



## Case Study 1: Effective crackdown on littering and illegal dumping – Sutherland Shire Council's Heathcote Road Project

### The Problem

Heathcote Road had been used for decades as a dumping ground for construction, industrial and domestic waste and abandoned vehicles. This caused significant environmental, public health problems and created an eyesore.

### Objectives

- Reduce illegal dumping on a 15-kilometre stretch of Heathcote Road (from Holsworthy to Heathcote).

### Stakeholders, targets and partners

- RTA
- Councils (Sutherland and Liverpool)
- Australian Army
- Gandangarra Aboriginal Land Council
- WSN Environmental Solutions
- Former Southern Sydney and Western Sydney Waste Boards (now DECC)
- NSW Rural Fire Service

### What did they do (objectives)?

The project adopted council's 'inform and then enforce' approach, encompassing an extensive education campaign followed by a focus on enforcement.

#### 1. Intelligence gathering: physical surveillance and camera surveillance

- Council's Environmental Protection Officers maintained surveillance of Heathcote Road over 24 hours and throughout the week to identify illegal dumping hot spots.
- Council tested a hidden surveillance camera in isolated bushland. The camera had an independent battery power source. The camera surveillance was conducted in accordance with privacy management guidelines published by The Attorney General's Office.

#### 2. Building of landscaped mounds as physical barriers

- This stretch of Heathcote Road consists of many vehicular access points into the bush, which had been used by dumpers. Council in co-operation with the RTA, Liverpool City Council and the Australian Army constructed landscaped mounds to stop vehicle access in this stretch of road.

#### 3. Community education/promotion program

- Council developed a promotional campaign for the residents of the four surrounding suburbs. This included distributing an information pack, which also contained a car pad to help record information should residents witness illegal dumping activities, a fridge magnet, sticker and community newsletter. To directly communicate with residents and encourage greater ownership of the project and outcomes, council organised education face-to-face with resident precinct committees.
- Heathcote Road residents received an information mail-out from council.

## Case study continued...

- A general campaign with media articles and advertisements was directed at Sutherland Shire and Liverpool City residents.
- Twenty-five large permanent reflective illegal dumping signs were installed in the Liverpool and Sutherland LGAs to comply with privacy management guidelines. They also enforced the message to residents and motorists that the area was under surveillance for illegal dumping. This reached motorists who regularly used Heathcote Road, but did not live in the Sutherland or Liverpool council areas, so would not be reached by other means.
- Council used independent community consultation before and after the campaign to gauge the effectiveness of the strategies to reduce illegal dumping.

### Funding and resources

The project was funded with significant state and local agency support. Its total cost was \$190,000, with a council contribution of \$60,000 and a \$25,000 grant from the Southern Sydney Waste Planning and Management Board to buy cameras. The remainder consisted largely of in-kind contributions from partner agencies, including the RTA, and industry.

### Outcomes

- Continued patrols by enforcement officers have reported a marked decrease in the number of illegal dumping incidents.
- The RTA reported a 96% decrease in the amount of material collected along Heathcote Road during monthly clean up activities over a 12-month period.
- Sutherland Shire Council has a 93% success rate for prosecuting illegal dumping and environmental offences.
- The RTA is saving approximately \$45,000 annually in clean up costs.

### Essential success factors included:

- Co-operation between a range of different stakeholders working towards a common goal.
- A comprehensive education campaign aimed at both local residents and motorists coming from outside the area, combined with an enforcement regime.
- Investigative persistence and interagency networking.

### Further Information

Manager Regulation and Enforcement  
Sutherland Shire Council  
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## Case Study 2: Neighbourhood Clean Up Blitz, Parramatta City Council

### What was the problem or issue?

A group of residents who make up the Noller Park Committee in South Parramatta were fed up with the amount of litter and rubbish being dumped and the lack of community pride in their area.

### Stakeholders, targets and partners

Parramatta City Council, residents and the Noller Park Committee.

