

Riverina Eastern
Regional
Organisation
Of Councils



**ILLEGAL
DUMPING
STRATEGY
2017-2020**

reroc
waste forum

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Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils Illegal Dumping Strategy

1. Introduction

The Riverina Eastern Regional Organisation of Councils (REROC) is a voluntary association of 9 General Purpose councils and two water county councils located in the eastern Riverina of NSW. The Member Councils are the councils of Bland, Coolamon, Cootamundra-Gundagai, Greater Hume, Lockhart, Junee, Snowy Valleys, Temora and Wagga Wagga and Goldenfields and Riverina Water County Councils.

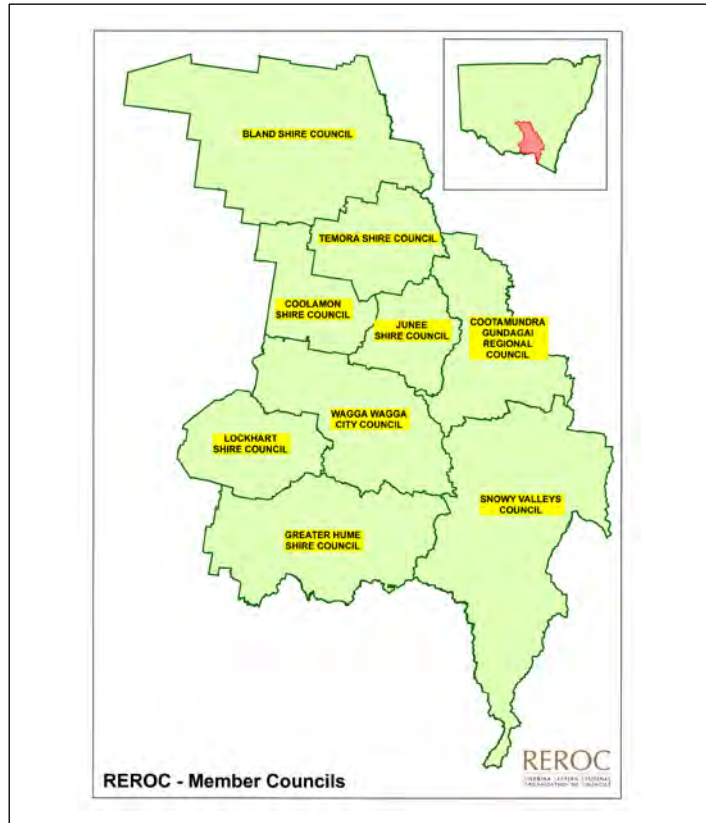
A key priority of the NSW Government is combating illegal dumping. REROC's Member Councils agree that it is a priority to reduce the incidence of illegal dumping across the REROC Region.

The REROC Region covers an area of almost 40,000 sq kilometres and a population of approximately 140,000.

With a population density of 3.5 people per sq kilometre, which drops to 2.5 people per sq kilometre when the urban population of NSW's largest inland City Wagga Wagga, is not included, there are ample locations available for people to dump waste illegally. Very importantly and of concern for the Member Councils is the opportunity for non-residents to travel into the Region for the purpose of illegally dumping waste.

It is a criminal offence under the *NSW Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (the Act) to wilfully or negligently dispose of waste in a manner that harms the environment.¹ It is also an offence to transport waste to a place that cannot be used as a waste disposal facility.² In both instances the person who dumps or transports the waste and the owner of the waste are liable for fines,³ the directors and management of a corporation are also held liable for breach offences under s169 of the Act.

REROC has used the NSW state-wide strategy, the *NSW Illegal Dumping Strategy 2014-16* as well as other research and strategies in the area, together with regional data on illegal data to inform the development of the *Regional Illegal Dumping Strategy 2016-19*.



¹ Section 115, *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*

² Section 143, *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*

³ Fines: \$1,000,000 for corporations and \$250,000 for individuals

2. Our Strategic Framework

2.1 Our Vision

By 2019 illegal dumping in the REROC Region has decreased by 20%

2.2 Our Goals

- 1. Minimise the incidents of illegal dumping in the REROC Region***
- 2. Drive positive long-term change in community attitudes and behaviours to prevent illegal dumping.***
- 3. Reduce the social, environmental, health and financial impact of illegal dumping.***

2.3 Our Strategies

- 1. Identification*** – building an evidence base and identifying hotspots
- 2. Mitigation*** – implementing measures that discourage illegal dumping
- 3. Strategic Enforcement*** – increase waste compliance and enforcement
- 4. Capacity Building*** – improve Member Councils' skills and capacity to address illegal dumping
- 5. Education*** – raise awareness of what constitutes illegal dumping and the problems it generates
- 6. Community Engagement*** – build partnerships that motivate communities to promote and support the reduction of illegal dumping.

2.4 Priority Waste Types

Based on the data collated for the Region the priority areas are:

- ***Household Waste - General Waste***
- ***Household Waste – Whitegoods***
- ***Household Furniture***
- ***Green Waste***
- ***Mattresses***
- ***Construction and Demolition Waste***

3. Illegal Dumping in the REROC Region

3.1 What is Illegal Dumping?⁴

Illegal dumping is the unlawful disposal of any waste that is larger than litter to land or water. Illegal dumping occurs where waste is deposited on private or public land that has not been approved for the acceptance of waste.



Photo: nsw.gov.au

Illegal dumping may vary from small bags of rubbish or household waste in an urban environment to larger scale dumping of construction demolition waste, tyres and dangerous materials like asbestos.

