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Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful marks America Recycles Day with Cigarette Litter Recycling



(November 14, 2022) America Recycles Day (ARD), a program of Keep America Beautiful, is held on and around November 15 to educate and encourage individuals to be more mindful of what they consume, where and how to properly recycle and to pledge to recycle more and recycle right in their everyday lives.

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is partnering with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to implement the Cigarette Litter Prevention Program (CLPP) at 14 state welcome centers in 2022-2023. The program hopes to raise awareness to travelers about the issue of proper cigarette butt disposal using messaging and marketing campaigns and placing ash receptacles at entrances to rest stop buildings. The effectiveness of the program will be

measured by comparing a pre and post program scan or physical count of cigarette butts and other tobacco products.

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has a partnership with TerraCycle to expand the program to include recycling and composting of the cigarette butt waste. Cigarettes collected through CLPP 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.

“We’re shining a light on this program for America Recycles Day to emphasize that even the smallest pieces of litter, like a cigarette butt, when disposed of responsibly can make a huge difference. Not only can we reduce the amount of cigarette and tobacco products that are littered, but the collected butts can be recycled into something useful,” said Shannon Reiter, President of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful. “We are honored to partner with PennDOT to assure our welcome centers are clean and beautiful for visitors and residents alike and we’re grateful to Keep America Beautiful for the funding that allows us to continue to invest in this highly effective program.”

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.

In support of America Recycles Day, all Pennsylvanian's are encouraged to take the #BeRecycled pledge and promise to actively choose to live a recycled lifestyle by recycling at home, work, school and on the go; buying products made with recycled content; and educating and encouraging friends, family, and neighbors to take the #BeRecycled pledge. Visit kab.org.

To find out more about the Cigarette Litter Prevention Program, visit keppabeautiful.org and choose Programs, then Cigarette Litter Prevention Program or contact Michelle Dunn, Program Coordinator, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful.

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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 152 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.keppabeautiful.org.