### What did they want to achieve (objectives)?

During a meeting with the Parramatta City Lord Mayor the residents suggested joining forces with Parramatta City Council to trial a one-day Neighbourhood Clean Up Blitz as an innovative way to tackle those problems.

### How did they do it?

They door-knocked the area advising of the upcoming event and encouraging people to take part. They also co-ordinated volunteers on the day to ensure the whole south Parramatta area was covered.

Before the day, the council carried out a number of activities to improve the condition of the area, including painting all the seats, repairing potholes in roads, repairing damaged signs, removing trip hazards from footpaths, graffiti removal, general parks maintenance, resurfacing cricket pitches, installing new footpaths and removing trolleys and rubbish.

On the day council staff and residents collected dumped rubbish and junk mail, tidied up nature strips, cleared fallen branches and removed dumped shopping trolleys.

### Funding and resources

All participants on the day went into the draw to win cinema tickets and gift vouchers worth \$50 from a hardware store. The first 40 people to register received a free T-shirt. The council supplied participants with gloves, vests, sunscreen and garbage bags and held a barbeque lunch for everyone involved after the blitz. All participants also received a calico bag full of goodies and useful information on positive things they can do for the environment, as well as a native tree.

The Lord Mayor's Community Spirit Budget provided funding. The Noller Park Committee provided a great amount of support for the event, both before and on the day.

### Outcomes

- 57 local residents participated
- 2.1 tonnes of waste collected
- a great sense of community spirit and community pride
- the development of a close relationship between the council and the community.

The blitz is an excellent example of community participation where the council values the community as a partner. The council and the community continued to work together after the blitz to maintain the area in its improved condition. The council also encourages residents to 'Dob in a Dumper' by reporting illegally dumped rubbish and taking notes of details that could lead to prosecution, such as the number plates of cars seen illegally dumping rubbish.

### Further Information

Manager Environment and Health  
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## Case Study 3: Application of illegal dumping prevention campaign materials – Kogarah ‘*Dumping. It’s Dumb.*’

### What was the problem or issue?

Over 42% of Kogarah Council’s residents live in multi-unit dwellings (MUDs). Kogarah Council employs a full-time waste operations officer and a waste education officer to deal with the constant problem of illegal dumping. Concerted effort using enforcement tape and stickers around and on dumped material successfully reduced illegal dumping in the last five years but after several years it needed a boost, which the ‘*Dumping. It’s Dumb*’ material supplied.

### Stakeholders, targets and partners

The council’s illegal dumping program was directed at all MUD residents, but particularly:

- renters, especially short-term renters
- Chinese language speakers, who represent almost 12% of residents
- Arabic speakers, another significant CALD population in Kogarah
- public housing residents.

The program mainly focused on MUDs where there were dumping events during the pilot. The general awareness for the wider community was also included.

Other stakeholders included:

- Kogarah Council officers
- bilingual educators
- local Department of Housing (DOH) officers
- local real estate and strata agents.

### What did they want to do (objectives)?

1. To reduce the volume and frequency of illegal dumped material around MUDs.
2. To increase knowledge and awareness and improve behaviour in the community to prevent illegal dumping around MUDs.

### How did they do it (actions)?

#### Launch and Display

Kogarah Council launched the ‘*Dumping. It’s Dumb*’ pilot program at its 2005 Australia Day celebration with a display featuring a trailer packed with items typically dumped outside MUDs. All the waste team and bilingual educators were on hand to talk about dumping and alternative waste disposal options.

#### Stakeholder Involvement

During the pilot, council staff contacted the Department of Housing and local real estate and strata agents to discuss the issue, and provided them with ‘*Dumping. It’s Dumb*’ materials that could be passed on to tenants or placed in buildings they managed.