In addition, illegal dumping includes situations where there is illegal landfilling when waste is used as “fill” with the consent of the owner or occupier of the land without having the necessary planning approvals or licences.

Illegal dumping research undertaken by the EPA in 2015⁵ showed that more than half of the councils surveyed advised that they had noticed an increase in both the illegal dumping of household waste and asbestos in the past five years.

In urban areas nature strips, roadsides, bushland, laneways, sporting grounds, vacant land are often used as dumping sites. In rural locations illegal dumping occurs in national parks and state forests, recreational areas including camping grounds, road verges on regional roads and walking trails.

Offenders will often go to extraordinary lengths to illegally dispose of waste. Consequently, illegal dumping is often premeditated and is undertaken in a way to ensure that detection and fines are avoided. The behaviour can be reinforced when offenders see the dumped waste being cleaned-up by councils or other land managers, therefore ensuring that the offender has effectively cost-shifted the responsibility of disposal to a third party.

A 2004 study by the NSW EPA⁶ on attitudes and behaviours to illegal dumping in Multi-Unit Dwellings found that businesses and individuals that illegally dump waste may do so due to:

- No easy disposal options for households because of the garbage tip’s opening hours, distance to the tip and lack of council collections.
- No/little storage available to them and other options seen to be inconvenient and expensive
- A lack of community pride, especially with transient residents
- It is easy to do it and get away with it (it is not necessarily seen as wrong).
- Living in MUDs gives them anonymity.
- Unable to pay for collection

⁴ Information taken from the NSW EPA, *Illegal Dumping Strategy 2014-16*

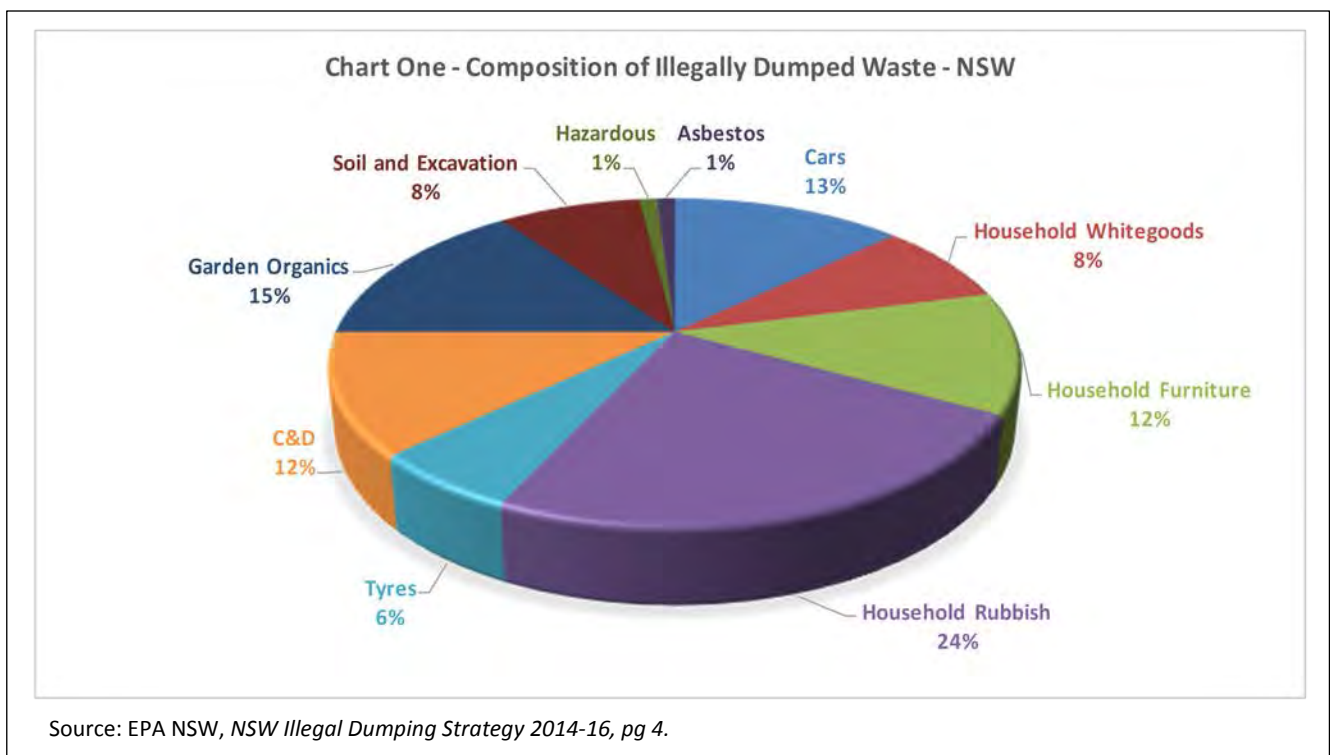
⁵ NSW EPA, *Illegal Dumping Report*, July 2015

⁶ NSW EPA, *An Assessment of Attitudes and Behaviour Amongst Multi Unit Dwelling Residents in Relation to Illegal Dumping*, 2004,

- Poor quality furniture with no re-sale potential.
- Real estate agents do not inform tenants about correct disposal procedures
- High frequency of waste services and clean ups encourages people to “put it out on the street” and it’s easy to add to an existing pile.
- Tenancies

3.2 What Types of Waste are being Illegally Dumped in NSW?

A 2004 survey⁷ conducted by the EPA showed that household waste was the most frequently dumped waste accounting for 44% of the problem. C&D waste, Garden Organics and Cars accounted for a further 40 % of the waste streams. Chart One below provides the breakdown of the waste streams. While asbestos accounted for only a small proportion of the waste dumped, it represents one of the largest costs associated with clean-ups.



