the most liveable, people-friendly community in Australia' is litter management. Litter has significant social, economic and environmental impacts. It is important that it is managed well using a multi-pronged approach. The new Environment Protection Amendment Act 2018 due to begin on 1 July 2021 includes a new approach to environment protection issues. It focuses on preventing waste and pollution with the foundation of the new EP legislation being the General Environmental Duty (GED). The GED requires anyone conducting an activity that poses risks to human health and the environment to understand and minimise those risks. This Strategy documents how we will work towards 'a clean and litter free municipality' over the next five years. Our vision is to work toward zero waste to landfill and a future where people and businesses take responsibility for their waste disposal, recycle, reuse and avoid generating waste and appreciate waste as a valuable resource.



COMMUNITY

Community Safety

Community Development

Community Health & Wellbeing

Community Services

Arts, Culture & Heritage

Recreation & Sport



ENVIRONMENT

Environmental Sustainability

Waste

Parks

Infrastructure, Assets & Facilities

Strategic Land Use



ECONOMY

Economic Development & Tourism

Events



COUNCIL

Leadership & Representation

Communication & Engagement

Customer Service

Financial Sustainability

Organisational Management

Figure 1: Community and Council Plan Strategic Areas

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Litter and Illegal Dumping Strategy 2020-2025* outlines the actions that are key to helping achieve our vision of ‘making this the most liveable, people friendly community in Australia’ (Community and Council Plan 2017-2021).

‘Maintaining a clean and litter free municipality’ involves a number of key initiatives. The litter management framework states that a combination of education, infrastructure and enforcement must be used in order to minimise the significant social, economic and environmental impacts of litter and illegal dumping. For example, providing waste infrastructure such as public bins is insufficient if the community are not educated on which items to put into which bins.

This strategy outlines the current and planned actions Council undertakes with regards to litter and illegal dumping. The strategy suggests a shift in focus to more preventative measures and less on clean up, although this remains an integral service provided by Council.

Five priority areas have been identified including:

1. Supporting our community to reduce litter
2. Education, behaviour change and partnerships
3. Sustainable litter prevention infrastructure
4. Compliance for a litter free municipality
5. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Household landfill, recyclables and organics collections are part of Council’s *Waste Management and Resource Recovery Plan 2020-2025*, and are outside the scope of this strategy.

Our vision for this *Litter and Illegal Dumping Strategy 2020-2025* is to work toward zero waste to landfill and a future where people and businesses take responsibility for their waste disposal, avoid generating waste and appreciate waste as a valuable resource.

Targets for success include:

- 10% reduction in the tonnes of illegal dumping collected by 2025.
- 10% reduction in the number of mattresses, tyres and electronic waste that is collected as illegal dumping by 2025.
- Increase from a mean average score of 4.0 of community satisfaction scores for litter control by 2025.
- 10% reduction in the tonnes of litter collected in gross pollutant traps by 2025.



INTRODUCTION

Why a litter and illegal dumping strategy is needed

Mildura Rural City Council provides litter and illegal dumping management services to our community. It is important that residents, visitors and businesses are able to responsibly dispose of the waste they produce so that it doesn't become litter or illegally dumped material.

Litter and illegal dumping has significant adverse social, environmental and economic impacts. Whilst overall our residential streets, shopping centres, roads and parks are generally clean, dumped rubbish and litter are a problem in the Mildura Rural Council area. With continued forecasted growth in resident numbers and lots of visitors to our region each year, it is very important that litter and illegal dumping is managed effectively.

Litter and illegal dumping clean up takes up a significant amount of Council resources. The focus needs to shift over to more preventative measures to stop littering and illegal dumping at the source. This will reduce the need for costly clean-up of littered and illegally dumped material.

Purpose of the strategy

The purpose of this *Litter and Illegal Dumping Strategy 2020-2025* is to provide guidance and direction to Council and to inform the community and stakeholders about the Council's current litter management status. The strategy outlines how Council intends to respond to current and emerging issues in litter and illegal dumping management.

Scope

Litter and illegal dumping management is not confined to Council's Parks and Waste teams. Litter and illegal dumping is a shared responsibility and includes the community, businesses, land managers such as Parks Victoria, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Regional Roads Victoria and catchment management and water authorities. Within Council there are different departments involved, each with a specific focus and activities that contribute to overall litter and illegal dumping management.

Table 1 lists the litter and illegal dumping prevention and management activities undertaken by Council that are within the scope of this strategy. Kerbside services including household landfill, recyclables and organics collections are part of Council's *Waste Management and Resource Recovery Plan 2020-2025*, and are outside the scope of this strategy. Other related documents include the *Litter and Illegal Dumping Education Plan 2020-2025*.

Table 1: Litter and illegal dumping activities undertaken by Council

Focus	Activities
Prevention	Communications about litter and illegal dumping*
	Environmental Sustainability programs including a focus on education, water and biodiversity
	Enforcement activities
	Council policies and local laws
Management	Management of landfills and transfer stations providing access to all residents to be able to dispose of waste and recycling where possible**
	Provision and servicing of street bins and public place recycling bins and bins available for event hire
	Undertaking routine and emergency street sweeping
	Gross pollutant traps to catch litter and other pollution before it enters waterways
	Investigation and enforcement of illegal dumping
	Customer requests and data management
Clean up	Illegal dumping, dead animal and syringe collection
	Litter clean up
	Community clean ups e.g. Clean Up Australia Day
Advocacy	Advocacy for Victoria wide programs such as a container deposit scheme to reduce litter and illegally dumped material

**Refer to Litter and Illegal Dumping Education Plan 2020-2025 for more details*

***Refer to Waste Management and Resource Recovery Plan 2020-2025 for more details*

What is litter?

Litter is defined by the Environment Protection Act 1970 as ‘any solid or liquid domestic or commercial waste, refuse, debris or rubbish and without limiting the generality of the above, includes any waste glass, metal, plastic, paper, fabric, wood, food, soil, sand, concrete or rocks, abandoned vehicles, abandoned vehicle parts and garden remnants and clippings, but does not include any gases, dust or smoke or any waste that is produced or emitted during, or as a result of, any of the normal operations of the mining, building or manufacturing industry or of any primary industry.’ The Act covers both private and public land. There is no separate definition of illegal dumping in the Act.

In this Strategy litter is broadly defined as small items of waste that are disposed of incorrectly and can be caused by either direct or indirect actions. For example, directly throwing food packaging on the ground or indirectly causing litter through an unsecured load. Illegal dumping consists of larger items such as whitegoods, building or demolition waste and significant household waste. Illegal dumping is usually more deliberate.

The following figure shows responsibilities for litter and illegal dumping under the Environment Protection Act 1970. Responsibility is based on a scale of littering and illegal dumping. Council consults with the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) for large scale illegal dumping by business and industry.



Figure 2: Litter and illegal dumping responsibilities under the Environment Protection Act 1970

Why litter and illegal dumping is a problem

Litter and illegal dumping are a visible sign of environmental pollution and cause damage to environments including parks, roadsides, bushland and waterways. Harm can be caused to animals that become entangled in litter or ingest littered or dumped materials. In addition, many illegally dumped materials are hazardous and can permanently pollute the surrounding environment. Examples include asbestos, chemicals, paints, solvents, petrochemicals and

poisons. These materials require specialist equipment and processes for their removal and are usually very expensive to clean up and dispose of at a lawful place.

Many items that are littered or dumped are recyclable. Useable resources such as aluminium cans sometimes stay in the environment for a long time and then can end up in landfill when they are eventually cleaned up.

Litter and illegal dumping also causes significant social and economic impacts. For example, the presence of litter increases the likelihood of socially unacceptable behaviour such as graffitiing. Research conducted by the Victoria Litter Action Alliance (now amalgamated into Sustainability Victoria) indicates that people who live in areas with high presence of litter have lower perceptions of safety and reduced quality of life. Litter and illegal dumping reduces amenity of public places. Inappropriately disposed items such as asbestos can cause hazards to human health.

In addition there are significant costs associated with management of litter and illegal dumping. Mildura Rural City Council spends in excess of \$1 million every year on litter programs. Research shows that reasons for littering and illegal dumping vary and there is no typical litterer. People of all ages and backgrounds litter. Littering behaviour depends on the item, the location and whether the person is with anyone else (Loddon Mallee Waste and Resource Recovery Group 2019).



MILDURA RURAL CITY COUNCIL- PROFILE AND OVERVIEW

Knowing our population demographics and environment is key to understanding our current litter status and planning for litter management in the future. Mildura Rural City Council municipality is located in the north west of Victoria and covers an area of 22,300 square kilometres, making it the largest local government area in the state. The Murray River runs along the northern border of the area. A map of the Council area can be seen in the following figure.



Figure 3: Boundary map of the MRCC municipality

Major townships of the area include Mildura, Irymple, Red Cliffs and Merbein. Other rural townships include Ouyen, Meringur, Werrimull, Cullulleraine, Cardross, Nangiloc, Colignan, Murrayville, Nichols Point, Cowangie, Underbool and Walpeup. The area supports a population of around 55,515 and this is only expected to increase over time. Approximately 32,738 of these people reside in Mildura.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LITTER STRATEGY

Due to the significant environmental, social and economic impacts that affect all sectors of the community, it is very important that litter and illegal dumping is managed well. The *Litter and Illegal Dumping Strategy 2020-2025* was developed following extensive research and consultation with Councillors, Council staff, key stakeholders and the residents of our community. The following table outlines the data analysis, consultation and survey activities undertaken to create this strategy.

Table 2: Process for developing the Litter and Illegal Dumping Strategy 2020-2025

Phase	Details
Community survey	<p>A litter survey was conducted in 2018 to help inform the priorities and actions in this strategy</p> <p>Yearly community satisfaction surveys</p>
Data collection	<p>Litter audit conducted in 2015 along the highway to Red Cliffs</p> <p>Dog waste audits conducted in 2009 and 2015</p>
Data analysis	In depth analysis of Council data as well as Victorian and regional litter and illegal dumping data
Internal consultation	Project control group, relevant Council areas
External consultation	Stakeholder consultation on litter results. Litter survey and results from community satisfaction surveys
Draft strategy	<p>Internal review by all of Council.</p> <p>Approved by Council to go out for public comment</p>
Final strategy	Approved by Council
Implementation	Implementation of the <i>Litter and Illegal Dumping Strategy 2020-2025</i> priorities and actions
Monitoring and evaluation	<p>Monitor and evaluate the delivery of the <i>Litter and Illegal Dumping Strategy 2020-2025</i> action plan</p> <p>Reporting internally and to the community on progress</p>

Traditional approaches to litter and illegal dumping management like clean-up projects can have positive benefits to targeted areas. However, ongoing litter and illegal dumping reduction requires a multi strategy approach. Best practice litter and illegal dumping prevention based behaviour change programs include a combination of education, infrastructure and enforcement. This Strategy outlines all the actions that will be taken by

Council over the next five years to minimise the impacts of litter and illegal dumping on our municipality. Education, infrastructure and enforcement are built into the five priority areas with an overall focus on avoiding, reducing and preventing litter and illegal dumping. The five priority areas include:

1. Supporting our community to reduce litter
2. Education, behaviour change and partnerships
3. Sustainable litter prevention infrastructure
4. Compliance for a litter free municipality
5. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Community Survey Results

A 2018 community survey about people's perception of litter and illegal dumping was part of the development of the *Litter & Illegal Dumping Strategy 2020-2025*. The survey was available online with hard copies available on request. There were 246 responses received however not every respondent answered all the questions.

