

Rubbish Report

2022



Clean Up 

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Introduction | Clean Up

During 2022 Clean Up Australia continued to encourage volunteers across the nation to **Step Up to Clean Up**, by taking to their streets, beaches, parks, bushland and waterways to remove accumulated rubbish. In response, an estimated 934,433 Australians registered 12,474 Clean Up sites, donating around 1,868,886 hours of their time and effort across the nation.

Over the past 33 years, more than 20 million volunteers have donated more than 38.5 million hours to their local communities, removing hundreds of thousands of ute loads of rubbish from over 215,500 registered locations across the country.

This Rubbish Report is a snapshot of the rubbish our volunteers counted in 2022.

Data is reported in three ways:

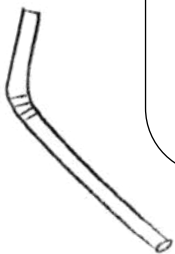
1. By **material type** e.g. plastics, metals or glass
2. In **groups** of like items regardless of material type [e.g. beverage containers which are glass, plastic or metal] and
3. As individual **items**.

In 2022 we introduced a citizen-science led initiative to capture 'quick counts' of the items volunteers told us were either new or had proliferated due to behaviour change as a consequence of COVID-related local lockdowns.



New items included:

- Face masks
- Vapes and
- Nangs [nitrous oxide canisters]



Other items and groupings included as 'Quick Count Priority Items' were:

- Soft plastics
- Single-use plastic beverage bottles
- Aluminium beverage cans
- Takeaway coffee cups
- Takeaway food containers
- Single-use cutlery/utensils/plates
- Straws
- Cigarette butts
- Batteries

The online 'Quick Count' proved popular, with 58.4% of survey respondents choosing it as their preferred data-input method.

Their data has been amalgamated with that provided by volunteers who undertook the full survey via an End of Clean Up Report.

What they told us

Across the nation, plastics continue to dominate as the material type most commonly reported, representing 63% of all counted rubbish this year. As a percentage of types of rubbish, soft plastics increased by 7%, and hard plastics and polystyrene each by 5%. Paper decreased by 7%, metals by 5%, glass and miscellaneous items each by 2%. For the first time since 2014 rubber decreased by 0.4%. Wood halved to 0.5%.

Packaging [non-food, beverage containers and food] continues to lead rubbish counts, representing 58% [45% in 2021] of all reported rubbish during the year. In 2020, packaging represented 49.8% of counted items, which suggests we are far from solving the issue of packaging waste.

Soft plastics have again been separated into their own category. This year counts include chip and confectionery wrappers, plastic food bags, retail and garbage bags, cling wrap, 'other' soft plastics, reusable shopping bags, and bait bags. 2022 volunteers counted 91,061 [38,266 in 2021] of these items, representing 25% [18% in 2021] of all surveyed rubbish and 39.2% [44.4% in 2021] of plastics.

Beverage container counts continue to fluctuate. We are still seeing evidence of 'container hunting' in states where the redemption scheme is new, but established states are reporting decreased counts as more containers are intercepted for redemption before they become litter. In 2022, beverage containers reflected 17.3% [13.3% in 2021] of counted rubbish. While some of this increase has been anecdotally attributed to hunting and redemption fatigue, we

also asked volunteers to focus on aluminium containers this year – resulting in a significant increase in the numbers of these reported. Volunteer feedback about 'redemption effort versus value' influenced Clean Up Australia's support for an increase in deposit/refund amounts plus expansion of schemes to include items currently exempt, such as larger containers and wine.

While again decreasing their % representations in some states, cigarette butts remain one of the highest individual items reported by volunteers. In 2022 they represented 13.6% [14.3% in 2021] of all reported rubbish nationally. In partnership with No More Butts and Cairns Regional Council, Clean Up piloted a focused drive to remove butts in Cairns as an initiative of the 2022 Great Northern Clean Up.

58.5% of single items reported in 2022 are either plastic or contain plastic [46% last year]. Its persistence is the challenge – hard plastics will outlive us all, and they, polystyrene and their soft plastic cousins easily tear or break up, with the danger of entering the food-chain.

Clean Up Australia Day, Everyday Clean Up sites and the Great Northern Clean Up would not be possible without the generous financial support of our sponsors.

McDonald's continued its support as Founding Partner, and we again successfully partnered with SodaStream.