The data shows the continuation of the trend from the 2004 survey where household waste was the most frequently dumped waste. The 2015 data shows that householders were responsible for over half the waste dumped.

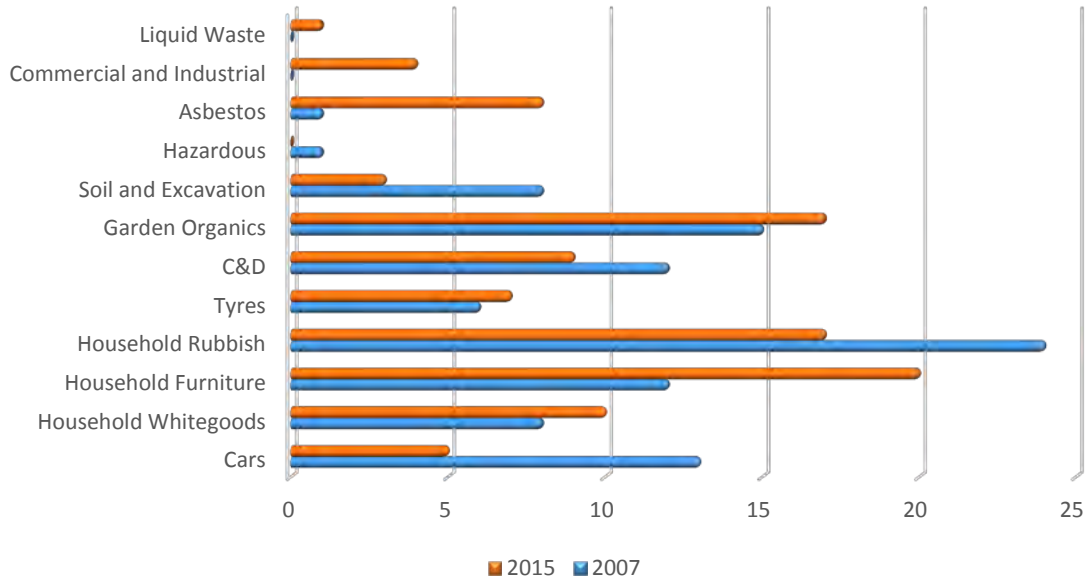
The EPA’s 2015 *Illegal Dumping Report* found that more than half of the responding LGAs had noticed an increase in the illegal dumping of household waste (54 per cent) and asbestos (52 per cent) in the past five years. However, many thought levels of dumping of most waste types had stayed the same.



*Household waste dumped near the Murrumbidgee Riverina in Wagga Wagga.
Photo: Daily Advertiser*

⁷ Ibid.

**Chart Two - Composition of Illegally Dumped Waste - NSW
Comparison of Research Findings 2007 and 2015**

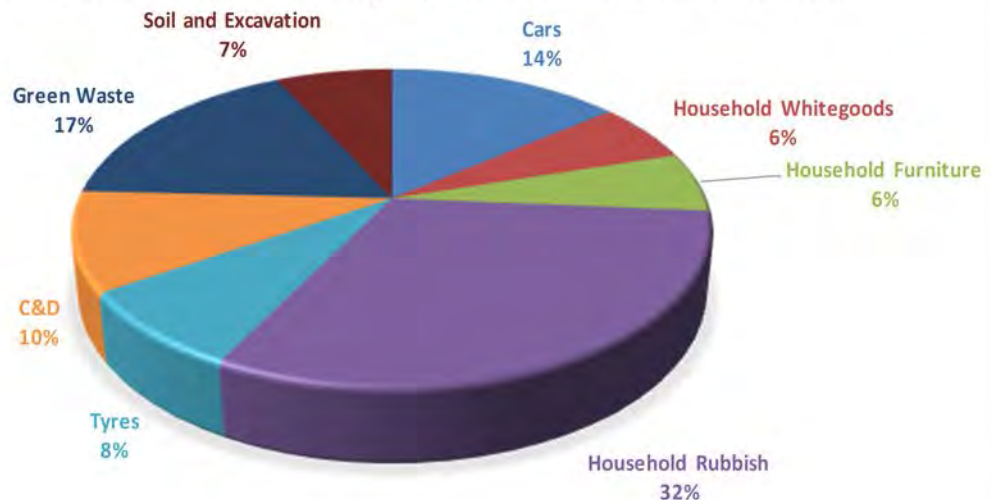


Sources: EPA NSW, *NSW Illegal Dumping Strategy 2014-16* for the 2015 data; and EPA NSW, *Crackdown on Illegal Dumping, A NSW Local Government Handbook* for the 2007 data.

Research undertaken by the NSW EPA over the last decade shows that householders continue to be the prime source of illegal dumping. Chart Two shows the changes in the composition of illegal dumping in NSW over a 7-year period. Clearly waste generated by NSW householders continues to be the biggest problem area in relation to illegal dumping in the State. Comparison of data collected in 2007 and 2015 shows that while the dumping of Household Rubbish has declined the dumping of Household Furniture and Whitegoods has increased significantly.

Chart Three shows the composition of illegally dumped waste for rural councils. This data from a

Chart Three - Composition of Illegally Dumped Waste- Rural Councils



Source: EPA NSW, *Crackdown on Illegal Dumping, A NSW Local Government Handbook*, 2007, pg 11.