Overall residents were concerned about litter and illegal dumping, highlighted sides of roads as a particular problem area and were in favour of a container deposit scheme and fines for littering.



Locations of litter and where litter ends up

Community members were asked to identify the problem areas for litter in our municipality. The highest problem area was on the sides of roads, followed by locations near the Murray River and then local parks and playgrounds. Specific examples included along the highway between Mildura and Red Cliffs, Jaycee Park and Apex Park. The dog waste audit showed South Mildura Wetlands was the problem area for people failing to pick up their dog's waste.

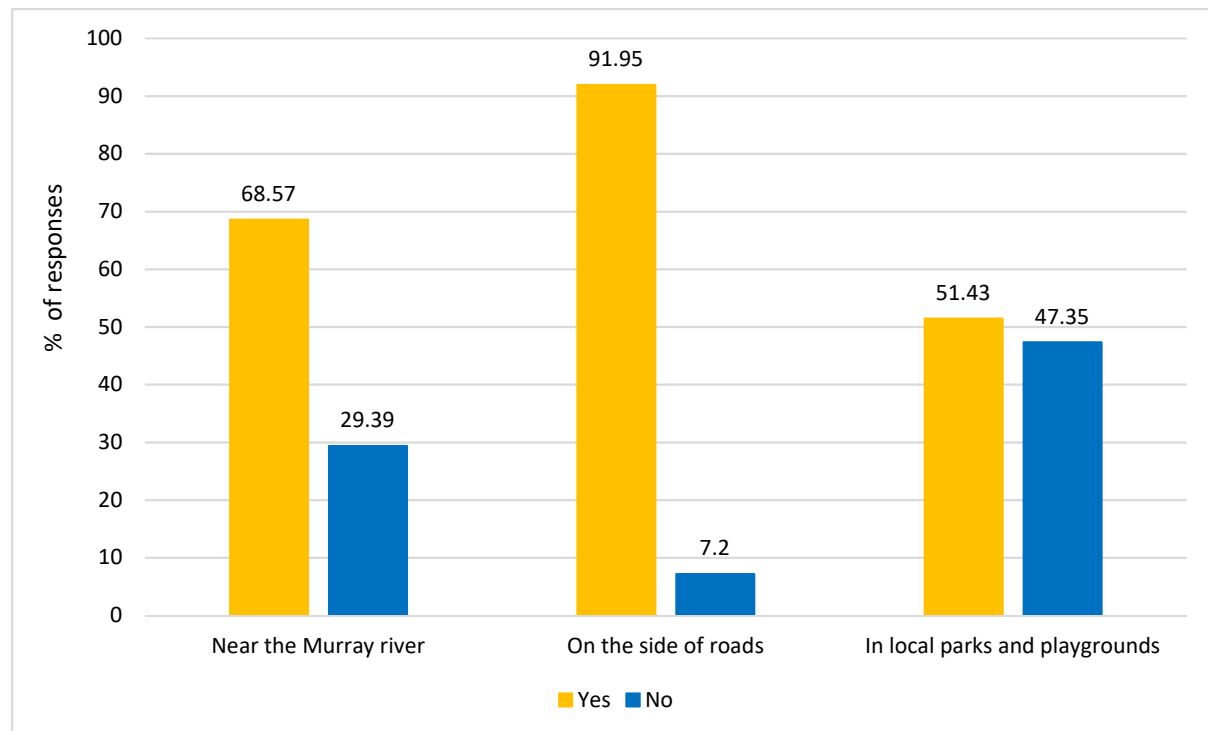


Figure 4: Do you see litter in these locations?

The majority of survey respondents understood that litter has the potential to end up in waterways, bushland and drains.

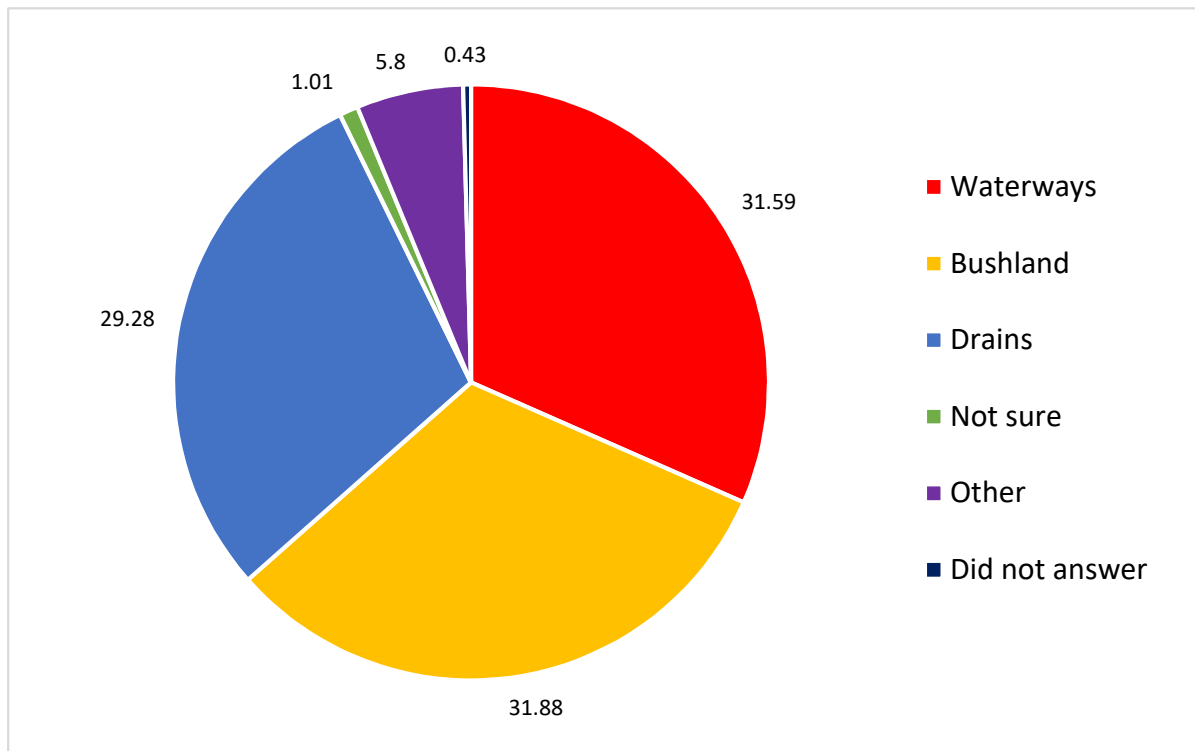


Figure 5: Percentage responses of where litter ends up

Types of litter

According to the Council litter survey the most common type of litter found in our municipality is fast food packaging, followed by drink containers then cigarette butts. This is slightly different to the state average where cigarette butts are the most common litter found. The second highest litter type is comprised of a recyclable material. Unfortunately this represents the loss of an otherwise valuable resource, highlighting the need for education and infrastructure to support people to recycle their drink containers.

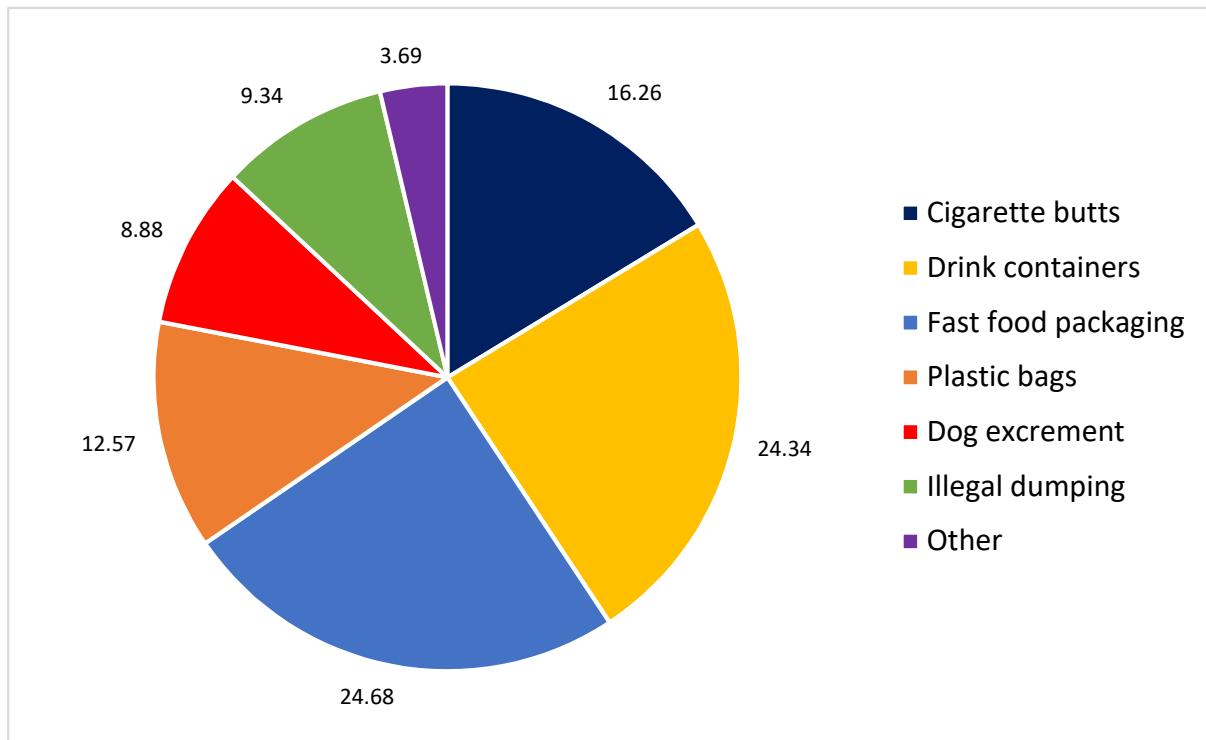


Figure 6: Percentage responses for types of litter

This data is also supported by the findings of the litter audit taken in February 2015 along the highway between Irymple and Red Cliffs. The second highest percentage of litter found was comprised of bottles and cans.

Impacts of litter

Generally our community has a strong belief that littering is unacceptable. The highest concern regarding litter is unsightliness followed closely by adverse impacts on the environment. Other concerns included perceptions of visitors to the area.