Coles' shoppers provided financial support through the purchase of reusable shopping bags and the 'Drop of Good' fundraising appeal conducted during the weekend of Clean Up Australia Day.

Amazon fulfilled kit delivery for Clean Up Australia Day, ensuring over 8,400 clean up materials kits were delivered on time across the nation.

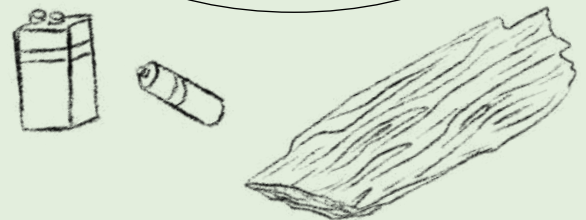
The Department of Industry provided a grant to supplement the salaries of our Clean Up Australia Day delivery team.

Shop A Docket and Shopper generously donated media support and Look Print, Daniels Cleanaway, and IQ Renew were active suppliers of Clean Up materials, signage and office accommodation.

It is also important to recognise the vital support that Clean Up volunteers receive from local government. 209 local councils registered intent to support their communities for 2022 campaigns and activities, demonstrating the commitment of local government to shared spaces within their jurisdiction.



This is the 32nd Rubbish Report produced by Clean Up Australia.





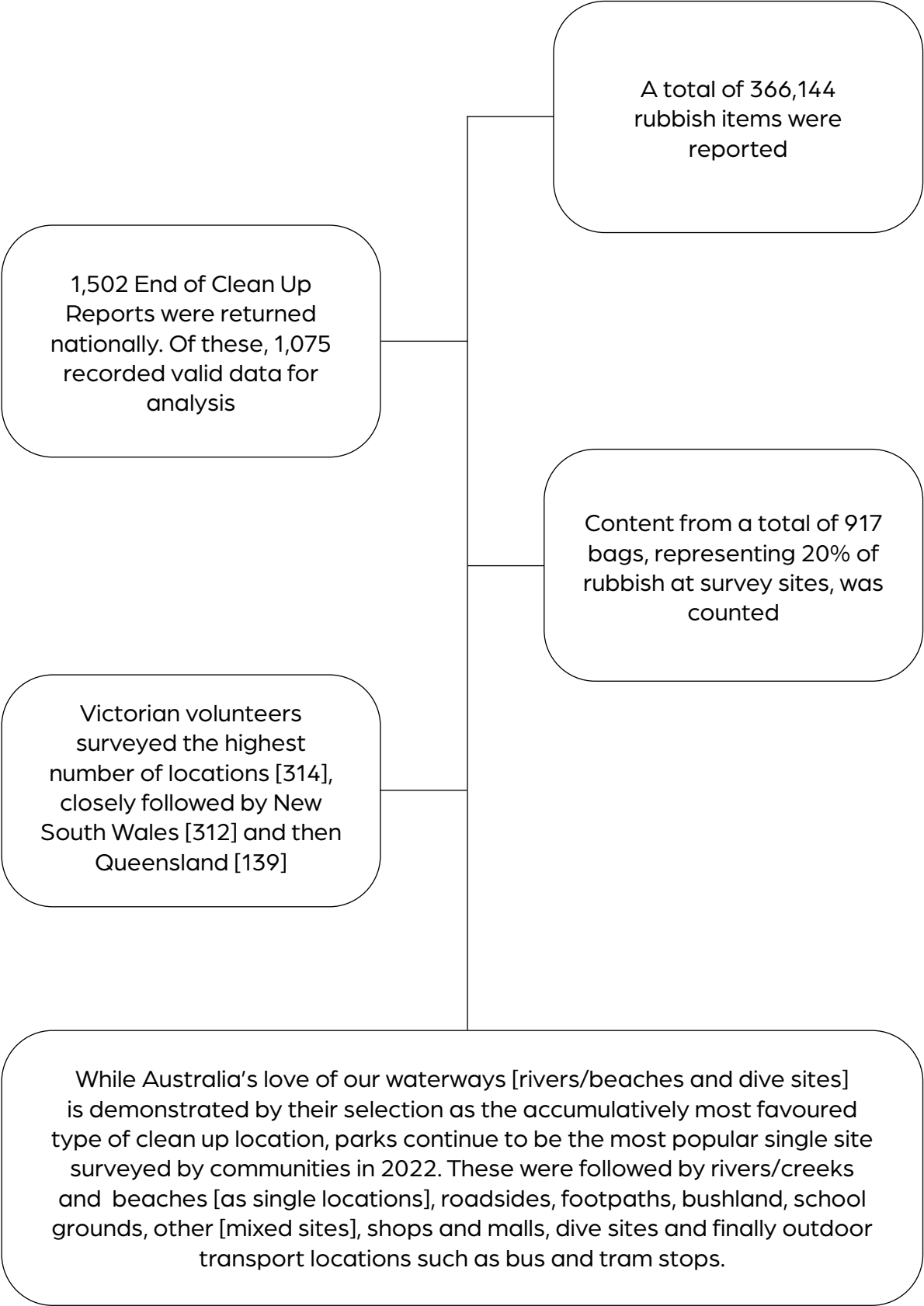
Executive Summary

The Rubbish Report is a snapshot of rubbish removed by volunteers during a calendar year. Since 1991, the Rubbish Report has proven to be an invaluable resource in identifying trends in the types and spread of rubbish throughout Australia. It continues to demonstrate the importance of refusing, reducing, re-using and recycling rubbish.

Clean Up Australia believes there is no such thing as waste – just wasted resources.

In partnership with communities, business and governments, Clean Up continues to support positive action that encourages a circular economy.

Sites Surveyed



Rubbish Sources

This is the 28th year that plastic has dominated the 'Major Types of Rubbish'.



Plastic [hard, soft and polystyrene] was the most common rubbish type, representing 63% [46% in 2021] of all rubbish items surveyed.