2007 EPA review again shows that the biggest illegal dumping problem source is householders.

The NSW EPA's *Illegal Dumping Report* concluded that "illegal dumping is a significant issue for NSWLGAs, charitable recyclers and other land managers...the perception among these groups is that illegal dumping has become more prevalent in recent years..."⁸ Further the Report concluded that while there was a "general perception among land managers"⁹ that only a minority of businesses and households illegally dumped and that it was "confined to certain demographic characteristics"¹⁰, being those from a low socioeconomic status, immigrants and residents of unit blocks. The research did not support this perception.

However, despite this perception, research conducted for the Report found that "there were no discernible differences in the demographic characteristics of people who dump at the kerbside and people who do not"¹¹, further it concluded that "illegal dumpers are not characterised as having low incomes, a lower level of formal education or as culturally and linguistically diverse."¹²

Finally, the Report found that "it is young people, males and those in full-time employment who are among the most likely to illegally dump waste elsewhere (other than or in addition to the kerbside)."¹³

3.3 What Types of Waste are being Illegally Dumped in the Eastern Riverina?

There is limited information available on the amount of waste that is being illegally dumped in the REROC Region. Traditionally councils have kept very limited information and statistics, however with the introduction of RID on-line many of the REROC councils have taken the opportunity to start inputting data to the system. Councils' commitment to using RID on-line will provide the Region with far more accurate data on the problem.

The data that has been inputted over the last 12 months has been used to ascertain the scope of the illegal dumping problem in the REROC Region. Although not all councils have taken advantage of the system to date, the quantum of data is sufficient to make some conclusions in relation to the illegal dumping problem in the eastern Riverina.



Household furniture dumped by the river in Wagga Wagga LGA. Photo: Daily Advertiser

In the last 12 months, 347 incidents of illegal dumping in the Region were reported to RID on-line by six of the Member Councils, with the most instances reported by Wagga Wagga City Council.

The breakdown of the types of waste being dumped is pictured the Chart Four below. Mirroring the EPA's state-wide research, over half the illegally dumped waste in the REROC Region is generated by households. Most of the illegally dumped materials are either general waste or furniture with

⁸ EPA NSW, above n4, 90.

⁹ Ibid.

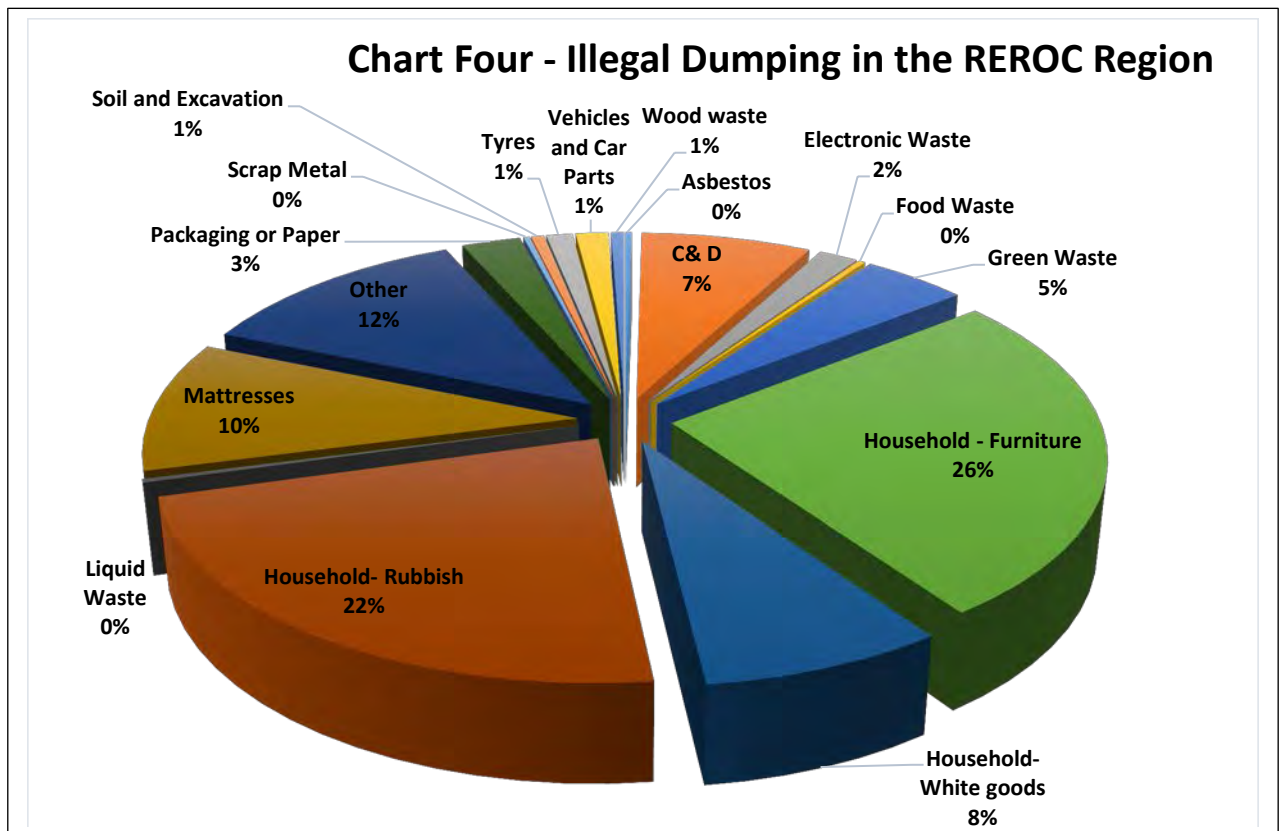
¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

mattresses and household whitegoods accounting for a further 18% of the waste. In total, illegally dumped waste that is generated by households accounts for over 66% of the total waste dumped in the REROC region.