#### Targeted Awareness-Raising Activities

The council’s waste officer hand-delivered over 60 ‘*Dumping. It’s Dumb*’ posters to MUDs in the area, with the aim of placing them on foyer notice boards. Over time the officer has built rapport with MUD residents and established a contact person in many of the blocks of units. Establishing rapport is one of the factors you need for a successful partnership with your community.

### General Awareness-Raising Activities

The council ran an advertising campaign about illegal dumping in the local newspaper, *The St George Leader*, and on local buses, as well as a platform billboard at Kogarah Railway Station during March and April. It also advertised in the Chinese newspaper, *Sing Tao*, and left multilingual postcards at the Rockdale Migrant Centre for distribution.

### Enforcement Actions

The council also began targeting MUDs where rubbish had been dumped on the kerb, by placing large 'Dumping. It's Dumb' stickers on the dumped materials, and placing its 'Under Investigation' letter and 'Dumping. It's Dumb' postcards in each MUD letterbox.

### Funding and resources

All the 'Dumping. It's Dumb' campaign materials for the pilot, including advertisements, were adapted to the council's needs. They had Kogarah Council's logo, phone number for information on clean ups and collection services, and the address of the local waste management centre in Rockdale.

Kogarah Council's illegal dumping program had a strong emphasis on educating residents who speak languages other than English. The pilot program used the following materials:

- standard letter in English to residents of a MUD where rubbish has been dumped advising that the incident was 'under investigation'
- education postcards in English
- enforcement postcards in English, Chinese and Arabic
- 'Dumping. It's Dumb' stickers – large and small
- the council's 'Under Investigation' stickers
- enforcement tape
- A3 and A4 posters (put up in foyers and bin bay areas)
- advertisements: English and Chinese newspapers; billboard at Kogarah railway station; buses.

### Outcomes

Overall, 61% of dumped rubbish was removed by the offenders within two days of the council's action.

Poster delivery proved to be time-consuming, particularly where security buildings did not allow entry to foyers. Developing a good rapport with the contact person in each unit block helped with placing the posters in foyer areas.

In future, Kogarah Council suggests laminating the small posters for use in bin bay areas where unwanted household items are often dumped.

The waste field officers' local expertise was used to decide which bilingual postcards to distribute to appropriate unit blocks. In future, Kogarah Council will print multilingual rather than language-specific material so it can be read by as wide a range of residents as possible.

### More information

Waste Education Officer  
Kogarah Council  
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## Case Study 4: Interagency partnership model – RID Squads

### What was the problem?

Illegal dumping is a particular challenge to councils located around the urban fringes of Western Sydney and the South Coast/Southern Highland areas.

### Stakeholders, targets and partners

Councils, DECC, SCA and the local community.

### What did they want to do (objectives)?

- encourage a more strategic co-ordinated approach to dumping incidents
- investigate incidents and taking action against offenders
- organise clean ups
- track down illegal landfills
- identify changes and trends in illegal dumping across a regional area
- deter and educate community members about illegal dumping.

### How did they do it (actions)?

DECC and partner councils and agencies have formed two RID Squads to solely focus on and tackle the problem of illegal dumping:

1. Western Sydney RID Squad (WSRID)
  - established 1999
  - represents Liverpool, Fairfield, Penrith, Bankstown, Holroyd, Baulkham Hills councils and DECC.
2. Greater Southern RID Squad (GSRID)
  - established in 2004
  - represents Eurobodalla, Shoalhaven and Wingecarribee councils, the Sydney Catchment Authority and DECC.

Both the WSRID and GSRID operate across member council boundaries to investigate and enforce breaches of NSW regulations on illegal dumping and illegal landfilling. The squads patrol, investigate dumping incidents, conduct special operations, issue notices and educate the public. They also carry out media promotion, erect signs and attend events to raise community awareness.

RID Squads operate under a management committee consisting of representatives from each participating council and the DECC. All partners sign a co-operative agreement. Each participating council delegates authority to the squad; this increases mobility across local government boundaries and allows prosecutions of offenders who cross boundaries. The squad structure enables flexible hours that contribute to innovative measures of surveillance, intelligence gathering and deterrents, such as the surveillance of suspicious transporters/waste contractors.

