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## **Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Reports 92% Reduction of Cigarette Litter in Participating State Parks**

*~ New grant funding will aid additional parks ~*

(November 17, 2020) Armed with a \$10,000 Keep America Beautiful [Cigarette Litter Prevention Program](#) (CLPP) grant, [Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful](#) (KPB) collaborated with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) in 2019 to reduce the number of cigarette butts carelessly left behind in four state parks: Benjamin Rush, Nockamixon, Ridley Creek and Tyler. Over the course of a year, the parks had a combined cigarette litter reduction rate of 92%.

The CLPP program begins with a scan, or physical count, of cigarette butts and other tobacco related products. Ash receptacles are then installed at points of entry, like entrances to public buildings, and portable ashtrays are distributed to smokers who visit the parks. In addition, the state parks agree to encourage the enforcement of litter laws, which includes cigarette litter, and educate visitors about the consequences of cigarette and other tobacco related litter. Two other scans are performed, one midway through the year and a final count at the end of the program.

"We are 100% glad to be a part of this program! We notice a drastic reduction in cigarette litter in the areas that receptacles are placed, and we offer the pocket ashtrays out of our park office," said Robert Sweeney, Assistant Park Manager at Nockamixon State Park.

According to [Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's 2019 Pennsylvania Litter Research Study](#), over 500 million pieces of litter were found on Pennsylvania's roadways. Of the total estimated litter, 186.2 million or 37.1 percent were cigarette butts.

Cigarette butts that are thrown on the ground can contaminate soil and ground water with chemicals and heavy metals; fatally impact birds, animals and marine life who often mistake them for food; and the filters, made of cellulose acetate, never fully disappear from the environment.

"We can help change littering behaviors through education and convenient access to ash receptacles through the Cigarette Litter Prevention Program," said Shannon Reiter, President of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful. We're grateful to Keep America Beautiful for the funding that allows us to continue to invest in this highly effective program."

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful received additional funding of \$20,000 this year to continue their work in state parks including: Cook Forest, Clear Creek, Chapman, Reeds Gap, Fort

Washington, Evansburg, Jacobsburg, Tobyhanna, Canoe Creek, Colonel Denning and Pine Grove Furnace.

“With our smoke-free beach program now in place at most of our state park waterfront operations, we are seeing a more than 95 percent reduction in cigarette litter in these specific areas,” said DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn. “However, this type of cleanup still diverts park personnel from much more meaningful tasks they could be addressing. We welcome Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful’s continuing support in combatting this problem.”

This year, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful and participating parks have partnered with [Terracycle](#) to expand the program to include recycling and composting of the cigarette butt waste. Cigarettes collected at the state parks will be shipped to Terracycle where the various materials that make up a cigarette are separated and processed. The filters will be melted into hard plastic that can be remolded to make new recycled industrial products, such as plastic pallets. The residual tobacco and paper will be separated out and composted in a specialized process.

The CLPP, created by Keep America Beautiful in 2002, is the nation's largest program aimed at eliminating cigarette butt and cigar tip litter. Since its inception, the program has been successfully implemented in more than 1,800 urban, suburban and rural communities nationwide. Over the past decade, participating communities have consistently cut cigarette butt litter by 50 percent based on local measurements taken in the first four months to six months after program implementation. Learn more at [kab.org](#).

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### **About Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful**

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's vision is a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Since 1990, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has worked with hundreds of thousands of volunteers across the state to pick up nearly 147 million pounds of trash from Pennsylvania's roadways, waterways, greenways, vacant lots, forestlands and other community spaces. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's core programming focuses on litter and illegal dump prevention, cleanup, community greening, and proper waste handling and sustainable practices. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful works with many partnering organizations on the state and grassroots level to accomplish our goal of a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is the state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, Inc., the nation's largest volunteer-based community action and education organization. To learn more about Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, visit [www.keeppabeautiful.org](http://www.keeppabeautiful.org).