Waste is being primarily dumped in urban areas, industrial areas, near landfills, at charitable recyclers, on crown land and Travelling Stock Routes (TSRs). In summary, illegal dumping is occurring in almost every urban and non-urban location in the Region, however the early data appears to show a predominance of dumping of household general waste in residential areas, while mattresses are found in more out-of-the-way locations.

More research needs to be undertaken within the Region to ascertain whether there are any localised drivers that result in illegal dumping.

3.4 What Motivates Illegal Dumping?

While people will often litter in full public view, illegal dumping is more likely to occur in remote locations, late at night or at other times when dumpers know there will be no-one present in a particular location. In rural areas where rural landfills may be unmanned it is not unusual for dumpers to make use of the unmanned facility as a dumping site, particularly as the landfill's opening hours are usually clearly signposted. A growing issue is dumping in broad daylight at places like charity bins, charity shops and in industrial areas.

The clandestine behaviours that often accompany dumping appear to indicate that dumpers know their activity is illegal and their actions are undertaken in order to avoid detection and fines.

It is important to understand what motivates people to illegally dump waste, as this will underpin the development of strategies to address the problem. The NSW EPA has identified four recurring reasons that motivate illegal dumpers¹⁴:

- convenience;
- using organised networks, particularly with regard to waste generated by businesses;
- an unwillingness to pay; and
- an uncaring attitude.

The Queensland EPA identified the following motivations for illegal dumping¹⁵:

- lack of repercussions from illegal dumping;
- a desire to avoid disposal fees at landfills;
- laziness (perceived time and effort required for correct disposal);
- lack of awareness of the availability of waste and recycling infrastructure;
- perception of what is illegal dumping (e.g. depositing household items beside a charity bin);
- poor planning/disorganisation resulting in a need to dispose of materials after hours;
- assumption that people are employed to manage the site (e.g. the people holding tenure of the location are responsible for the clean-up); and
- a perception the unwanted items will be available for someone else to recycle (e.g. kerbside dumping of household items).

Many of the above behaviours and perceptions can be reinforced when dumpers see the waste being removed by council or other land managers.

In the REROC region where residents may live a considerable distance from their local landfill, convenience may be one of our most significant factors.



*Illegal dumping in an urban area
Photo: Daily Advertiser*

¹⁴ NSW EPA, above n5, 5.

¹⁵ Qld Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, *Queensland's Litter and Illegal Dumping Action Plan*, October 2013

4. Cost of Illegal Dumping

Illegal dumping is a costly, constant and highly visible problem that impacts on the social, environmental and financial well-being of communities. Illegal dumpers unfairly shift the cost of waste disposal to local governments, communities, charities and state, Aboriginal and private land managers forcing the redirection of scarce resources from more worthy activities.

In 2007, it was estimated that NSW councils spent over \$10 million a year on cleaning up illegally dumped waste, with some larger councils expending as much as \$400,000 a year on the problem.¹⁶ In addition to the financial impact, illegal dumping results in significant social and environmental impacts.

4.1 Social Impacts

The social impacts of illegal dumping include:

- reduction in amenity leading to reduced visits by residents and visitors;
- decrease in community pride;
- increased crime and decreased perceptions of safety, spaces that look uncared for can attract anti-social behaviour;
- injury and public health risks as a result of sharp objects, unsafe objects or unsanitary materials being dumped;
- prevent or hinder the maintenance works of access ways, roads and property; and
- increasing the hazards faced by emergency services' personnel and land managers' staff by exposing them to potentially hazardous waste or preventing access to roads.

4.2 Environmental Impacts

The environmental impacts of illegal dumping include:

- injury or death to wildlife, where waste is mistaken for food or wildlife becomes entangled in the waste;
- degradation of habitats resulting in destruction of local biodiversity and hinder revegetation;
- contamination of soil and water sources;
- injury or death to livestock that might be traversing land that has been used as a dumping site, for instance Travelling Stock Routes;
- increased susceptibility to flooding and erosion by altering drainage patterns;
- harbouring parasites, vermin, snakes and mosquitoes and



*Dumped waste washes into waterways causing environmental damage
Photo: Daily Advertiser*

¹⁶ EPA NSW, *Crackdown on Illegal Dumping, A NSW Local Government Handbook*, 2007, 8.

- spreading weeds and noxious plant species; and
- fire.

4.3 Financial Impacts

The financial impacts of illegal dumping include:

- injury or death to livestock that might be traversing land that has been used as a dumping site, for instance Travelling Stock Routes;
- loss of resources through materials which could have been recycled or composted being dumped;
- loss of income to landfill operators, resource recovery and recycling facilities through the loss of the resource;
- reduction in visitor numbers affecting the local economy, people choosing not to visit reserves and forests because they have become dumping grounds;
- reduction in property values affecting residents; and
- diversion of councils' and other land manager's resources towards prevention, compliance, clean-up and waste disposal and away from more worthwhile activities.



Dumping at Charity Bins costs charities thousands of dollars a year creating social and financial impacts



Costs to councils of cleaning up dumping in public recreational areas is substantial

Photo: Daily Advertiser

5. Our Strategies

In determining our strategies to address illegal dumping REROC has reviewed existing research in the area to ensure that a Best Practice approach to the problem is adopted.