The squads specialise in investigations leading to on-the-spot fines and clean-up notices for minor offences. Serious offences are referred to the relevant council or the State Government for prosecution. Incidents of littering, illegal dumping and illegal landfilling are reported to the RID Squad or spotted on patrol. If investigations identify offenders, RID officers issue penalty notices, which result in the offender cleaning up the illegally dumped waste.

## Case study 4. continued...

### Funding and resources

The RID Squad model is unique because it combines the resources of local councils with the support of State Government authorities. All parties to the agreement contribute financially. One council hosts and manages the squad and provides administrative support for daily operations and reporting.

### Outcomes

The benefits of the RID Squads include:

- supplements the councils' regulatory staff so that more time can be allocated to illegal dumping
- fast incident response
- valuable source of data on illegal dumping trends and history in the area
- enforcement resource with specialist skills and experience in investigating illegal dumping
- high-profile deterrence/education role
- resources to follow up notices.

#### Western Sydney RID Squad

Between July 2004 and June 2006 WSRID:

- responded to more than 90% of incidents within 24 hours
- investigated 2528 incidents involving 11,250 tonnes of waste
- issued 47 clean-up or pollution prevention notices
- issued 713 penalty notices
- conducted seven special operations, including one helicopter surveillance operation
- issued penalty notices worth \$169,582.

#### Greater Southern RID Squad

Between March 2004 and June 2006 GSRID:

- investigated over 2556 illegal dumping incidents
- issued 296 penalty notices
- issued over 40 clean-up notices.

Please note, the two RID Squads operate within different parameters in areas of different population densities, so it is inappropriate to draw comparisons between these statistics.

Three GSRID projects highlight the benefits of a dedicated squad:

- 70% reduction in illegal dumping in an area of Moss Vale was achieved from clean up and fencing done in a partnership between the GSRID, State Rail and a local community group. The total cost of the project was \$13,000 with \$8,000 provided by State Rail.
- GSRID co-ordinated removal of 44 dumped motor vehicles at no cost to the landowners or council from a portion of vacant land in Erowal Bay. Operation Illegal Landfill led to the removal of 290 tonnes of waste and six PNs and six clean-up notices issued to the value of \$14,200.

### Further information

Director Local Government and Resource Recovery  
 Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW  
 Phone (02) 8837 6000



## Case Study 5: Interagency project led by Sydney Catchment Authority

### What was the problem or issue?

Damage to water quality within Sydney's drinking water catchments caused by a range of activities, such as illegal waste dumping, land cleaning, and unauthorised activities, such as trail bike riding within the Special Areas that are located around the Sydney Catchment Authority's (SCA) dams.

### Stakeholders and partners

The SCA maintains partnerships with agencies within the Sydney drinking water catchments, such as NSW Police, local government, Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW (DECC) and the Greater Southern Regional Illegal Dumping (RID) Squad.

### What did these agencies want to do (objectives)?

Consolidate partnerships with other regulatory agencies to pursue monitoring, regulation and compliance activities to promote more effective compliance programs.

### How did they to it (actions)?

- education: publication of brochures, maps and posters
- deterrence: fencing, barriers and gates and regulatory/advisory signs
- enforcement: regular patrols, including an aerial surveillance, mobile surveillance cameras and joint enforcement operations with the NSW Police.

A strong emphasis on surveillance and intelligence gathering is applied to develop strategies and plan targeted programs.

### Funding and resources

The SCA's grants and incentives program funds activities that protect catchment lands. For example, financial assistance was provided to the NSW Police to purchase two trail bikes to assist in joint operations to prevent illegal access in the Special Areas. SCA have also funded the Greater Southern RID Squad and are funding training workshops for local councils within the SCA's catchments to enhance staff skills in areas such as compliance and investigation.

