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Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Reports 42% Reduction of Cigarette Litter in Participating State Parks

~ New grant funding will aid additional parks ~

(July 22, 2021) Armed with a \$20,000 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 2020 to reduce the number of cigarette butts carelessly left behind, by a combined total of 42%, in Cook Forest, Clear Creek, Chapman, Reeds Gap, Evansburg, Jacobsburg, Tobyhanna, Canoe Creek, Colonel Denning and Pine Grove Furnace state parks.

To date, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has implemented the Cigarette Litter Prevention Program in 35 of the 121 state parks with an overall, combined reduction rate of 67%.

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.

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

"Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has been a great partner in keeping Chapman State Park cleaner. Not only by providing professional, modern receptacles and signage for cigarette litter, but also assisting with best practices for their locations. With their help, we have significantly and noticeably reduced the amount of cigarette litter in our parking lots and around our buildings. Picking up cigarette litter or emptying the receptacles has always been considered an undesirable task for our employees. Knowing that it's going to be recycled, not just be more trash in a landfill and seeing the accumulation in the postage-paid box from Terracycle, does help to add meaning and value to this unpleasant task," said Tyson Martin, DCNR, Chapman State Park Manager.

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.

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful received additional funding of \$20,000 to continue their work in 2021-2022 in Sizerville, Little Buffalo, Cowans Gap, Laurel Hill, Keystone and Ryerson Station state parks.

"During the pandemic Pennsylvanians have turned to state parks and forests in record numbers, as time outdoors has been critical to our well-being" DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn said. "We are asking all of our visitors to help us care for these special places by leaving no trace and disposing of all trash properly. We appreciate Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's support in expanding cigarette litter prevention to an additional six state parks as it is a big help to our DCNR staff caring for them and providing all with the opportunity to enjoy them."

"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 are thrilled to partner with our state parks system that is a treasure for all residents and visitors of Pennsylvania and we're grateful to Keep America Beautiful for the funding that allows us to continue to invest in this highly effective program."

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 148 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.