Miscellaneous items took second position at 15.8% [17.8% in 2021]. The most common item reported within this category continues to be cigarette butts, reflecting 85.9% [80.7% in 2021] of reported items.



Metals represented 8.0% of the total count this year [12.7% in 2021]. Beverage containers continue to dominate, representing 83% of metal rubbish reported. Metal bottle caps were next in line at 9.1% followed by construction waste which represented 3.2% of counted metals.





Glass reflected 7.3% of the count, a reduction of 1.2% over 2021. Glass pieces continue to dominate counts, representing 69.7% of the count [37.1% in 2021].

Paper recorded 4.6% of all rubbish reported, a 7.8% decrease in 2021. Within this category, small pieces of paper continue to dominate, reflecting 28.7% of the count [20.7% last year].



These sources were followed by rubber at 0.6% [1.5% in 2021] and wood at 0.5% [1.2% last year].

Top 10 Rubbish Items

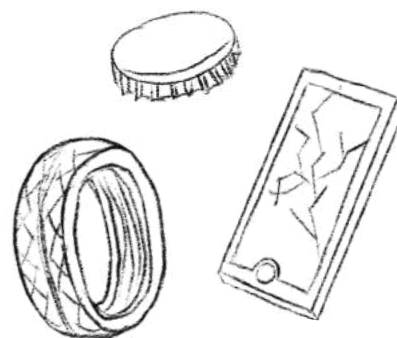
The Top 10 Rubbish Items as a percentage of all rubbish were analysed two ways – as groups of data [sets of like items regardless of material (e.g. beverage containers = glass, plastic, metals)] and as individual items [single item as a percentage of all rubbish reported].

Grouped Data

Item	Rank	%	% Difference to 2021
Non-food packaging	1	28.2	-4.8
Soft plastics	2	25.0	7.0
Beverage containers	3	17.3	4.3
Food packaging	4	12.7	0.7
Beverage rubbish	5	6.9	-3.1
Sanitary items	6	4.4	1.4
Household items	7	2.1	-2.9
E-waste	8	0.9	Not grouped separately
Toys/sporting equipment	9	0.9	-1.1
Construction materials	10	0.8	-2.2

- As a percentage of types of rubbish reported, soft plastics increased by 18%, beverage containers by 13%, food packaging by 12% and sanitary items by 3% [noting the inclusion of face masks within this category contributed to this increase]
- Non-food packaging reduced its presence by 4.8%, beverage related rubbish by 3.1%, household items by 2.9% [noting e-waste separation accounts for 0.9% of this reduction], construction waste by 2.2% and toys/sporting goods by 1.1%.