### Outcomes

The SCA has seen significant value and positive improvements on-the-ground through partnerships and working in co-operation with others, such as the police and local government.

### More information

Manager Compliance  
Sydney Catchment Authority  
Phone (02) 4725 2100



## Case Study 6: Regional partnerships – Hunter Region Illegal Dumping Group (HRIDG)

### What was the problem or issue?

Councils and agencies in the Hunter region, NSW, were tackling illegal dumping and related issues independently and on an ad hoc basis.

### Stakeholders, targets, partners

The DECC, Hunter councils (9), Department of Lands, Department of Primary Industries – Forests NSW, NSW Rural Fire Service, Hunter Water Corporation, NSW Police, Energy Australia, WorkCover NSW, Hunter-Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority and the Department of Corrective Services

### What did they want to do (objectives)?

Establish a Hunter stakeholder group to develop and agree to a co-ordinated, cohesive and integrated approach to illegal dumping and related issues. The group would also communicate, share ideas and in-kind resources in an organised and formal manner, and pursue support for regionally-based projects.

### How did they do it (actions)?

The Waste Management Association Australia (Hunter Group) identified illegal dumping as a priority issue for action. The Cessnock City Council and the DECC, which are members of the WMAA, met and discussed a strategic approach to developing a regional illegal dumping group. The DECC offered funding and in-kind support for an initial meeting and workshop to find out how much interest and commitment there was for a regional program.

The Cessnock City Council and the DECC invited regional stakeholders (government, industry, community, private sector) to a workshop to gain a better, shared understanding of the nature of the problem of illegal dumping in the region, and people's experiences in that regard. Workshop topics included who-does-what, current issues/problems, current programs (what works/what doesn't) and where-to-from-here? Approximately 50 people attended the half-day workshop, where there was consensus to develop HRIDG. Members nominated on the day.

HRIDG has since developed its terms of reference, a three-year regional program, a regional data-gathering project to establish better baseline data and data collection methods, and will continue to communicate and share information. HRIDG provides reports to the NSW Premier's Department Regional Coordination Management Group (Hunter RCMG) as part of its sustainable and collaborative whole-of-government approach.

### Funding and resources

Membership of HRIDG is voluntary. HRIDG meets quarterly and its projects currently attract in-kind support with some financial assistance from the DECC. HRIDG pursues grant opportunities for nominated programs as they arise.

### Outcomes

- Communication and awareness of each organisation's illegal dumping programs – ideas, funding, resources and learning.
- A better understanding of the information collected by HRIDG member agencies.

### Further Information

Illegal Dumping Programs Officer  
Sustainability Programs Division (Hunter)  
Department of Environment and Climate Change NSW  
Phone (02) 4908 6800



## Case Study 7: Regulating local development – Holroyd City Council Asbestos Cement Policy

### What was the problem or issue?

An increase in demolition works during the late 1990s raised concern within Holroyd City Council and the community that correct procedures were not being followed to ensure the safe handling and disposal of asbestos cement. There was also evidence that some demolition contractors were not licensed to remove asbestos cement and were failing to comply with WorkCover NSW guidelines.

### Stakeholders, targets and partners

Holroyd City Council, WorkCover NSW, WorkSafe Australia, Standards Australia.

### What did they want to do (objectives)?

1. Reduce the risk of workers and residents next to demolition sites inhaling dangerous asbestos fibres.
2. Ensure that demolition contractors comply with WorkCover's NSW guidelines for the safe removal and disposal of asbestos cement.

### How did they do it (actions)?

Holroyd City Council applied special conditions to development consents for demolition and renovation or recladding or brick veneering works of buildings erected before 1987, which is when builders stopped using asbestos sheeting and products. The special conditions were to ensure the safe removal and disposal of asbestos cement.

