

# **Goulburn Valley Environment Group (Inc.)**

## **Council action needed on butt litter problem**

### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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A regional environment group is calling upon the City of Greater Shepparton to get serious about dealing with a growing cigarette butt litter problem in the Shepparton CBD.

Goulburn Valley Environment Group (GVEG) has expressed alarm at increasing cigarette butt litter at outdoor cafes and bars and called upon the local council to start taking the matter seriously.

A recent survey carried out by GVEG found most businesses with outdoor seating areas were failing to provide windproof ashtrays for smokers, contrary to local laws and permit conditions from the City of greater Shepparton.

Cigarette butts accounted for 27 per cent of rubbish collected from sites around Victoria. This was an increase from 2009 when cigarette butts accounted for 13 per cent of rubbish found.

“Cigarette butt litter is increasing with up to 7 billion butts littered in Australia each year” Helen Reynolds, GVEG President said today “locally, cigarette butts dropped in the CBD often ultimately end up in the Goulburn River. It’s not only bad for the environment; it looks terrible and makes out town look dirty”

GVEG has asked the City of Greater Shepparton to deal with the issue and is appealing to local businesses and smokers to combat the problem

“This isn’t about stopping smoking, it’s about stopping littering. Cafes, bars and any business with outdoor seating have a responsibility to provide ashtrays to prevent littering. Importantly the City of Greater Shepparton is required by law to enforce rules on local littering. So far they haven’t done anything about the problem.

“What CoGS now needs to do is to adequately resource their relevant departments to enforce local laws to prevent cigarette butt littering to continue to pollute our streets and waterways’

GVEG will continue to work with the community and the City of Greater Shepparton to ensure the issue is dealt with over the coming months

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