Individual Data

National	Rank	%	% Difference to 2021
Quick count soft plastics	1	17.5	11.5
Cigarette butts	2	13.6	-0.4
Single use plastic bottles	3	6.1	Not separated
Fast food/takeaway containers	4	6.0	5.0
Aluminium beverage cans	5	6.0	Not separated
Glass pieces	6	5.1	2.1
Plastic packaging pieces	7	5.1	Not separated
Chips and confectionery bags	8	3.7	-2.3
Bottle caps and lids	9	3.3	-0.7
Face masks	10	3.2	Not counted

- Single-use packaging [plastic bottles, fast food/takeaway containers/ aluminium beverage cans, plastic chip and confectionery wrappers, plastic bottle caps and lids] accounted for **25.1%** of all reported rubbish
- Soft plastic counts also dominated the Top 10 Individual item list, increasing 11.5% to 17.5%
- Glass pieces, both a safety and fire hazard, increased by 2.1%
- Butts decreased by 0.4%, but continue to represent 13.6% of reported rubbish
- Face masks, a newly counted item in 2022 hit the Top 10 list at 10th place, representing 3.2% of all counted rubbish

Site Types

National	Number of sites	Items Found	% of total state waste	Average # per site
Beach/Coastal	180	83,557	23	464
Rivers/Creeks/ Waterways/ Water storage	188	81,197	22	432
Public Bushland	121	48,778	13	403
Dive Sites	2	1,972	1	986
Footpaths	74	14,781	4	200
Parks [incl Nat Parks]	247	52,247	14	212
Roadsides	116	26,304	7	227
Shops/Malls	10	6,316	2	632
School Grounds	73	13,091	4	179
Outdoor Transport	1	114	0	114
Other	63	38,866	11	617



46% of all reported rubbish nationally was in waterways [beaches/rivers and dive sites], 14% was in parks, and 13% in bushland.

Rubbish by Site Types

	Waterways	Parks	Beach/ Coast	Roadsides	Footpaths	Bushland	Shops/ Mall	Schools
Plastic	46.2	50.7	57.5	44.3	52.7	60.4	32.5	72.6
Polystyrene	16.4	8.9	7.8	12.4	14.1	13.2	8.9	6.6
Glass	14.2	4.5	0.0	5.6	1.8	8.2	6.0	1.7
Rubber	0.5	0.5	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.5	1.0	0.3
Paper/ Cardboard	2.8	6.2	4.8	8.0	4.0	3.7	8.5	4.4
Metals	7.1	7.2	5.7	16.6	11.8	7.5	10.2	4.0
Wood	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.2	0.6	1.5	0.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

	Outdoor	Drive Sites	Other	Total
Plastic	64.0	24.7	51.2	52.5
Polystyrene	21.9	9.7	11.1	11.5
Glass	0.0	3.8	4.9	6.1
Rubber	0.0	0.6	0.6	0.6
Paper/ Cardboard	0.0	4.3	4.7	4.7
Metals	4.4	34.7	9.5	8.1
Wood	0.0	0.2	0.5	0.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Plastics [plastic and polystyrene] account for 63% [46% in 2021] of all reported rubbish and are the most common item reported across all locations, accounting for:

- 79% of items reported in school grounds
- 74% of bushland rubbish
- 60% of rubbish reported within parks
- 62% along roadsides footpaths
- 54% of waterway items [rivers + beach/coastal areas + dive sites].



Methodology

The figures presented in the Rubbish Report are based on a sample of Clean Up sites where data is collected by our dedicated volunteers.

Rubbish Report surveys are issued within Clean Up kits as part of the End of Clean Up Report. In 2022, the report was again also available to complete online, enhanced by the introduction of a citizen-science led initiative to capture 'Quick Count Priority items' volunteers told us were either new or had proliferated due to behaviour change as a consequence of COVID-related local lockdowns.

New items included:

- Face masks
- Vapes and
- Nangs [nitrous oxide canisters]

Other items and groupings included as 'Quick Count Priority Items' were:

- Soft plastics
- Single-use plastic beverage bottles
- Aluminium beverage cans
- Takeaway coffee cups
- Takeaway food containers
- Single-use cutlery/utensils/plates
- Straws
- Cigarette butts
- Batteries

The online Quick Count process proved popular, with 58.4% of survey respondents choosing that as their preferred data-input method. A number also went on to complete their full End of Clean Up Report online, reinforcing Clean Up's desire to further automate this process.

Their data has been amalgamated with that provided by volunteers who undertook the full survey via an End of Clean Up Report.

The full survey requires volunteers to identify and count a proportion of the rubbish removed from their site.

Those taking part are asked to survey one in five bags of rubbish removed, with a maximum

of six bags surveyed per site. However, a number of site coordinators surveyed a greater proportion.