The NSW EPA's *Illegal Dumping Report* recommended that future strategies and interventions to reduce illegal dumping should:

- capitalise on businesses' concern for their reputation;
- reinforce the social norm that illegal dumping is unacceptable;
- create a social norm around reporting illegal dumping;
- increase the perceived likelihood of being caught dumping in state forests and at charity bins;
- raise the profile of the personal consequences and ensure fines are more than the savings made by dumping illegally;
- educate householders to request evidence of legal disposal from any contractors used; and
- share best practice relating to strategies to minimise, enforcement and clean-up among LGAs and other land managers.¹⁷

5.1 Illegal Dumping Prevention Mechanisms

Both the NSW EPA and Queensland's DEH have identified five illegal dumping mechanisms to address the behaviours and contexts associated with the dumping¹⁸, REROC has also adopted these mechanisms.



1. **Make dumping harder** – increase the effort required to illegally dump. In many cases dumpers consider that it is easier to dump than to do the right thing. By making access more difficult through the use of mitigation measures like gates, fences or landscaping, dumpers

¹⁷ NSW EPA, above n4, vii

¹⁸ NSW EPA, above n4, 8, and Qld Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, above n15, 10..

will have to increase their efforts to find an appropriate location to dump consequently making the activity less attractive.

2. **Increase the risk of getting caught** – if there is a general perception that there is little risk of getting caught then this supports dumpers in their activities. The perceived risk of dumping can be increased through actions such as active enforcement and compliance activities and promoting the outcomes of those activities.

In addition reducing the anonymity of spaces, introducing lighting and cameras and encouraging the community to take an active role in reporting dumping increase the risk of getting caught.

3. **Reducing the rewards associated with the activity** – dumpers are financially rewarded for their activities through avoiding the cost of disposal and reducing the effort required for disposal. For businesses that generate large amounts of waste the financial reward generated through illegal dumping can be substantial. Compliance and enforcement such as issuing fines and requiring offenders to meet the full cost of the clean-up need to be activated, publicising the names of businesses that have offended imposes an additional cost on businesses by impacting on the business's brand.

In addition, ensuring that the price structures are right to legally dump the waste is also very important.

4. **Reducing provocations by making disposal easier** – dumpers may illegally dump if they perceive that it is too difficult to dispose of the materials legally. Limited landfill opening times, waste collection services that are not efficient or convenient may encourage people to dump illegally. In addition individuals may be encouraged to dump at sites that already hold dumped waste because they feel it will not make a difference.

It is important that councils adopt best practice approaches to waste management that limit barriers to the legal and appropriate waste disposal.

5. **Remove excuses to dump waste** – those that dump may find it easy to rationalise and find excuses for their behaviours. Laziness, lack of infrastructure (bins, landfills), claimed ignorance of the rules, justifications such as “no one cares” or “everyone does it” are reasons that are given for illegal dumping.

These excuses can be removed through targeted education, advertising waste collection and disposal services, keeping areas free of waste and displaying signs at known illegal dumping hot spots. Information should be provided to businesses and householders to ensure they know and understand their responsibilities in relation to the proper disposal of their waste.

5.2 Strategies

5.2.1 Identification – building an evidence base and identifying hotspots.

Good quality information on where, when, why and by whom illegal dumping is occurring is important to developing appropriate regional and local responses to the issue. Key in obtaining this information is the active use of the RID on-line tool by councils and other land managers, coupled

with increased reporting of dumping-specific data in relation to who and why will improve the Region's knowledge base and inform the development of strategies to combat dumping.

Action	Outcomes
1. Establish baseline data for illegal dumping in the Region.	1. Baseline data established allowing effective measurement of the success of the program in the region. 2.
2. On-going training and support for Member Councils to use RID on-line	3. Informed council staff who are committed to the timely, logging of all illegal dumping incidents on RID Online. 4. Robust data on illegal dumping which can be used to inform regionally-based prevention strategies and actions.
3. Encourage other land managers in the Region to input data to RID on-line e.g. Local Land Services	1. Informed land managers who are committed to the timely, logging of all illegal dumping incidents on RID Online. 2. Robust data on illegal dumping which can be used to inform regionally-based prevention strategies and actions.
3. Aggregate RID on-line results and publish outcomes regionally and locally to raise awareness of the problem	1. Councils, businesses and residents are aware of the size of the problem and the costs associated with its management.
4. Analyse and map data to identify possible trends and commonalities	1. Trends and commonalities identified and tracked to inform and enhance enforcement activities. 2. Data analysed to identify Illegal Dumping Hot Spots in the REROC Region. 3. Data analysed to inform prevention strategies and actions.

5.2.2 *Mitigation* – implementing measures that discourage illegal dumping

By making dumping harder we can decrease the incentive to dump. Mitigation measures like gates, fences or landscaping, force dumpers to increase their efforts to find an appropriate location to dump waste. Resources for such activities are limited, therefore it is important to focus on Illegal Dumping Hot Spots in order to achieve a value for money outcome for the investments made.

Action	Outcome
1. Assess Illegal Dumping Hot Spots in the REROC Region to determine most appropriate mitigation measures that	1. Analysis of mitigation measures undertaken and most effective measures selected for each site.

will make illegal dumping harder.	
2. Implement mitigation measures at Hot Spots	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Group procurement of mitigation measures. 2. Mitigation measures implemented at each Hot Spot.
3. Determine effectiveness of measures on reduction of illegal dumping, review and where required implement additional measures.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effectiveness of measures reviewed and quantified. 2. Additional measures identified where effectiveness of existing measures is not sufficient and implementation schedule prepared.