They required that:

- the developer advise neighbouring residents of the day demolition will start, five days before it begins
- proper fencing and signs (for example DANGER: ASBESTOS REMOVAL IN PROGRESS) be erected around the demolition or renovation site
- demolishers be licensed by WorkCover NSW to remove and dispose of asbestos cement
- asbestos cement waste be disposed of in a lawful manner to a waste facility licensed by DECC
- the developer provide Holroyd City Council with all original weighbridge receipts as evidence of proper disposal within 14 days of completion of demolition works.

Holroyd City Council also added a condition that requires an 'Asbestos Clearing Certificate' prepared by a NATA accredited occupational hygienist to be lodged within 14 days of completion of the works. This condition also requires a signed statement verifying that any demolition work and disposal of materials was done in accordance with the Waste Management Plan approved for that project.

### Funding and resources

The majority of funding to establish the program came from Holroyd City Council's existing budget.

### Outcomes

1. Increased community awareness about the requirements for safe handling and safe disposal of asbestos.
2. Increased numbers of builders and demolishers correctly handling and disposing of asbestos.

Furthermore in August 2002, the Local Government Association of NSW and the Shires Association of NSW executive resolved:

1. That Holroyd City Council's Asbestos Removal Policy be adopted as a minimum standard; and
2. That councils be made aware of the Waste Service NSW facility requirements for asbestos disposal.

Councils were advised of this matter through the *Lgov Weekly* in September 2002 and March 2003.

### Further information

Waste Services Team Leader  
Holroyd City Council  
Phone (02) 9840 9840



## Case Study 8: Using POEO Act powers to check lawful disposal of asbestos – DECC’s audit of asbestos removalists

### What was the problem or issue?

DECC has identified illegally dumped asbestos waste as a priority issue as it poses a risk to the environment and human health.

### Stakeholders, targets and partners

DECC, Workcover NSW and asbestos removalists.

### What did they want to do (objectives)?

To combat this, the DECC has recently conducted a targeted campaign to find out whether asbestos waste is being lawfully disposed of by licensed and unlicensed asbestos removalists.

### How did they do it (actions)?

The campaign involved sending 20 asbestos removalists a legal notice (under section 191 of the POEO Act) to provide the DECC with information and records in relation to their asbestos removal jobs for a three-month period. The legal notice required the selected asbestos removalists to provide information, such as:

- Address and contact details for every job where asbestos was removed.
- Tonnage of asbestos removed.
- Details of all transporters that removed asbestos.
- Disposal locations for all asbestos removed.

Asbestos removalists were also required to provide copies of every receipt that showed proof of lawful disposal of the asbestos, such as weighbridge dockets and invoices. Responses were due back within six weeks of the legal notice issue date.

All the information provided was collated and checked against WorkCover NSW’s monthly notification register of asbestos jobs. This allowed the DECC to determine whether the WorkCover licensed asbestos removalists had advised the DECC of all their asbestos jobs. If the DECC identified discrepancies, it considered further investigation and action.

### Funding and resources

The DECC’s Waste Management Section resourced and carried out the project.

### Outcomes

This campaign has raised awareness within asbestos removalists of the need to keep records and information readily available, as the DECC can request access to them at any time. This campaign has also raised awareness of the legal ramifications for unlawful disposal of asbestos waste. The DECC will continue to conduct similar campaigns in the future to crack down on illegally dumped asbestos.

Councils can use this program within their own areas to find out whether asbestos waste has been disposed of in a lawful manner. Councils could use the development application process to require developers to provide proof of lawful disposal of asbestos waste within 14 days of completing demolition works. Councils can also audit recent asbestos-related demolition works using a legal notice to require developers to provide information and records regarding disposal of their asbestos waste. Information provided by developers could be cross-referenced with information collated by WorkCover NSW to identify discrepancies.

An integrated approach using the development planning process and follow-up regulatory action will assist in the crackdown of illegally dumped asbestos waste.

### Further information

Waste Operations Manager  
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