During 2022, volunteers were again asked to separate their rubbish into recyclable and non-recyclable items. The intention is to, where possible, encourage recycling of rubbish. Volunteers were asked to capture a representative sample from both types of bags.

While we appreciate that the level of contamination of materials removed during clean ups will generally make them non-recyclable, we believe it is important that volunteers pause to consider how many bags of rubbish could have been recycled if items had not entered the environment.

Each site surveyed is classified by the category that best describes its location.

In 2022 these categories included: Rivers and Creeks, Parks [incl National Parks] Beaches/ Coastal, Suburban Roadsides, Footpaths, Public Bushland, Shops and Malls, School Grounds, Outdoor Transport areas, Dive site, and Other.

The 2022 End of Clean Up survey listed a total of 115 specific waste items grouped by source material, with the 'other' field for items which do not fit easily within the list. 'Other' items are then carefully analysed to track the number of each specific item recorded.

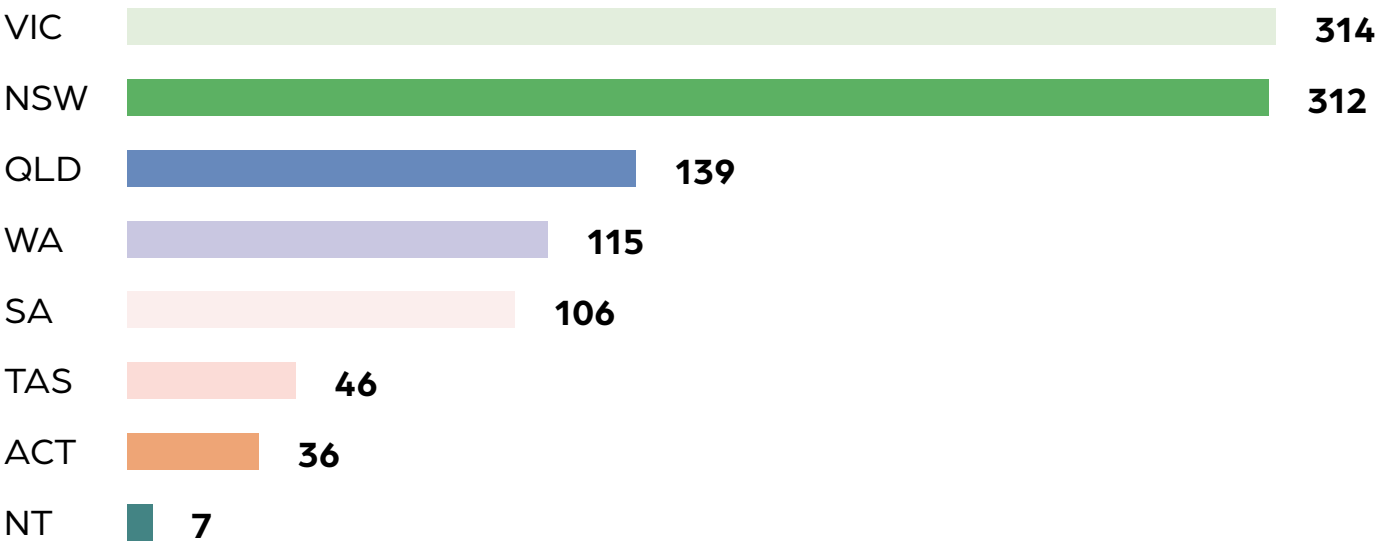
Source categories are: plastic (further divided into soft plastics, plastic bottles/containers, and plastic miscellaneous), polystyrene, glass, rubber, paper/cardboard, metal/aluminium (further divided into cans, and miscellaneous), wood, and miscellaneous.

The Rubbish Report is a snapshot of information to show trends over time of rubbish removed during Clean Up Australia Day, the Great Northern Clean Up and Everyday Clean Up sites. It is not intended to be a definitive survey representing all rubbish found in all Australian environments.