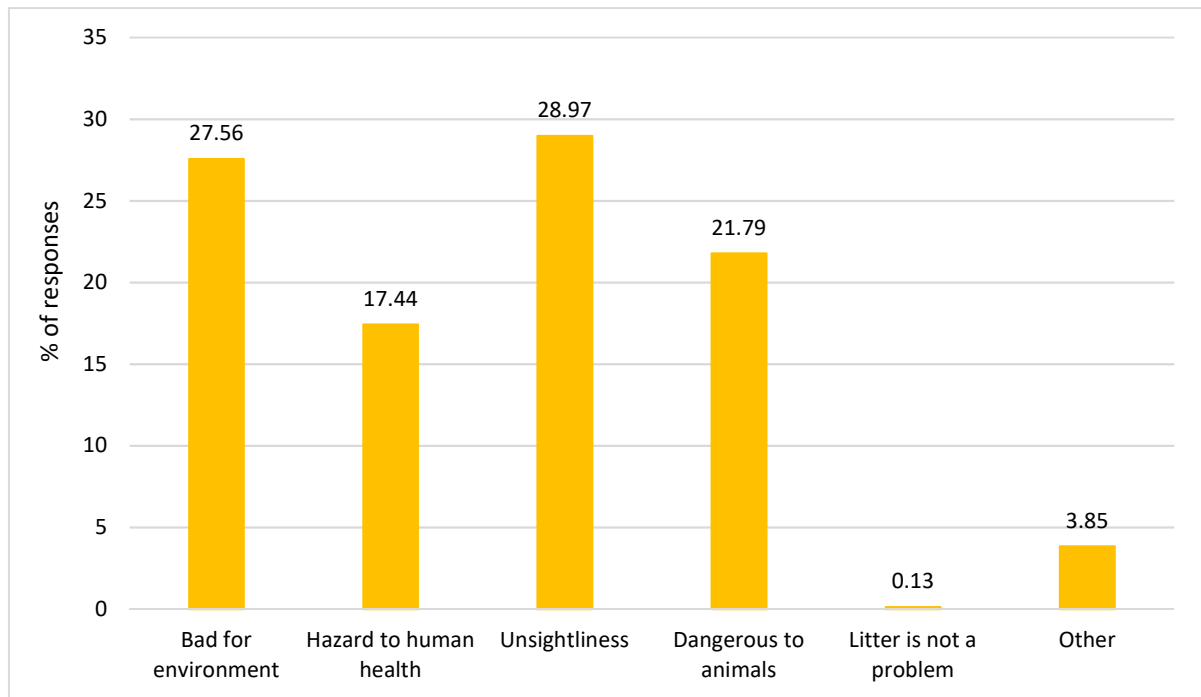


Figure 7: Community perceptions of the impacts of litter

Reasons for littering

People litter for a variety of reasons. Reasons highlighted by the Victoria Litter Action Alliance (amalgamated into Sustainability Victoria in 2019) include laziness, insufficient rubbish bins, a belief that litter is someone else's responsibility or a perception that if a place is already littered, it is ok for them to litter there too. However, the research indicates that there is not a typical litterer. The results from Council's litter survey show laziness was the most common reason given for why people litter. The number of responses for laziness was significantly higher than other reasons like having to pay landfill fees or having a lack of infrastructure to appropriately dispose of their waste.

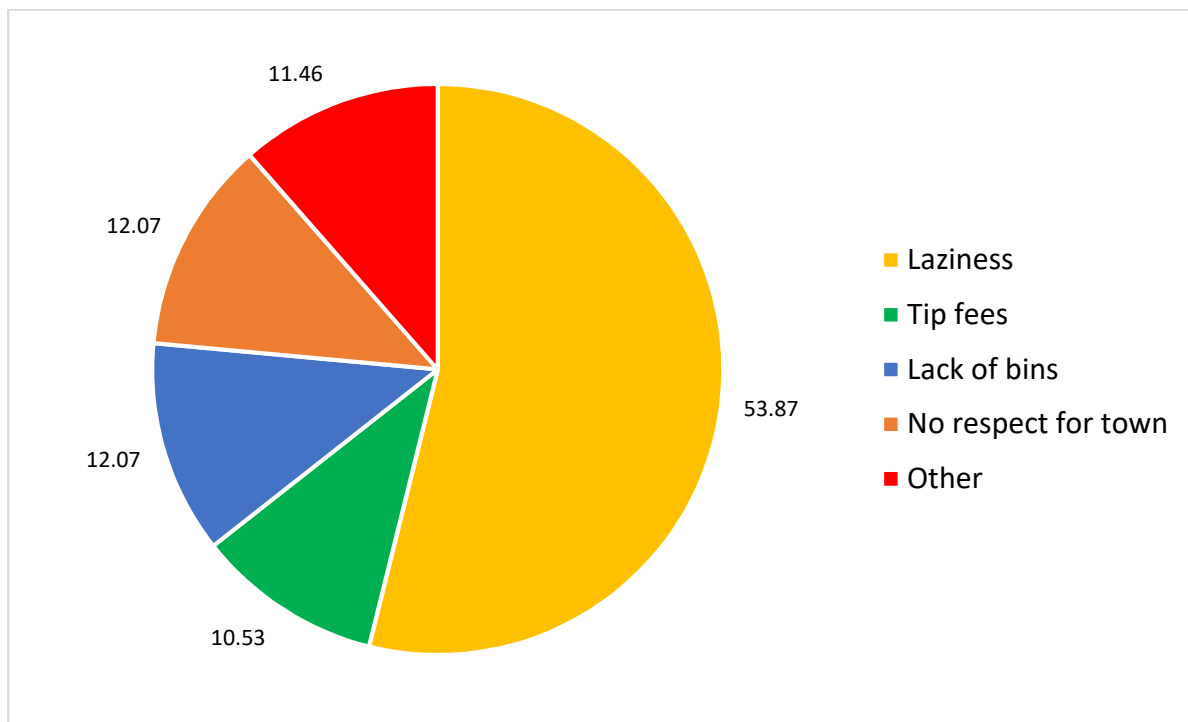


Figure 8: Percentage responses for reasons for littering

Strategies to reduce litter

Community members were asked what they think is the most effective way to reduce litter. The highest percentage of responses was on a container deposit scheme followed by fines for littering, increased infrastructure and education.

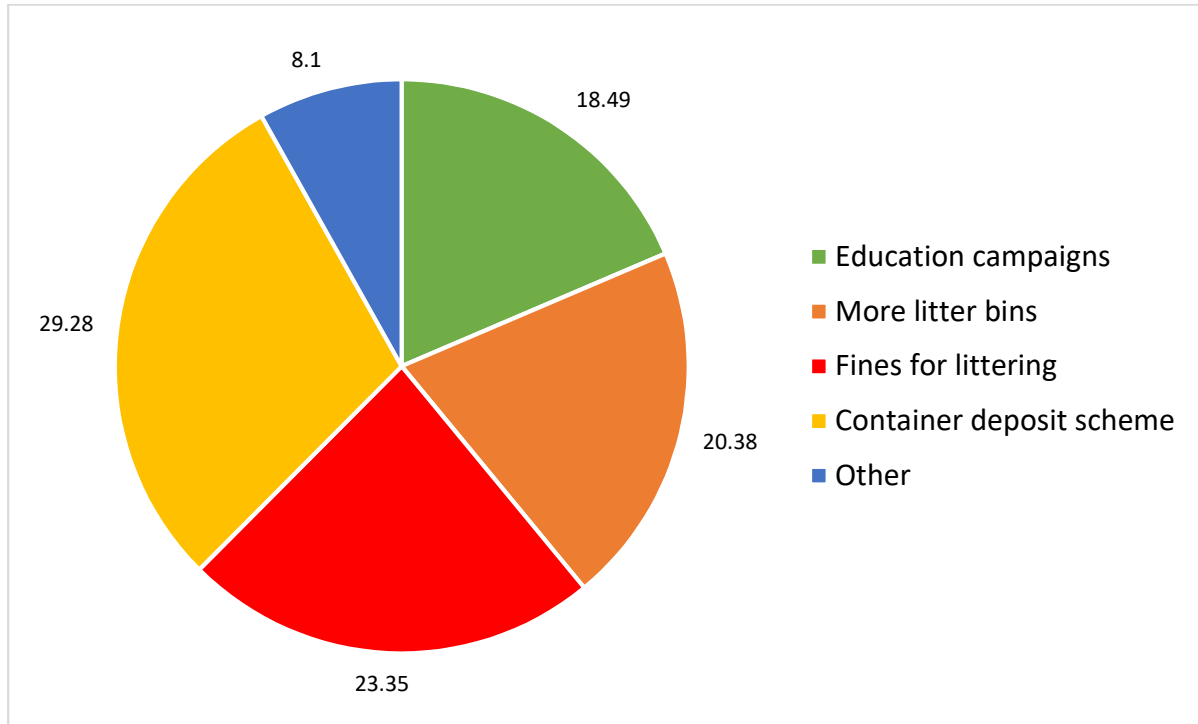


Figure 9: Percentage responses to strategies to reduce litter

Community satisfaction with litter control

Council conducts yearly community satisfaction surveys about our operations and performance. Community members were asked about their levels of satisfaction with litter control. The below figure shows the mean performance score out of seven for the financial years ending 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019. Satisfaction scores have been steady from 2015 to 2019.

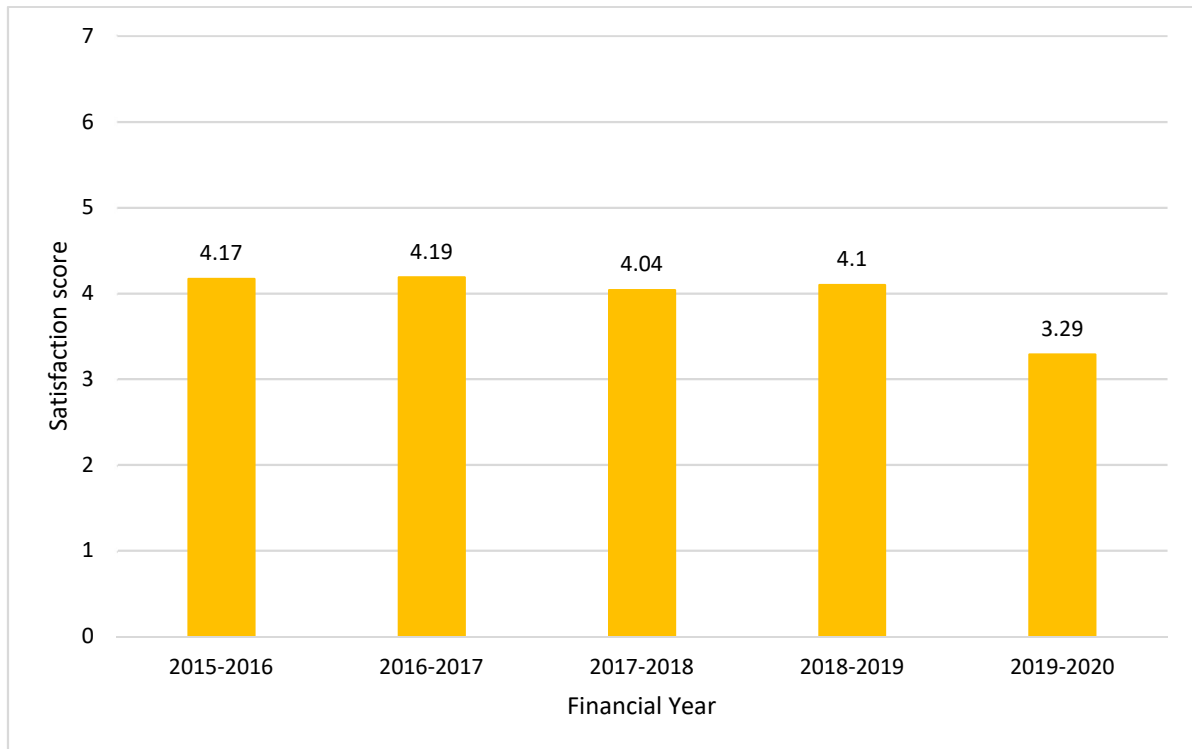


Figure 10: Mean community satisfaction scores for litter control from financial years 2015 to 2020

POLICY FRAMEWORK AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

As part of the development of the *Litter and Illegal Dumping Strategy 2020-2025* national, state and Council policy and litter management frameworks were considered. The following section outlines those relevant to the strategy.

