

**Get the facts.
Take responsibility.
Do your part to reduce
cigarette litter.**

Keep America Beautiful, the nation's largest nonprofit community improvement organization, is working with communities across the U.S. to combat this problem through its *Cigarette Litter Prevention Program*. Find out more at www.preventcigarettelitter.org or www.kab.org

Keep America Beautiful offers this information to support community efforts to reduce cigarette litter.



**ABOUT KEEP AMERICA
BEAUTIFUL, INC.**

Since 1953, Keep America Beautiful's mission has been to make communities, cleaner, greener, safer, and more livable. We accomplish this by engaging individuals to take greater responsibility for improving their community environments. We carry out our work through our network of nearly 1,000 certified affiliates and participating organizations, touching communities from coast to coast.

For more information visit
www.preventcigarettelitter.org

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**CIGARETTE
LITTER
PREVENTION**



**The Facts About
Cigarette Litter**

A CIGARETTE BUTT IS LITTER

When it ends up on the ground and not in a receptacle, a *cigarette butt is litter*. Partially smoked cigarettes, matches, disposable lighters, packaging, and cigarette butts are all part of a growing national litter problem.

Individuals, who would never litter beverage cans or paper packaging, typically don't consider tossing cigarette butts on the ground littering. Lack of awareness; lack of ash receptacles, and ordinances that move smokers outdoors all increase cigarette littering.

Use car ashtrays, pocket or portable ashtrays, and ash receptacles to dispose of cigarette butts.



CIGARETTE LITTER AND YOUR COMMUNITY

Although it's one of the smallest pieces of litter, communities report cigarette butts are the top item collected during local cleanups. All that cigarette litter has an impact on the places we live:

- **Creating blight.** Cigarette litter is unsightly. It accumulates in corners, gutters, and outside doorways and bus shelters. Litter in a business district and other signs of disorder create a sense that no one cares about the community.
- **Harmful to waterways.** Littered cigarette butts are easily carried in storm water runoff through drainage systems and eventually to local streams, rivers, and waterways. Cigarette filters contain cellulose acetate; a form of plastic that does not biodegrade and can persist in the environment.



- **Costly to cleanup.** Cigarette litter requires additional sidewalk and street sweeping, greenway and park maintenance, and storm water system upkeep. Business owners also bear the expense of cigarette litter cleanup at entrances, exits, and adjacent sidewalks and parking lots.

TIPS TO REDUCE CIGARETTE LITTER

Appropriate ash receptacles need to be available to smokers who have moved from buildings, businesses, and restaurants on to the sidewalks to smoke. And, individuals who smoke must accept personal responsibility and choose not to litter.

Here's how you can help:

- **Carry a portable or pocket ashtray when smoking outside.** Encourage smokers to be aware of where their cigarette will be discarded when they light up. Whether smokers are outside public buildings, in parks, on beaches or city sidewalks, a little planning will reduce the number of butts that end up on the ground.
- **Use a receptacle to dispose of cigarette butts, packaging, and lighting material.** Ash receptacles are needed at the places where people must stop smoking before they proceed. These are called "transition points." Ash receptacles at transition points remind smokers to properly dispose of cigarette butts.
- **Don't throw butts out car windows.** Place cigarette butts in a car ashtray, a portable ashtray (which fits in the cup holder or on the window), or a container with a secure top like an empty bottle or snap-lid tin.
- **Be aware of local litter ordinances.** Many communities have litter ordinances that target cigarette litter. These are enforceable and carry penalties.