Returned Valid Surveys by State

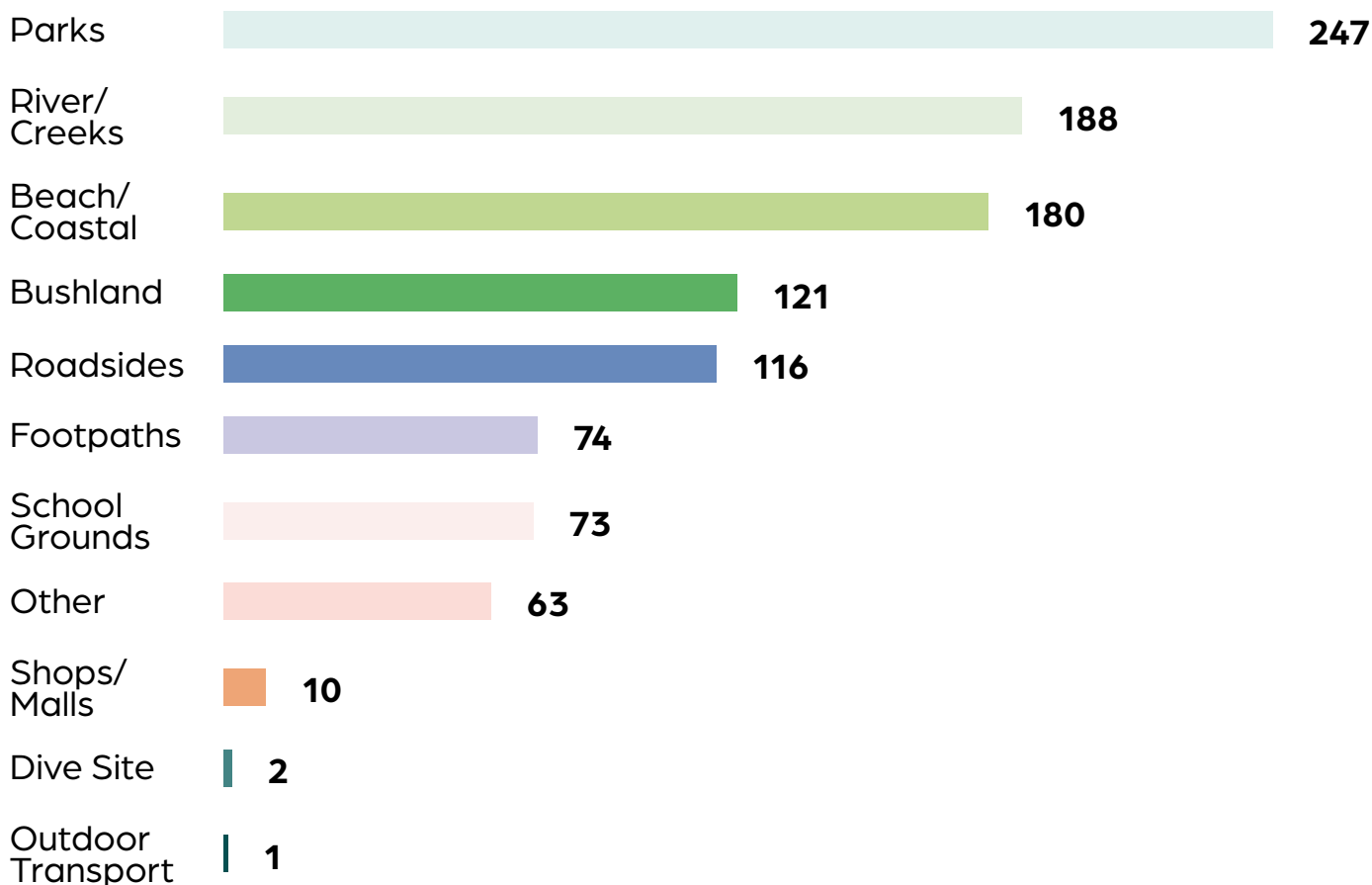
The 'Returned Valid Surveys by State' chart shows the number of valid Rubbish Report surveys received from each state.



In 2022, Victorian volunteers surveyed the highest number of locations [314], closely followed by New South Wales [312] and then Queensland [139].



Returned Valid Surveys by Site Type



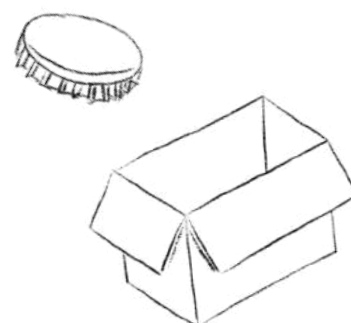
The 'Returned Valid Surveys by Site Type' chart shows the number of valid Rubbish Report Surveys received from each site type.

Parks were the single most favoured single site at which rubbish was counted in 2022, reflecting 22.9% [25.6% in 2021] of all surveyed locations.