5.2.3 Strategic enforcement – increase waste compliance and enforcement

If illegal dumpers believe there is little or no risk of getting caught then they are more likely to engage in the behaviour. Therefore, it is important to increase the risk and consequently reduce the rewards associated with the illegal behaviour. Critical in achieving this are enforcement and compliance activities that target the illegal activity. REROc will use data gathered through RID on-line to identify problem areas and then implement strategic enforcement at those locations to increase the risk of capturing dumpers either during or after the act.

Action	Outcome
1. Train Council Officers in compliance and investigation techniques relevant to illegal dumping.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council Officers have a better understanding of the legislation and compliance regime for illegal dumping. 2. Council Officers undertake more successful investigations of illegal dumping.
2. Conduct pro-active compliance and enforcement activities to escalate the risk of being caught.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More compliance and enforcement activities end in success. 2. Councils issue more fines for illegal dumping.
3. Promote successful prosecutions/PINS to increase the sense of risk of being caught	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Decrease in the incidence of illegal dumping as dumpers become aware there is an increased risk of being caught.
4. Work with other Land Managers to increase and improve compliance and investigation of illegal dumping	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Land Managers have a better understanding of the legislation and compliance regime for illegal dumping.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Land Managers undertake more successful investigations of illegal dumping. 3. More compliance and enforcements activities end in success. 4. Councils issue more fines for illegal dumping.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Encourage the public to report illegal dumping activities. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The public takes an active interest in reporting illegal dumping. 2. Increased reports of illegal dumping are received by councils and other Land Managers. 3. Public assistance results in an increase in successful investigations of illegal dumping.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Seek funding opportunities to establish a RID squad/officer for the REROC region 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RID squad/officer operates in the region to supplement and support the work of councils and other land managers in enforcement activities.

5.2.4 Capacity Building – improve Member Councils’ skills and other land managers’ capacity to address illegal dumping.

In order to deal with illegal dumping successfully it is important that the REROC Member Councils and other land managers are armed with the knowledge and skills needed to address the problem. This includes training staff so that they can collect the evidence required to successfully prosecute illegal dumpers and raising awareness about what mitigation options are best suited to specific problem areas.

In addition, it is important that Member Councils are able to utilise the data on illegal dumping to review their own waste services to identify opportunities to improve or enhance those services in order to reduce the incidences of illegal dumping.

In the REROC region there are a number of Waste Management Enterprises in operation that recycle and reuse waste such as waste oil, Used Lead Acid Batteries, green waste and scrap metal. There may be opportunities to improve their accessibility for residents that will result in a reduction in illegal dumping.

In addition the policies introduced by public land managers in relation to the way that they manage waste can impact on the levels of illegal dumping. In locations where public land managers know that the public will be using the land for recreational and sporting purposes but the land manager does not provide adequate or appropriate waste disposal services, this increases the risk of dumping occurring, either at the land manager’s location or at council waste disposal facilities, which may be located nearby.

Action	Outcome
1. Provide on-going training for Council Staff and other Land Managers on identifying illegal dumpers and compliance options.	1. Council Officers and other Land Managers develop better investigation techniques that allow them to identify illegal dumpers. 2. Council Officers undertake more successful investigations of illegal dumping.
3. Raise awareness of prevention and mitigation options for illegal dumping.	1. Council Staff and other Land Managers develop a good understanding of the different prevention and mitigation options available to deal with illegal dumping. 2. The most appropriate and effective mitigation options are chosen by councils to address illegal dumping problems and Hot Spots.
4. Analyse data on illegal dumping to identify ways in which councils and other Waste Management Enterprises can improve waste services to help address the problem.	1. Illegal dumping that is occurring as a result of poor service delivery by councils is identified. 2. Council, other land managers and Waste Management Enterprises waste services are altered to address the problem.

5.2.5 *Education* – raise awareness of what constitutes illegal dumping and the problems it generates

Education is a vital step in combating the problem because it raises the awareness of the social, environmental and financial impacts of illegal dumping. The goal of an education program is for it to be a catalyst for behavioural change, leading people to reconsider their actions and the damage it causes. In addition, education will increase the awareness of the personal consequences of illegal dumping such as loss of reputation for businesses, fines and penalties for businesses, householders and other illegal dumpers. Education will also be used to ensure that the community is fully aware of the legal waste disposal options in their LGA and the Region generally.

REROC will deliver a regional education and communication for its nine-member council LGAs to provide consistent messaging on the illegal dumping problem

Action	Outcome
1. Develop and deliver a regional education and communication strategy to promote the problem of illegal dumping.	1. Comprehensive, regional strategy developed and implemented that promotes the problem of illegal dumping, raises the awareness of the social, environmental and economic

2. Increase awareness of the social, environmental and economic impacts of illegal dumping.	impacts of illegal dumping, increases awareness of fines and penalties and how the general public can report incidences of illegal dumping.
3. Increase awareness of fines and penalties.	
4. Raise awareness of how the general public can report incidences of illegal dumping.	
5. Apply for funding to implement regional education and communication strategy	1. Funding obtained that supports the regional delivery of the education and communication strategy.