Litter Management Principles

Two key principles underpin this *Litter and Illegal Dumping Strategy 2020-2025*:

- Litter prevention framework
- Waste hierarchy

Litter Prevention Framework

The strategy to reduce litter and illegal dumping will be done through a combination of education, infrastructure and enforcement, consistent with Victoria's litter prevention framework. A successful litter reduction outcome can only be achieved if:

- The community are aware of the issues associated with litter and encouraged to use correct disposal methods;
- People are supported to dispose of their litter correctly with infrastructure like public bins and signs;
- There are consequences and penalties for those who litter, providing a clear deterrent and message that littering behaviour is unacceptable.

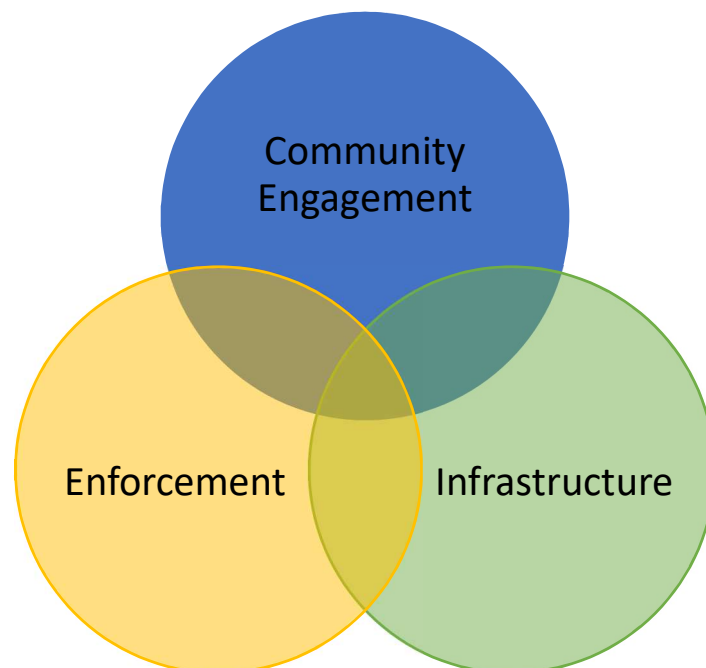


Figure 11: Victoria's litter prevention framework

Waste Management Hierarchy

The waste management hierarchy is the underlying key principle of waste management and is included in the *Environmental Protection Act 1970*. This hierarchy can also be applied to litter management. The highest priority is the avoidance and reduction of waste and litter. This is followed by reuse and recycling. Recovering resources keeps materials in a circular economy and benefits the environment by reducing the need for new materials and waste absorption. The waste hierarchy recognises that some types of waste, such as hazardous chemicals or asbestos, cannot be recycled safely. Direct treatment or disposal is the most appropriate management option.

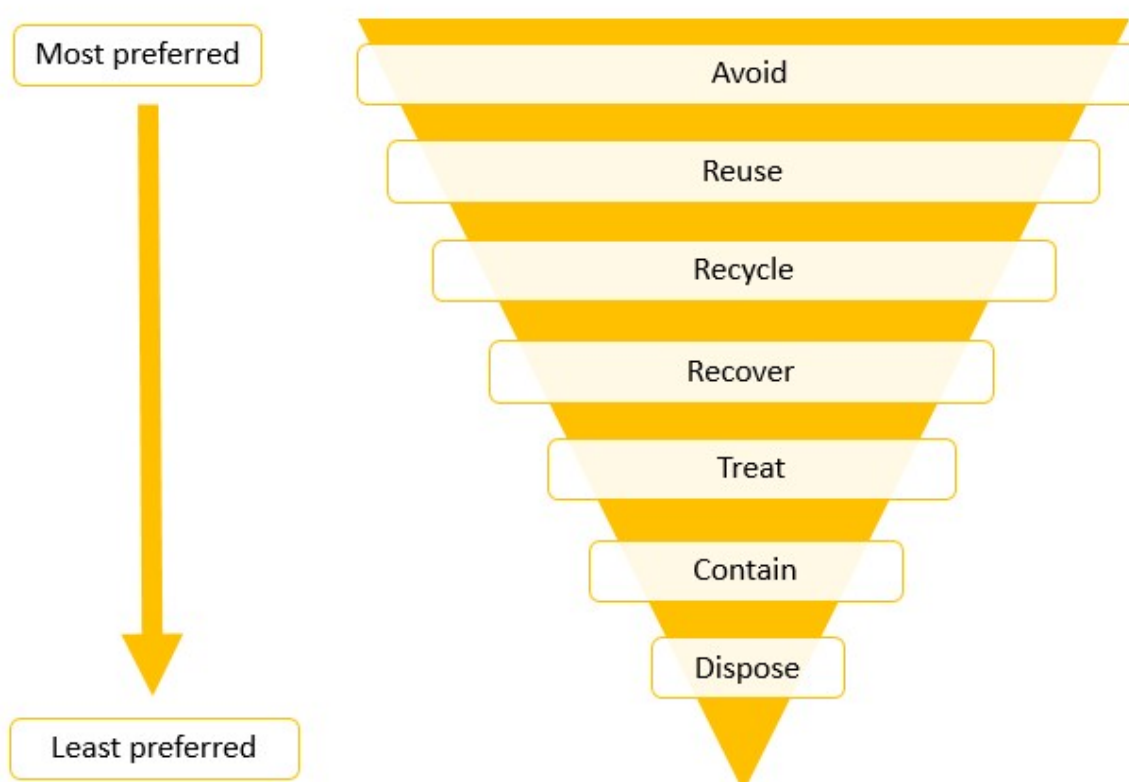


Figure 12: Waste Management Hierarchy

Strategic and Policy Context- National, State, Regional and Council Levels

Mildura Rural City Council acts within a wider policy framework for waste and litter management. The following section outlines the range of policies, plans and regulations at national, state and regional levels that have been considered in the development of this *Litter and Illegal Dumping Strategy 2020-2025*.

National

The *National Waste Policy 2018* provides the framework for collective Australia wide action on waste management, recycling and resource recovery. Litter fits into this policy under

product stewardship to better manage packaging and to improve the use of resources, reduce the environmental impact of packaging design, and to enhance away from home recycling and reduce litter. The Commonwealth has provided funding to non-government organisations such as Keep Australia Beautiful.

State

The state are responsible for shaping litter policy, collecting data and conducting research into litter and illegal dumping and provision of grants for litter prevention programs and infrastructure. Relevant documents include: *Recycling Victoria: A new economy 2020*, *Victorian Litter Reduction Strategy 2012-2014*; *Victorian Waste Education Strategy 2016*, *Environmental Protection Act 1970* and *Local Government Act 1989*. In July 2021 a new *Environmental Protection Act* will come into force that focuses on prevention and allows for litter offences to be differentiated by quantity.

Regional

The *Loddon Mallee Regional Litter and Illegal Dumping Plan 2019* identifies litter and illegal dumping priorities for the region. Actions include: reducing littering on roadsides; building on community rejection of littering; increasing the likelihood of being caught and fined and more. This strategy uses key information and recommendations from this regional plan for the Loddon Mallee region that includes the Mildura municipality.

Council

This strategy is consistent with the overall vision and goal of the *Community and Council Plan 2017-2021* to ‘make this the most liveable, people-friendly community in Australia’ and achieve a ‘clean and litter free municipality.’ The *Waste Management and Resource Recovery Plan 2020-2025*, *Environmental Education Plan 2020-2024*, *Waste Education Plan 2020-2025* and *Litter and Illegal Dumping Education Plan 2020-2025* also contribute to ensuring the community are aware of waste issues and general environmental sustainability. Other related plans include the *Mildura Stormwater Quality Improvement Plan 2009-2014*, *Domestic Animal Management Plan 2017-2021* and *Events Strategy 2025*.

An overview of the framework for Mildura Rural City Council within the Commonwealth, Victorian and regional context is provided below.