Waterways, representing rivers and creeks, beaches and dive sites together represented 34.4% of surveyed locations.

Roadsides and footpaths were the also popular locations to undertake a survey, making up 17.7% of valid reports.

Bushland came next with 10.9% followed by school grounds at 6.8%, and then shops and malls at 2%.



The Top 10 Rubbish Items

The Top 10 Rubbish Items as a percentage of all rubbish were analysed in two ways – as **groups of data** [sets of like items regardless of material (e.g. beverage containers = glass, plastic, metals)] and as individual items [single item as a percentage of all rubbish reported].

Grouped Data

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Non-food packaging	1	28.2	-4.8
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Food packaging	4	12.7	0.7
Beverage rubbish	5	6.9	-3.1
Sanitary items	6	4.4	1.4
Household items	7	2.1	-2.9
E-waste	8	0.9	Not grouped separately
Toys/Sporting equipment	9	0.9	-1.1
Construction materials	10	0.8	-2.2

While the Top 5 Grouped items remain consistent with 2021, we saw increases in three categories: soft plastics [up 7%], beverage containers [up 4.3%], and food packaging [up 0.7%].

Sanitary items rose from 8th to 6th in ranking, reflecting a 1.4% increase in their counts. The introduction of face masks as a new item in 2022 contributed to this increase.

The good news is non-food packaging counts decreased by 4.8% as did beverage related rubbish.

Household items slipped one ranking with a 2.9% reduction of reported items and construction waste replaced clothing at #10. The adjustment to household items reflects the separation of e-waste for the first time, where it took 8th place as a category.

Toys/sporting equipment counts decreased by 1.1%, but this didn't affect their 9th place ranking.

Individual Data

National	Rank	%	% Difference to 2021
Quick count soft plastics	1	17.5	11.5
Cigarette butts	2	13.6	-0.4
Single use plastic bottles	3	6.1	Not separated
Fast food/takeaway containers	4	6.0	5.0
Aluminium beverage cans	5	6.0	Not separated
Glass pieces	6	5.1	2.1
Plastic packaging pieces	7	5.1	Not separated
Chips and confectionery bags	8	3.7	-2.3
Bottle caps and lids	9	3.3	-0.7
Face masks	10	3.2	Not counted



Top 10 individual items rankings changed significantly in 2022, with single-use plastic bottles [a quick count category introduced for the first time], fast food/takeaway, aluminium beverage cans [a quick count focus], pieces of plastic packaging and face masks [new item for 2022] all making the list in 2022.

They replaced metal bottle caps, alcoholic beverage containers, food bags, plastic packaging and foil confectionery wrappers.

