



News Release

California Department of Transportation

Santa Cruz • San Benito • Monterey • San Luis Obispo • Santa Barbara

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District 5
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September 20, 2005

CALTRANS ANTI-LITTER CAMPAIGN WRAPS UP - \$200,000 IN ONE MONTH

CENTRAL COAST – As part of the statewide 'Don't Trash California Campaign' the central coast Caltrans office has an anti-litter campaign of its own. From August 20 through today, Caltrans crews were piling collected trash in strategic and visible locations to highlight the costly, unsightly and hazardous problem of litter.

On the central coast, Caltrans spent \$200,000 over the last 30 days removing litter in eight strategic locations: Goleta/Santa Barbara, Santa Maria, San Luis Obispo, Templeton, Salinas, Carmel, Santa Cruz and Watsonville. Over 5,000 bags were collected which equates to over 21,000 cubic feet of trash.

The trash piles will be removed over the next two days, beginning today at noon.

The purpose of the effort was to demonstrate the only effective way to combat the growing litter problem is to stop it at its source. Litter is a statewide problem that costs communities millions of dollars each year to clean up – money that could be otherwise spent on transportation projects. Caltrans spends roughly \$40 million each year picking up litter on California's highways. Caltrans employees and Adopt-A Highway groups collectively picked up 11.6 million pounds of trash last year.

Motorists are urged to become more aware of how they are contributing to litter on the central coast. A significant amount of trash ends up on highways by "flying out" of the back of pick-up trucks, either from loads that aren't tied down or from the occasional piece of trash left in the truck bed that becomes airborne when the truck travels on the highway.

All trash – including plastic grocery bags, food containers and cigarette butts – must be disposed of in a proper trash container. Once on our roadway, litter travels into storm drains and waterways and pollutes rivers, lakes and the ocean.

Caltrans also reminds motorists that littering carries fines up to \$1,000.

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256-1



9/19/05

Media Advisory

HIGHWAY 1 ANTI-LITTER EVENT IN CARMEL

Who: Caltrans; Supervisor Dave Potter; Assemblyman John Laird; Representative for State Senator Abel Maldonado; Libby Downey, Monterey City Council member and Industry officials

What: Anti-litter outreach event

Where: Northbound Highway 1, just north of Carpenter Road, off right shoulder before Highway 68 ramp.

When: Tuesday, September 20, 2005 @ 10 a.m.

Why: The purpose of this effort is to demonstrate the only effective way to combat the growing litter problem is to stop it at its source.

The event will last about 30 minutes culminating with the litter being loaded onto dump trucks and an opportunity for interviews/photos.

Please contact Caltrans Public Affairs Office, Susana Z. Cruz @ (805) 549-3138 or Colin Jones @ (805) 549-3189, for more information.



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9/20/05


HIGHWAY 1 ANTI-LITTER EVENT IN CARMEL

* AGENDA *

- 10:00 a.m. Welcome and Introductions
- 10:05 a.m. Steve Price, Dep. District Director,
Maintenance and Operations (Caltrans)
- 10:10 a.m. Supervisor Dave Potter
- 10:15 a.m. Assemblyman John Laird
- 10:20 a.m. Rep. for State Senator Abel Maldonado
- 10:25 a.m. Libby Downey, Monterey City Council member
- 10:30 a.m. Closing Remarks
Trash being loaded onto a dump truck and an opportunity for
interviews/photos.



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September 25, 2005

Don't trash California

By R. Gregg Albright

As many of you may have seen, state Department of Transportation (Caltrans) crews were piling collected trash in strategic and visible locations to highlight the costly, unsightly and hazardous problem of litter. The trash piles have been hauled away, but more needs to be done to combat this mounting problem.

On the Central Coast, Caltrans spent \$200,000 over the last 30 days removing litter in eight strategic locations: Goleta/Santa Barbara, Santa Maria, San Luis Obispo, Templeton, Salinas, Carmel, Santa Cruz and Watsonville. More than 5,000 bags were collected, which equates to more than 21,000 cubic feet of trash.

Every individual needs to take personal responsibility to toss their litter into a trash can or recycle bin, dispose of large garbage items at the dump, and securely cover their truckloads. These small community efforts would help accomplish the following:

- Enhance the appearance of our roadsides;
- Improve the water quality of our lakes, streams, rivers and oceans;
- Prevent injuries from broken glass and reduce exposure to dangerous chemicals;
- Prevent wildfires caused by lit cigarettes;
- Save public agencies in California more than \$375 million (Caltrans alone spends more than \$40 million per year on litter removal).

Cigarette butts are the No. 1 litter item tossed carelessly onto our freeways and significantly pollute our highways and storm drains. Storm water carries them directly into our natural and manmade water systems where they can release toxic chemicals and could poison marine life.

Litter includes things like spoiled food, Styrofoam cups, snack-food wrappers, matches, bottles, cans, antifreeze and motor oil containers, paints and thinners, tires, cigarette butts and human waste — all of which pose risks to waterways and public health.

Social scientists define litterbugs as lazy, careless and inconsiderate people. Experts believe they litter out of ignorance on what constitutes litter and its damaging effects on the environment, rebellion against authority, and a lack of social pressure opposing such action as well as penalty enforcement.

Caltrans recommends that we all follow these suggestions to prevent litter:

- Never litter. Set an example for others. Children imitate what they see.
- Carry a litterbag in your car for disposable items.
- Cover truck loads and make sure loose items are not stored in the beds of pickup trucks, which can blow out of the vehicles in the wind and become litter and traffic safety hazards.

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■ Regularly service your automobile with tune-ups and oil changes. This helps to ensure that oil or other fluids do not enter highway storm drains.

■ If you smoke, use the ashtray in your car.

■ Volunteer to help an Adopt-A-Highway sponsor and pick up trash on your local roadways. Support community and school clean-up events and help to educate local leaders about the importance of keeping litter off our roadways.

Caltrans will continue to take a leadership role in getting the word out that litter is more than an eyesore. It costs taxpayers millions of dollars to clean up and pollutes our communities. There is a simple and inexpensive solution: Don't Trash California.

For more information, please review the Don't Trash California campaign online at www.donttrashcalifornia.info.

R. Gregg Albright is district director of Caltrans District 5 San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito counties.

 Print Article

You can find this story online at:

<http://www.santacruzsentinel.com/archive/2005/September/25/edit/stories/04edit.htm>

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