5.2.6 *Community Engagement* – build partnerships that motivate communities to promote and support the reduction of illegal dumping

Illegal dumping is a problem for the entire community, motivating communities to promote and support the reduction of illegal dumping is an important tool in combatting the issue. There are numerous community groups that can be harnessed to assist in addressing the problem, particularly Tidy Towns, Landcare and Clean-up Australia groups. REROc and its Member Councils need to actively seek partnership arrangements with community groups as well as educate and encourage them to take an active role in reporting illegal dumping incidents. REROc will also assist them to promote the problem of illegal dumping to the groups and individuals with which they interact.

Actions	Outcomes
1. Encourage key regional organisations and land managers to report illegal dumping	1. Increased use of RID on-line by key regional organisations and land managers. 2. More robust data on illegal dumping for the region because it is inputted by multiple sources.
2. Provide training to regional organisations and other land managers to identify illegal dumpers and supports the issuing of fines and compliance activities.	1. Regional organisations and land managers work with Council Officers to successfully investigate and fine illegal dumpers.
3. Work collaboratively with regional organisations and other land managers to deliver educational information on illegal dumping issues.	1. Education materials on illegal dumping are distributed to a broader audience through the use of regional organisation and land manager’s distribution channels.
4. Seek funding to support the provision of training and educational materials to regional organisations and other land managers.	1. Training delivered and educational materials distributed to support the prevention of illegal dumping.

6. Working in Partnership to Deliver Outcomes

REROC recognises that it is important that we work in partnership with other regional organisations and land managers in order to deliver the identified outcomes. Key partners for REROC and its Member Councils are:

EPA

The EPA is the primary environmental regulator in NSW. REROC has a strong and valuable partnership in place with the EPA through the EPA's Voluntary Regional Waste Groups initiative. REROC will continue to work closely with the EPA, utilising their resources, knowledge and accessing initiatives funded through *Waste Less, Recycle More* to deliver positive, measurable outcomes that address the problem of illegal dumping.

Local Land Services

Riverina Local Land Services (RLLS) is a key land manager in the REROC region. RLLS has over 80,000 hectares of Travelling Stock Routes (TSR) under its direct control. TSRs are regularly used by illegal dumpers because they are remote, used intermittently and therefore the risk of being caught is low.

The cost of illegal dumping can be very high for the LLS particularly where the dumped waste is toxic e.g. asbestos or Used Lead Acid Batteries and therefore toxic to the livestock that are travelling on the TSR.

Other Public Land Managers

In addition to the LLS, other public land managers in the REROC region include Crown Lands, Forests NSW and the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, all of whom manage large land parcels. In addition Roads and Maritime services manage state roads and road corridors.

Wastes commonly dumped on publicly managed land *"include bulk household waste such as furniture, whitegoods, mattresses, garden waste, car bodies, tyres and construction waste including asbestos."*¹⁹

Public land managers are responsible for the clean-up of illegally dumped waste, the cost of which can be substantial. In addition the environmental cost of illegally dumped waste can be particularly high for public land such as parks and reserves because of the higher risk to native flora and fauna.

In addition the policies introduced by public land managers in relation to the way that they manage waste can impact on the levels of illegal dumping. In locations where public land managers know that the public will be using the land for recreational and sporting purposes but the land manager does not provide adequate or appropriate waste disposal services, this increases the risk of dumping occurring, either at the land manager's location or at council waste disposal facilities, which may be located nearby.

¹⁹ NSW EPA, above n4, 12.

Aboriginal Land Councils -

There are three Aboriginal Land Councils operating in the REROC region: Brungle-Tumut, Wagga Wagga and West Wyalong.

The *NSW Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983* requires that Land Councils:

- Take action to protect the culture and heritage of Aboriginal persons in the council's area, subject to any other law, and
- Promote awareness in the community of the culture and heritage of Aboriginal persons in the council's area.

Land Council land is particularly susceptible to illegal dumping because it is often located in remote areas. Illegally dumped waste affects the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal communities, it can also disturb cultural values and their relationship with Country.

Waste Management Enterprises

There are three MRFs servicing the REROC region: Kurrajong Recyclers, Valmar and Elouera. In addition there are a number of other recycling operations established that deal with Used Lead Acid Batteries, waste oil, green waste and scrap metal.

These organisations benefit from waste as a resource, illegally dumped waste can include waste that could have been collected and reused by a Waste Management Enterprise, some of which are prepared to pay for the waste. There is a financial cost to these enterprises as a result of the waste not being disposed of properly, raising awareness of their operations may reduce the incidence of illegally dumped waste.

Charity Organisations

There are many charity organisations across the REROC region that accept donations through "bins" or drop-offs. They collect clothing, furniture and other items for sale or distribution. However, along with receiving quality donated items that support their work they are often on the receiving end of what is household waste which has been dumped by residents at their facilities. The charitable organisation is then left with the cost of cleaning up their sites and disposing of the dumped waste.

There are significant social and financial costs associated with illegally dumped waste at charity organisations, every dollar that is spent by the organisation addressing the problem, is money that is not spent furthering their social and community goals.

Community Groups

There are a number of community groups that play an important role in maintaining and improving urban and rural landscapes. They include urban and rural Landcare groups who are actively working to protect the environment and Tidy Towns and Clean-Up Australia committees that are working to improve the visual amenity and environment usually in urban areas.

The members of these community groups can come into contact with illegal dumping, through their work with the group. It is important that when this happens it is reported and acted on, not just cleaned-up by willing volunteers. Encouraging community groups to report illegal dumping through RID on-line and to work with councils will assist in combating the problem.

Bibliography

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