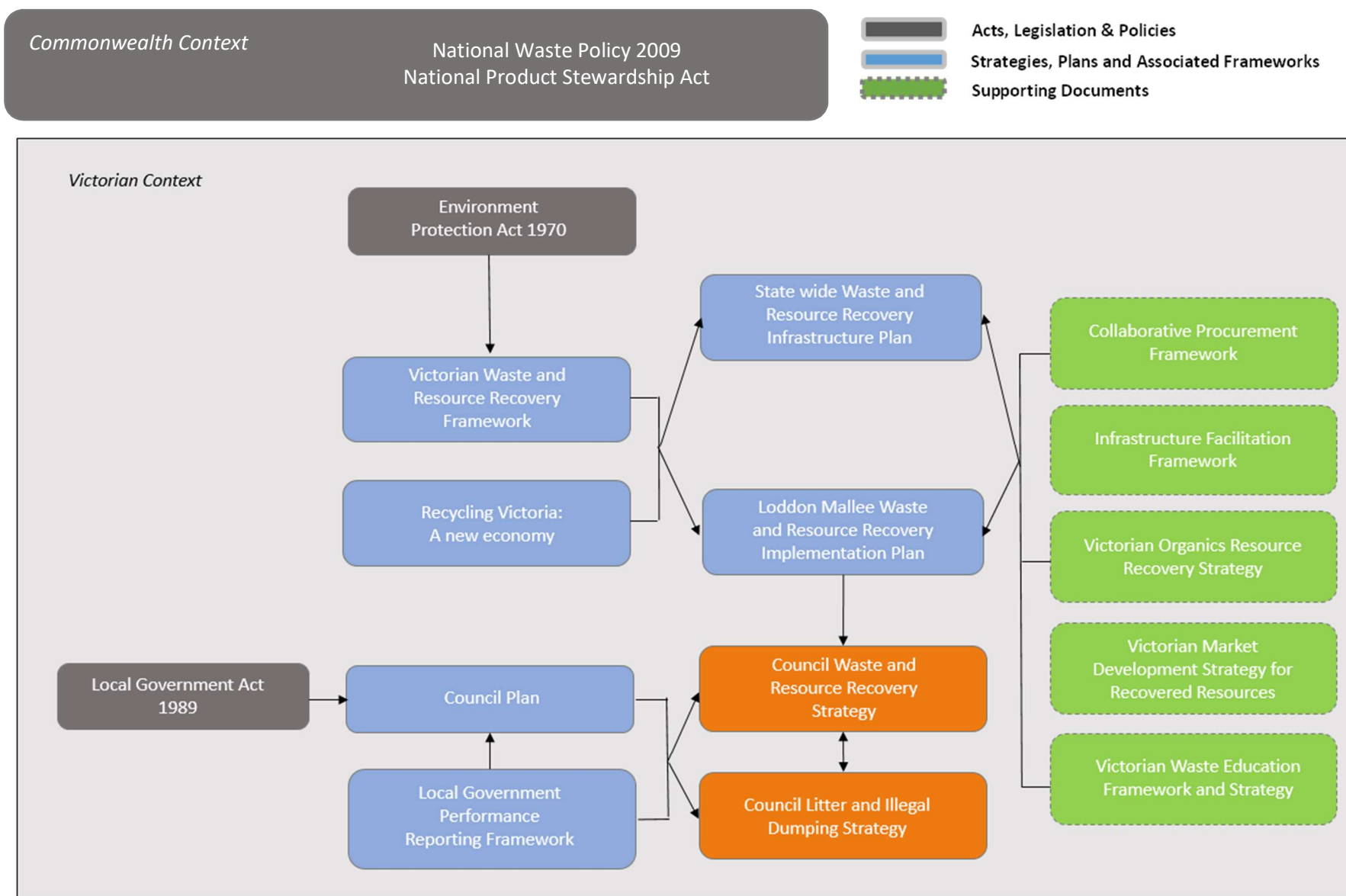


Figure 13: Framework for MRCC within the Commonwealth, Victorian and regional context



CURRENT LITTER STATUS

Understanding our current litter management status is key to identifying and maximising future opportunities for litter reduction.

The following figure shows the tonnes of litter collected from each financial year from 2015 to 2020. This includes what has been collected through the public litter bins, illegal dumping, street sweeping and gross pollutant trap waste. Note that street sweeping data includes soil and leaf matter as well as litter so true amounts of litter may be slightly lower than recorded.

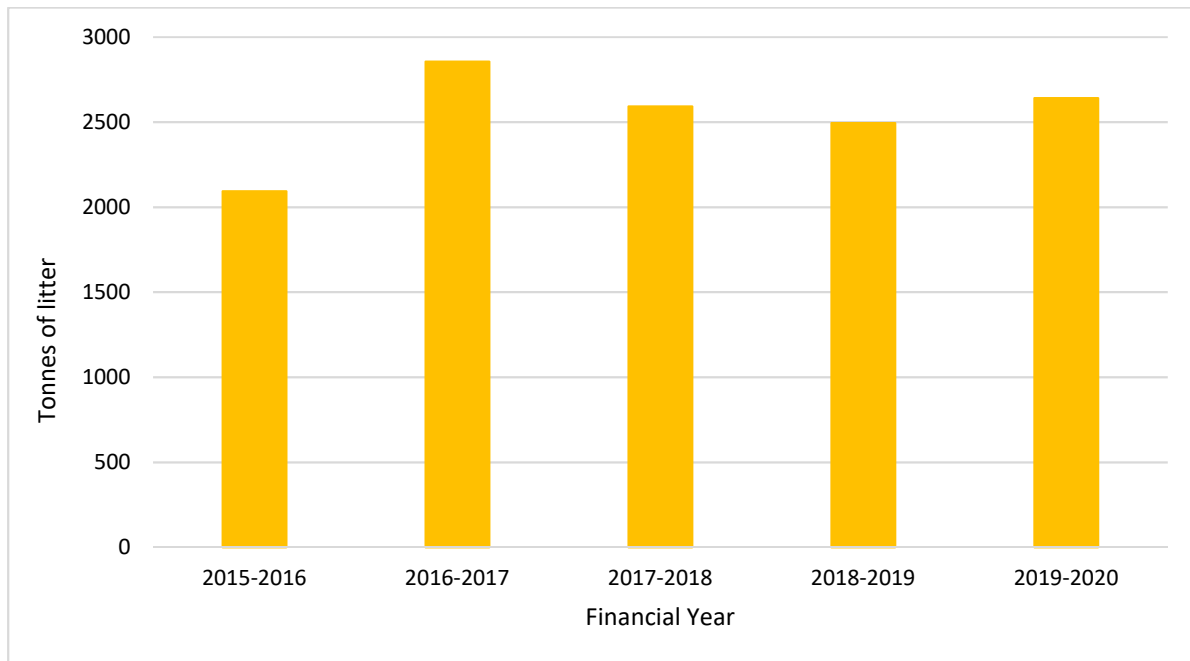


Figure 4: Tonnes of litter collected per financial year

Customer requests data shows that the majority of illegal dumping occurs along road sides, except in the years 2017 and 2018 when there was a spike in illegal dumping in natural areas.

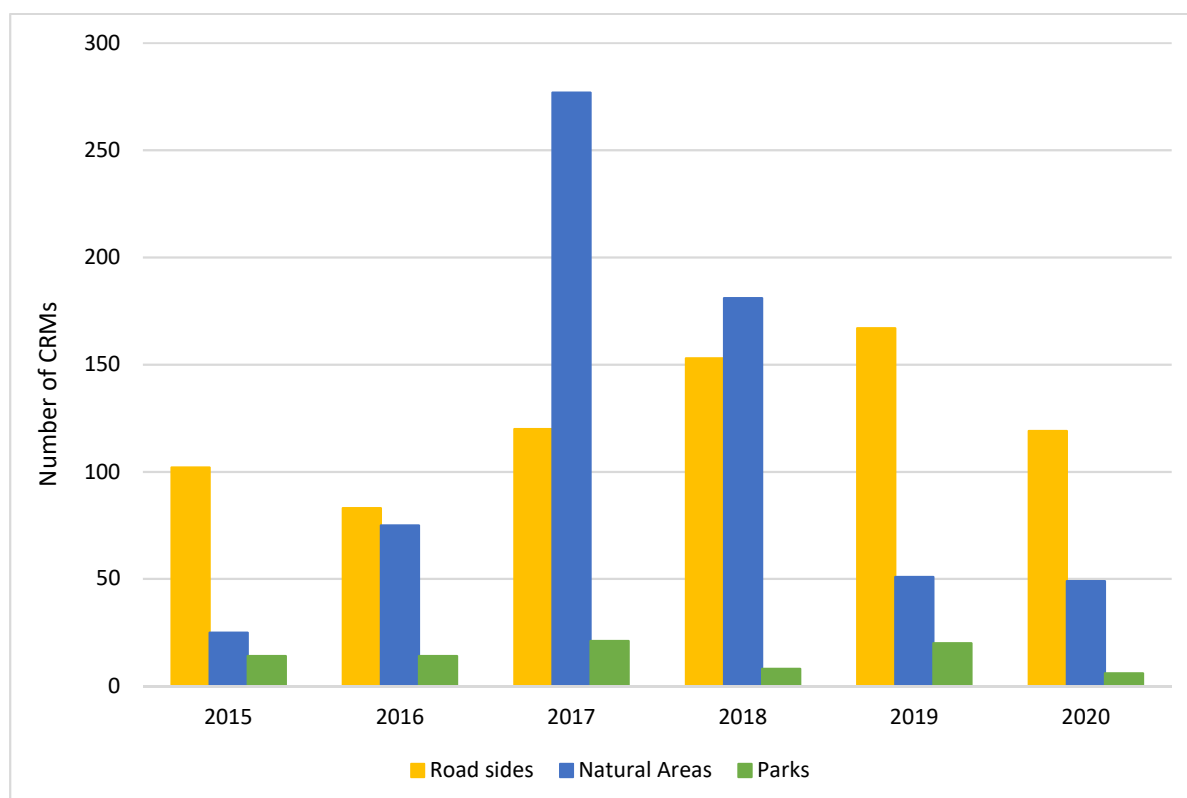


Figure 5: Number of customer requests relating to illegal dumping clean ups

**2020 data up to 13th of August 2020. Increase in natural areas in 2017 is from staff recording what was collected in more detail. This does not mean illegal dumping and litter increased in these areas.*

The following table shows the litter offences reported to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) for Mildura Rural City Council municipality in the 2019-2020 financial year.

Table 3: Litter Offences reported to the EPA in 2019-2020

Offence	Number of Reports to EPA	Number of Penalty Infringement Notices Issued
Deposited cigarette	8	9
Deposited lit cigarette	20	20
Deposited litter	6	5
Deposited small item	1	0
TOTAL	35	34

The following figure shows the tonnes of waste from illegal dumping sent to landfill from 2015 to 2018. Note that these figures do not include items like mattresses, tyres and televisions which are counted not weighed.

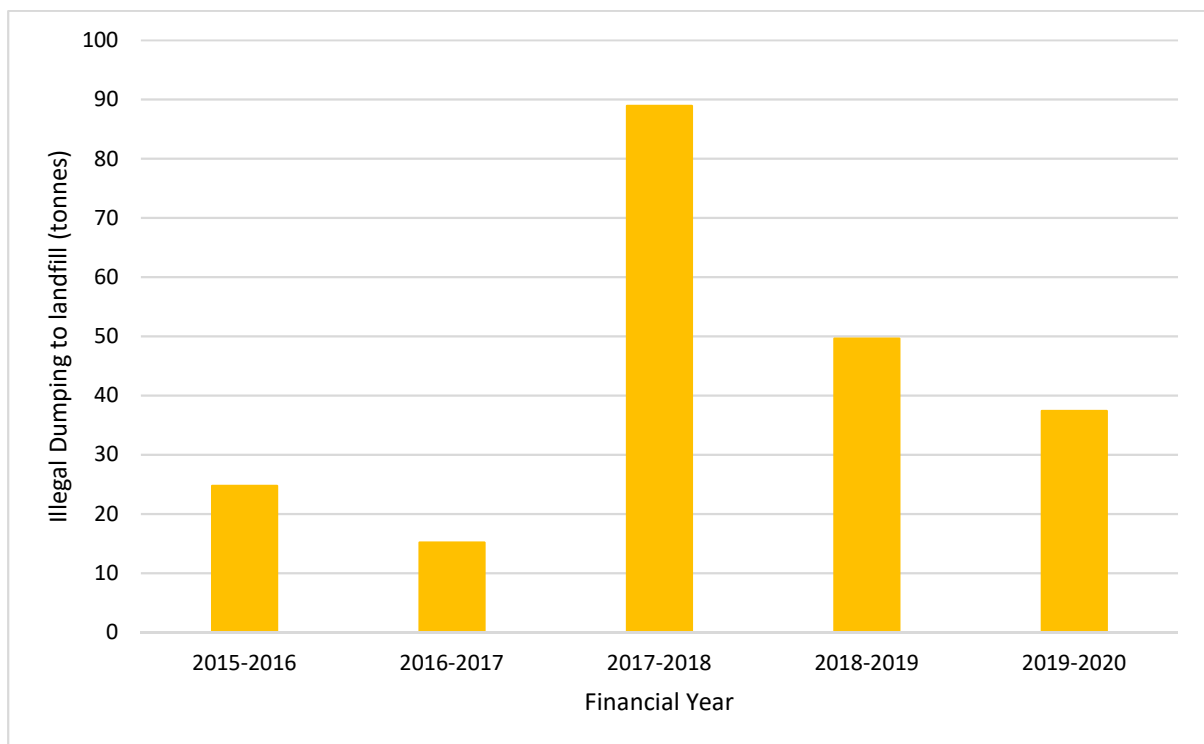


Figure 6: Tonnes of illegal dumping sent to landfill

The following figure shows the count of illegally dumped mattresses, tyres and televisions sent to landfill. Tyres were the most commonly dumped item, followed by mattresses.

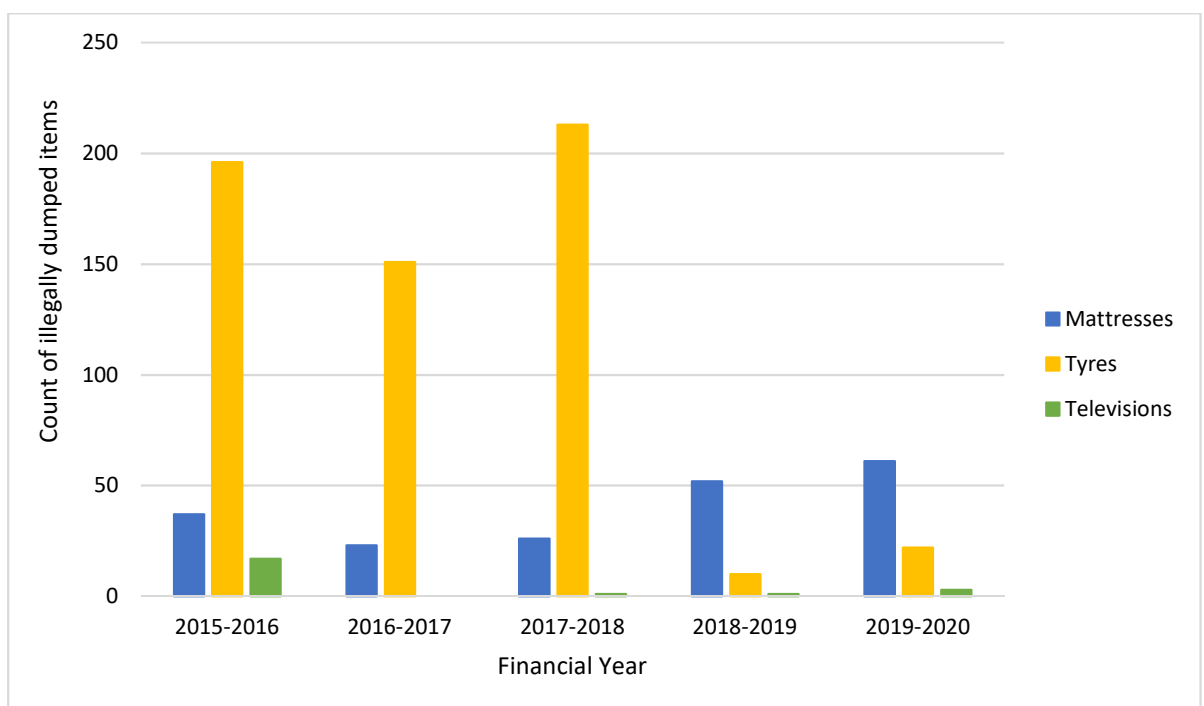


Figure 7: Count of illegally dumped mattresses, tyres and televisions

The following shows the results of the dog excrement audit taken in various locations around the municipality. Site 5 which was the South Mildura Wetlands had a significant amount of littered dog excrement.

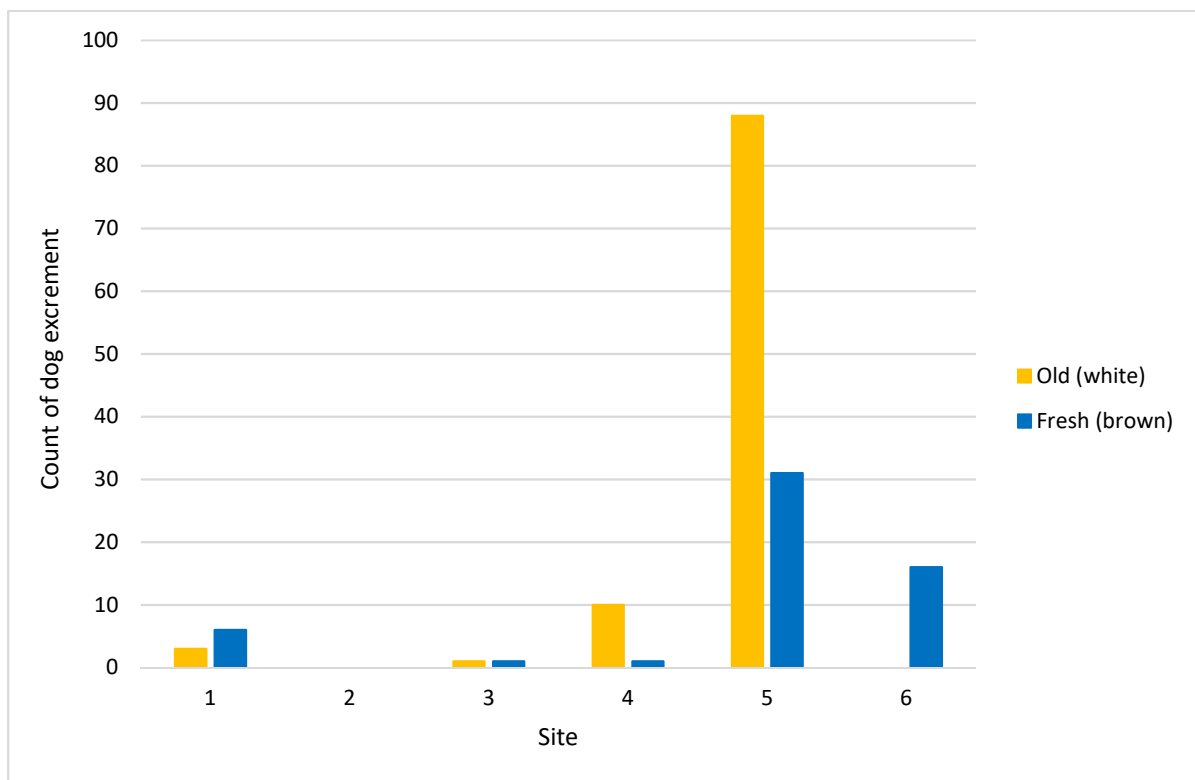


Figure 8: Count of dog excrement in different sites around Mildura

Site 1 is the area along the riverfront from Cureton Ave to the bridge/Nowingi.

Site 2 is the area from the Hugh King Drive entrance near the tennis courts to Jaycee Park and does not include Jaycee Park itself.

Site 3 is the area on Cureton Ave from the Old Mildura Homestead to the Apex Park boat ramp.

Site 4 is Mansell Reserve.

Site 5 is South Mildura Wetlands and Site 6 is the old aerodrome ovals.

PRIORITY AREAS

The Council will continue to work with the community to provide ‘a clean and litter free municipality.’ This *Litter and Illegal Dumping Strategy 2020-2025* identifies the following five priority areas:

1. Supporting our community to reduce litter

2. Education, behaviour change and partnerships

3. Sustainable litter prevention infrastructure

4. Compliance for a litter free municipality

5. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting



PRIORITY 1: SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY TO REDUCE LITTER

Engagement with community groups

Community engagement is essential to achieve reduced waste generation, maximise waste diversion and reduce litter levels. There are a number of community groups who undertake important work to support waste minimisation, better recycling, litter prevention and clean-up activities. Examples of these groups include the Sunraysia Sustainability Network, Mildura War on Waste and Plastic Free Sunraysia, among many others. Greater engagement with and support to community groups by Council will help to increase their presence within the community. There are also opportunities for Council and community groups to collaborate on shared waste minimisation and litter reduction projects and for a community stakeholder group to be established.

Container Deposit Scheme (CDS)

Part of the state government's plan to reduce waste to landfill is to introduce a container deposit scheme across the state by 2023. This initiative influences littering behaviour by encouraging the consumer to hold onto the empty drink container and return it for a refund and providing an incentive for other people to pick up littered containers and receive the refund. Since the Return and Earn container deposit scheme was introduced in New South Wales in December 2018, over 2.7 billion containers have been returned. Council is waiting for information from the State Government on how the container deposit scheme will work in Victoria.

Engagement through cleaning up

The main clean-up program is Clean up Australia Day (CUAD). CUAD is a nationwide community based environmental event that is held in March every year. Individuals and local groups can either organise a clean-up site or volunteer to join an existing site. Council supports the local clean-up efforts and will arrange for the collection and disposal of any rubbish collected on the day. CUAD exempts roadsides from being cleaned up under this program. Regional Roads Victoria has the Adopt a Roadside program through Keep Victoria Beautiful where volunteers can adopt a roadside in regional Victoria to clean or revegetate.

Council in the past has received requests of support from community members who clean up litter along roadsides. It is noteworthy to understanding that Council can support individuals if they volunteer with Council. Council expects volunteers to adhere to Council policies and processes and Occupational Health and Safety Legislation. Further details as to volunteer and Council responsibilities can be found in Council's *Volunteer Policy OP083*.

While clean up days are a management option and a shift to prevention is preferred, it is still important to engage the community in clean up events helping to promote a culture of shared responsibility for litter management.

Reducing waste

This topic will be covered in detail in the *Waste & Resource Recovery Strategy 2020-2025*, however a step towards reducing litter is reducing the amount of waste we produce. Although the amount of packaging has increased, we can still make choices to purchase with less packaging and use reusable items such as reusable shopping bags. For more information on this, please refer to Council's *Waste & Resource Recovery Strategy 2020-2025*.

PRIORITY 1 – WHAT WE WILL DO

- ✓ Establish a community stakeholder group
- ✓ Support community groups in waste minimisation and litter prevention activities
- ✓ Support the introduction of a container deposit scheme
- ✓ Promote and participate in Clean Up Australia Day
- ✓ Develop guidelines on how to get involved in volunteer waste clean ups
- ✓ Undertake one community nominated roadside clean up each year

PRIORITY 2: EDUCATION, BEHAVIOUR CHANGE AND PARTNERSHIPS

Education & Behaviour Change

Behaviour change among members of the community starts with better knowledge about the issue of litter, the desired behaviours and benefits and penalties for littering and illegal dumping. Many people in the community may be unaware of the significant cost of addressing dumped rubbish or may lack knowledge about correct disposal.

The Loddon Mallee Community survey found that 5 out of 10 people thought it was okay to throw away an apple core or other food scraps. Effective behaviour change requires strategies that influence personal behaviour as well as broader communities of influence and social norms. The needs of culturally and linguistically diverse communities also need to be accounted for and respected in education and communication activities.

Council has drafted up a *Litter and Illegal Dumping Education Plan 2020-2025* based on the key findings from community surveys and key documents. The key message in regards to litter is “take your rubbish home with you”. There will not always be a place to dispose of your waste when you are away from home. It is your responsibility to dispose of rubbish correctly. The overall aim of the education campaign will be to build community capacity and knowledge on appropriate waste disposal and reduce the amount of littering and illegal dumping. The education plan will cover various topics including picking up after your dog and securing loads properly so as not to create litter.

This education campaign will be conducted following the waste hierarchy, litter prevention framework and community based social marketing principles. The campaign will be rolled out in stages including smaller trials, community wide launches, follow up, ongoing communications and evaluation. For more information on this, please refer to the *Litter and Illegal Dumping Education Plan 2020-2025*.

Litter Prevention Officer

The appointment of a Litter Prevention Officer will provide Council and the community with the human resources to follow up on enforcement action and provide education to our community on littering and illegal dumping. Our current Civic Compliance team have a range of officers that deal with a wide range of compliance issues. Having a dedicated Litter Prevention Officer to investigate and action litter & illegal dumping reports and undertake community engagement and education will raise awareness of litter & illegal dumping in our community. This position will be dependent on future funding opportunities.

Education for farming properties

Council has a large farming community in the municipality. Not all areas in the municipality have close access to a wide range of recycling and waste disposal options. By providing an annual waste and recycling disposal day, an increase in awareness and education on correct waste disposal can also occur. Education for farmers on correct waste disposal is vital so that

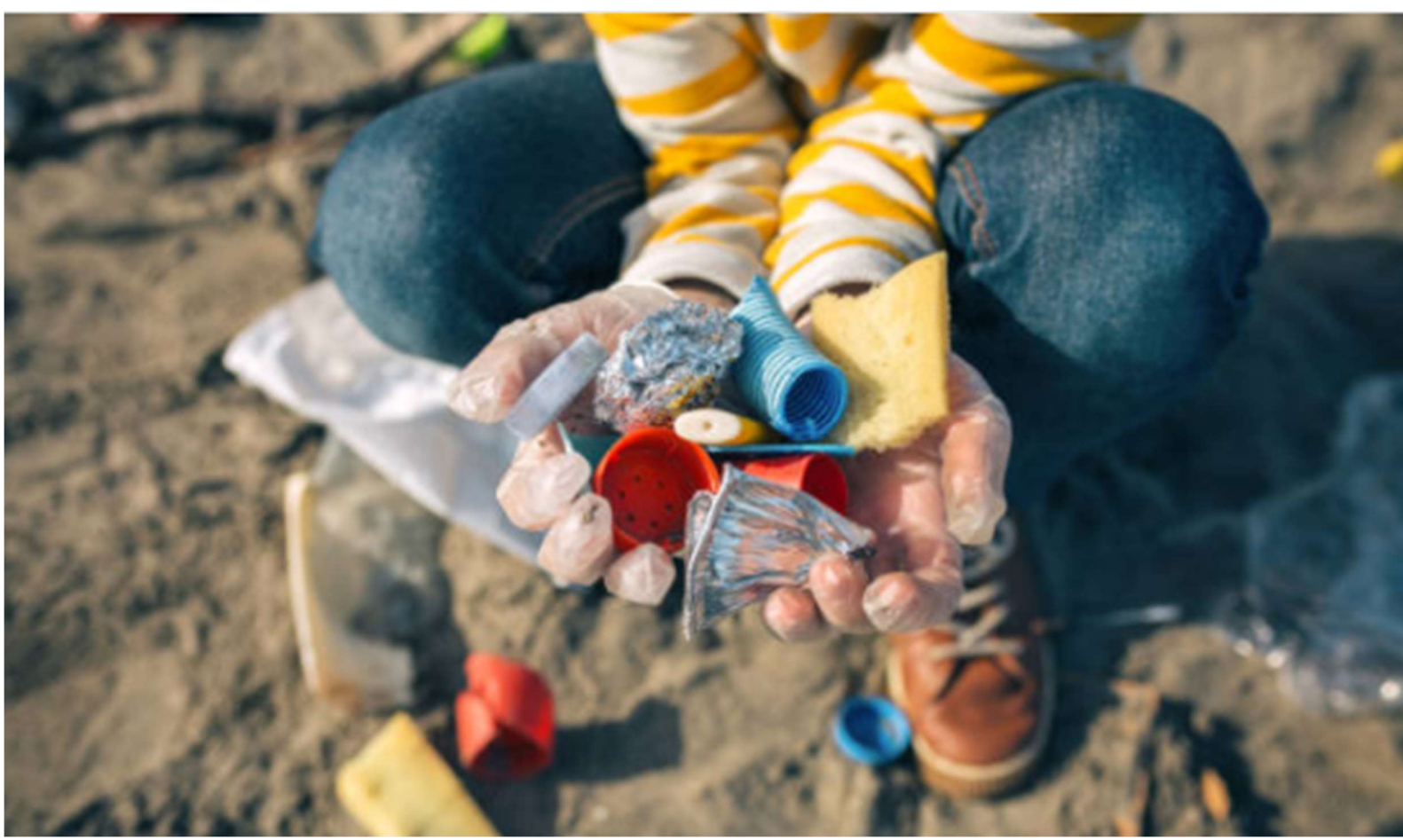
their waste does not affect the environment and pollute their property or neighbouring property.

Construction sites

Construction sites can create litter through poor management, or become sites where illegal dumping occurs. To improve on this, Council will review the wording in Local Laws No 5 to include more detail on how construction sites should manage their waste. We will also include environmental risk assessments as per the Environment Protection Act 2018 for subdivision development. This will ensure waste is correctly managed and disposed of and reduce the incidence of littering and illegal dumping at these sites.

PRIORITY 2 – WHAT WE WILL DO

- ✓ Adopt the 'take rubbish home with you' message for our community
- ✓ Develop and deliver the actions from the *Litter and Illegal Dumping Education Plan 2020 – 2025*
- ✓ Appoint a Litter Prevention Officer
- ✓ Provide an Annual Waste and Recycling disposal day for farmers
- ✓ Review the Local Laws to include more detail on how to manage construction waste
- ✓ Introduce risk assessments for subdivision planning referrals



PRIORITY 3: SUSTAINABLE LITTER PREVENTION INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure

One of the three components that make litter and illegal dumping mitigation successful is appropriate infrastructure. This includes public litter bins, landfills and transfer stations, gross pollutant traps and street sweeping services.

Bins are not the only answer to reducing litter. In studies conducted by the Beverage Industry Environment Council and Community Change Consultants it was found that most of the littering occurred within five metres of a bin. This is why litter prevention needs to also include education and enforcement to be successful.

Public Litter Bins

Public litter bins are placed in locations around the municipality to encourage people not to litter. Examples of locations where bins are currently provided include Mildura, Merbein, Irymple, Red Cliffs and Cardross CBDs and Jaycee and Henderson Parks. Council has one litter truck that services the public litter bin network 365 days per year, with the support of kerbside garbage collections for the Mallee Track. Comprehensive data around public litter bins is currently lacking. Council will map and review the public litter bins network to ensure they are in the most helpful locations to assist in litter control.

Technology such as self-compacting litter bins

Self-compacting litter bins run off solar energy. When the waste inside reaches a certain level the compactor initiates and compacts everything inside. These bins are capable of holding up to 600 litres or four times more waste than regular litter bins meaning they do not have to be emptied as frequently. Reduced collection needs help to reduce carbon emissions and traffic from collection vehicles. Council will explore the viability and benefits of these sorts of technologies as part of its review into the public litter bin network.

Dog Waste Bag Dispensers

All pet owners have a responsibility to look after their animals and ensure they don't cause problems for the wider community when out in public. As specified in Local Law No 2, owners must remove and dispose of dog litter if their dog defecates in a park, road, footpath or other public place. Dog owners are also legally required to carry a litter device such as plastic bag to clean up after their pet. Breaching these laws can result in fines.

Whilst the responsibility is on the owner to always ensure they carry a litter device, Council does provide dog waste bags in key areas around the municipality to encourage responsible pet ownership. There are currently 37 dog waste bag dispensers that are regularly restocked. Council will review its provision of dog waste bags and dispensers with a particular focus on dog parks.

Service Levels

Council also provides street sweeping services to manage litter in public places. Street sweepers are also for keeping roads and the Central Business District (CBD) of Mildura clean on top of litter collection. Council has two road street sweepers that service all kerb and channel roads, intersection sweeping, road construction and private works. The one smaller sweeper services the CBD area. Council has not been through a recent review of these levels of service to assess environmental benefit and costs which is recommended as an action.

Collection vehicles- electric or hydrogen powered vehicles to reduce carbon footprint

Electric cars operate using electricity stored in rechargeable batteries that power an electric motor. Hydrogen powered cars use hydrogen gas to power an electric motor. Hydrogen powered and electric cars do not produce any exhaust emissions, unlike conventional vehicles that run on gasoline or diesel. Council will investigate electric or hydrogen powered vehicle options for litter trucks and street sweepers to help reduce carbon emissions.



Stormwater Infrastructure

Gross pollutant traps (GPTs) are filters that catch solid waste such as litter and coarse sediment before it enters waterways. Stormwater pollution has adverse impacts on plants and animals. For example, when green waste breaks down in water it uses up oxygen, reducing oxygen available to plants and fish. Litter can clog waterways and cause toxicity as it breaks down.

It is important to note that GPTs can catch most litter and silt but cannot stop chemicals from going into the environment. The contents of the GPTs are emptied on a regular basis and the contents sent to landfill. There are 26 GPTs located in the Mildura Rural City Council area. Council's target is to see a 10% reduction in the amount of material collected in GPTs by 2025.

PRIORITY 3 – WHAT WE WILL DO

- ✓ Review and rationalise the public place waste and recycling bin network as required
- ✓ Work with the community to install customised litter bins in CBDs and townships
- ✓ Trial self-compacting litter bins in high usage areas
- ✓ Map the public litter bin network
- ✓ Develop service levels for litter bins
- ✓ Include the public litter bin network in Councils Asset Management System
- ✓ Develop service levels for street sweeping programs
- ✓ Investigate electric vehicle options for litter trucks and street sweepers



PRIORITY 4: COMPLIANCE FOR A LITTER FREE MUNICIPALITY

Consistent and effective enforcement helps change behaviour through reinforcing the consequences of undesired behaviour.

Littering offences include:

- Littering (including littering from vehicles)
- Aggravated littering- littering which is reasonably likely to cause or contribute to danger or harm to any person, animals, premises or property.
- Depositing, or causing someone to deposit, advertising material in a public space or open private place other than in a mail box, under a door or on a vehicle.

Authorised officers use legislation under Section 45E of the Environment Protection Act 1970 to enforce litter offences.

Civic Compliance within Council issue infringements for littering, illegal dumping and illegal burning of rubbish. Civic Compliance also play a role with police in relation to unsecured loads, education and enforcement.

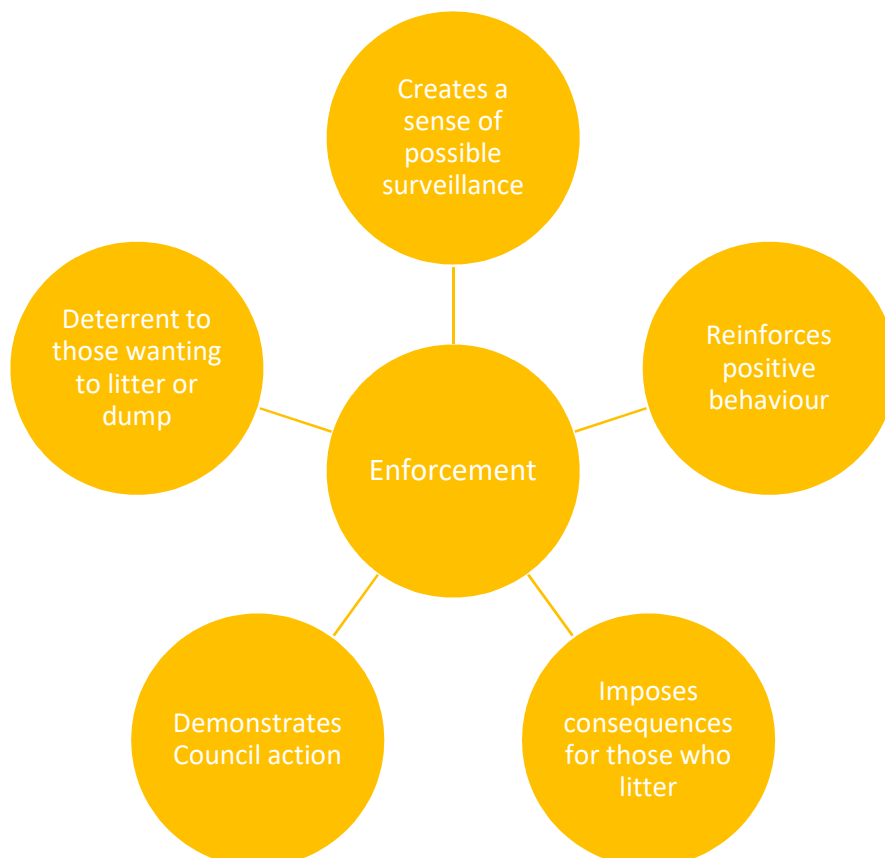


Figure 9: Functions of enforcement activities

The Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA Victoria) manages the public reporting system that can be used by Victorians to report incidents of pollution, environmental hazard or other activities that could be harmful to the environment including litter from vehicles.

Table 4: Fines for littering

Infringement notice	Type	Penalty in 2020-21*	Penalty Units
Litter infringement notice	Extinguished cigarette, small piece of litter	\$330	2
Litter infringement notice	Lit cigarette, burning litter	\$661	4
Motor vehicle infringement notice	Individual	\$826	5
Motor vehicle infringement notice	Company	\$1652	10
Environmental infringement notice	Individual	\$1983	12
Environmental infringement notice	Company	\$8261	50
N/A	Penalty reminder notice	\$25.80	1.74

**Note this is for the 2020-2021 financial year only and may change in the future*

PRIORITY 4 – WHAT WE WILL DO

- ✓ Install surveillance cameras in key illegal dumping hotspots
- ✓ Promote community reporting of litter and illegal dumping

PRIORITY 5: MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

It is hard for Council to track the amount of litter especially since different work teams within Council collect litter as part of their daily duties. The only way Council keeps a record of illegal dumping is through the tonnes brought to Mildura Landfill and the number of customer requests received to investigate and collect it.

Tools to help track litter and illegal dumping

The National Litter Index (NLI) is useful to help track progress and guide priorities and targeted actions. The purpose of the NLI is to provide insight regarding the presence, volume and make-up of litter at sites within broadly comparable regions. The NLI currently surveys 151 sites across Victoria with surveys conducted bi-annually in November and May.

The Asset Management Information System is a program Council uses to provide the same information on Council assets. This program may be able to be used to map illegal dumping and litter and to identify hotspots.

It is important the community knows about litter and illegal dumping. A report card can be provided each year detailing the amounts, types and costs of illegally dumped waste to keep our community accountable for their waste disposal.

PRIORITY 5 – WHAT WE WILL DO

- ✓ Investigate and develop processes to record and track litter and illegal dumping
- ✓ Improve understanding of the litter and illegal dumping issues in our community
- ✓ Annual reporting on litter and illegal dumping to our community



ACTION PLAN

Priority 1: Supporting our community to reduce litter

Action	Lead	Support	Timeframe
Establish a community stakeholder group	Waste	Community Futures	2020-2025
Support community groups in waste minimisation and litter prevention activities	Waste	Community Futures	2020-2025
Support the introduction of a container deposit scheme by the Victorian State Government by 2023.	Waste	LMWRRG	2020-2023
Develop a streamlined process to make it easier for community members to collect litter on Council land and roadsides.	Waste	Risk & Governance, OH&S, Community Futures	2021
Community nomination of one roadside clean up each year.	Waste	Regional Roads Victoria, Community Futures	2021-2025
Continue to support Clean up Australia Day.	Community Futures	Waste Services	2020-2025

Priority 2: Education, community engagement and partnerships

Action	Lead	Support	Timeframe
Adopt the 'take rubbish home with you' message for our municipality.	Waste	Community Futures, Marketing & Communications	2020-2025
Develop and implement a litter prevention education program that compliments the waste education program identified in the Waste & Resource Recovery Strategy.	Waste	Marketing & Communications, Community Futures, LMWRRG	2020-2025

Litter Prevention Officer position to undertake illegal dumping, litter prevention and enforcement in the municipality (funding dependent).	Development Services/Waste		2021
Work with other land managers to educate the community on litter and illegal dumping prevention.	Waste	Regional Roads Victoria, LMW, DELWP, Parks Vic, VicTrack, LMWRRG, Mallee CMA, EPA Vic	2021-2025
Develop and implement an annual disposal program for farmers for the correct disposal of waste. Propose this as a future budget initiative.	Waste	Development Services, EPA Vic, Community Futures, LMWRRG	2021-2025
Review and update wording in Local Laws No 5 for more detail on how construction sites should manage their waste.	Works and Engineering Services		2022
Include environmental risk assessment process for subdivision development and building construction and demolition as per the new Environment Protection Amendment Act 2018.	Works and Engineering Services	EPA Vic, Waste Services	2022
Priority 3: Sustainable litter prevention infrastructure			
Action	Lead	Support	Timeframe
Review and rationalise the public litter bin network in our municipality. Use The Asset Management Information System to manage the bin network.	Waste	Asset Services	2022
Develop a public litter bin decision framework.	Waste		2022
Trial self-compacting litter bins in the municipality.	Waste	Loddon Mallee Waste & Resource Recovery Group	2025

Review and determine service levels for the street sweeping program and litter bins.	Waste		2021
Investigate electric vehicle options for litter trucks and street sweepers.	Waste	Fleet	2022
Work with the community to install customised litter bins in CBDs and townships.	Waste		2020-2025

Priority 4: Compliance for a litter free community

Action	Lead	Support	Timeframe
Install surveillance cameras in key illegal dumping hotspots.	Development Services	Information Systems	2022
Promote community reports of litter and illegal dumping either through Council or EPA Victoria.	Waste/ Development Services/ EPA Vic	Marketing & Communications, LMWRRG	2020-2025

Priority 5: Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting

Action	Lead	Support	Timeframe
Investigate and develop a process to use The Asset Management Information System to record and track litter and illegal dumping.	Waste	Asset Services	2021
Develop a report card on litter and illegal dumping to be reported each year to our community.	Waste, Media & Communications		2021-2025
Use The Asset Management Information System to record litter collection as part of daily tasks by Council staff for a short period of time to improve the overall understanding of the litter issue in our municipality.	Waste	Parks & Gardens, Works & Engineering Services, Asset Services	2021

TARGETS AND MEASURES OF SUCCESS

Our targets for the *Litter and Illegal Dumping Strategy 2020-2025* include:

- 10% reduction in the tonnes of illegal dumping collected by 2025
- 10% reduction in the number of mattresses, tyres and electronic waste that is collected as illegal dumping by 2025
- Increase in average community satisfaction scores for litter control by 2025
- 10% reduction in the tonnes of litter collected in gross pollutant traps by 2025

The following key performance indicators will be used:

- Tonnes of illegal dumping sent to landfill each year
- Number of tyres, mattresses and electronic waste collected as illegal dumping each year
- Number of prosecutions for illegal dumping enforcement
- Number of fines from EPA and Council for littering
- Number of reports of illegal dumping from the community to Council
- Tonnes of litter collected through street sweeping, public litter bins and gross pollutant traps
- Number of litter and illegal dumping engagement activities



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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

General Environmental Duty (GED): The basis of the new Environmental Protection Act is the General Environmental Duty. This requires all Victorians to understand and minimise their risks of harm to human health and the environment, from pollution and waste. Everyone is now responsible for the classification and transport of waste and the disposal of waste at a lawful place.

Illegal dumping: Larger items, such as white goods, building and demolition waste or significant household waste that has been disposed of inappropriately.

Lawful place: A lawful place is somewhere lawfully authorised to receive waste. If you generate, transport or receive waste, you must make sure it ends up at a lawful place.

Litter: Small items of waste disposed of inappropriately.

Waste: Materials or products that are unwanted or have been discarded, rejected or abandoned, including materials or products that are recycled, converted to energy, or disposed.

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