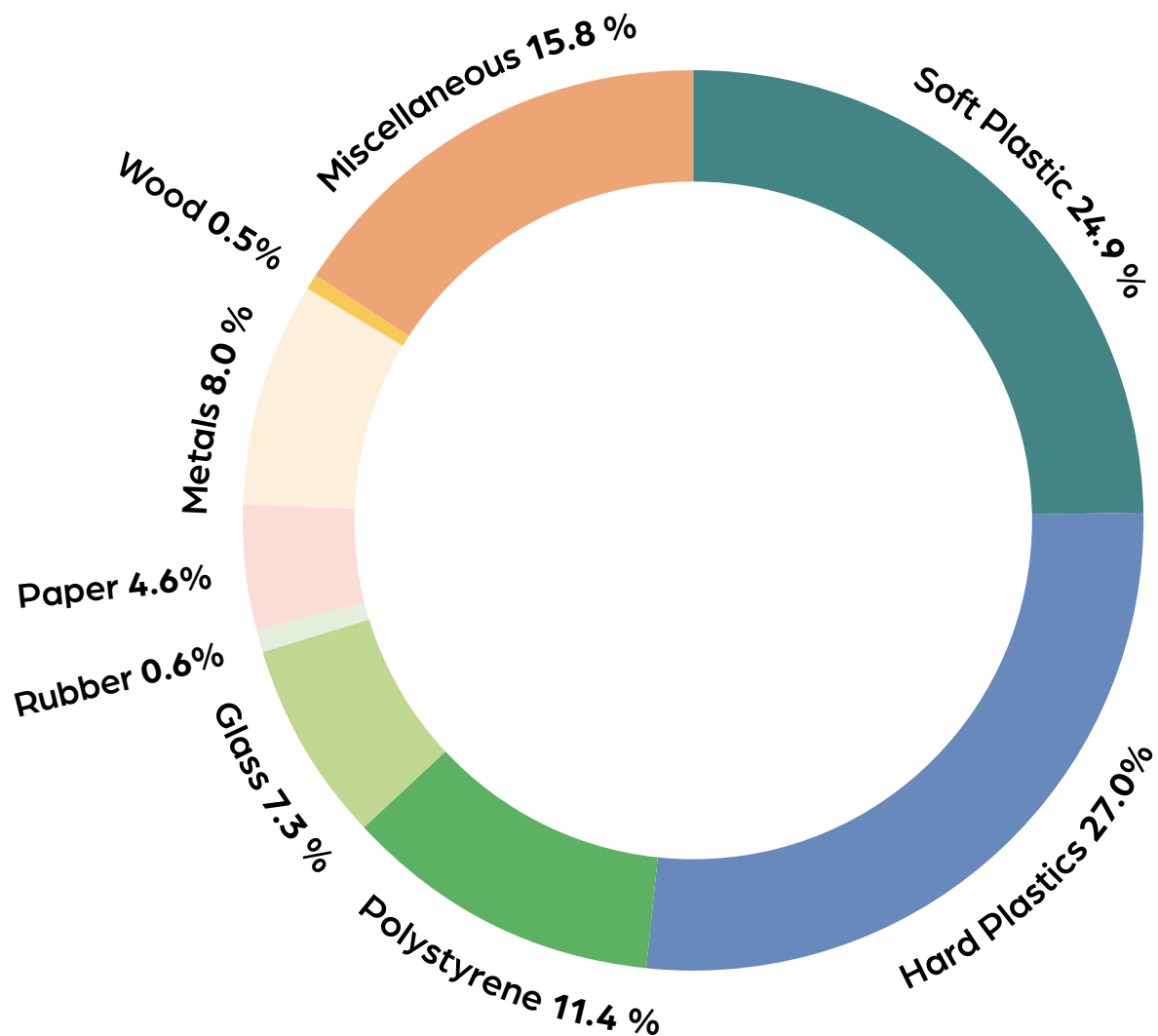
Within items that remain on the list from last year, we saw a 11.5% increase in soft plastics. Much of this can be attributed to the inclusion of a new quick count category of soft plastics.

While dropping one place on the list, cigarette butt counts as a percentage of all rubbish remained on-par with 2021.

Glass pieces reduced by 2.1%, as did chip and confectionery wrappers [by 2.3%]. Plastic bottle caps and lids fell by 0.7%.

Major Types of Rubbish

The 'Major Types of Rubbish' chart below shows the types of rubbish surveyed, along with their proportion of the total rubbish.





Plastic [hard, soft and polystyrene] was the most common rubbish type, representing 63% [46% in 2021] of all rubbish items removed.

This is the 28th year that plastic has dominated the 'Major Types of Rubbish'.

Soft plastics counts include chip and confectionery wrappers, plastic food bags, retail and garbage bags, cling wrap, 'other' soft plastics, reusable shopping bags, and bait bags.

2022 volunteers counted 91,061 [38,266 in 2021] of these items, representing 25% [18% in 2021] of all surveyed rubbish and 39.2% [44.4% in 2021] of plastics.

Miscellaneous items took second position at 15.8% [17.8% in 2021]. The most common item reported continues to be cigarette butts, reflecting 85.9% [80.7% in 2021] of reported items in this category.

Metals represented 8.0% of the total count this year [12.7% in 2021]. Beverage containers continue to dominate, representing 83% of metal rubbish reported.

Metal bottle caps were next in line at 9.1%, a significant decrease on their 22.5% representation in 2021. Construction represented 3.2% of counted metals.

Glass reflected 7.3% of the count, a reduction of 1.2% over 2021. Glass pieces continue to dominate counts, representing 69.7% of the count [37.1% in 2021]. These were followed by alcoholic beverage bottles, which accounted for 24.5% of counted glass, a welcome 8.2% decrease in 2021.

Paper recorded 4.6% of all rubbish reported. This was a 7.8% decrease in 2021. Within this category, small pieces of paper continue to dominate, reflecting 28.7% of the count [20.7% last year]. This was closely followed by fast food packaging at 20.2% [15.6% in 2021], and then napkins & tissues at 17.7% [16.8% in 2021].

These sources were followed by **rubber** at 0.6% [1.5% in 2021] and wood at 0.5% [1.2% last year].

Historical Comparison

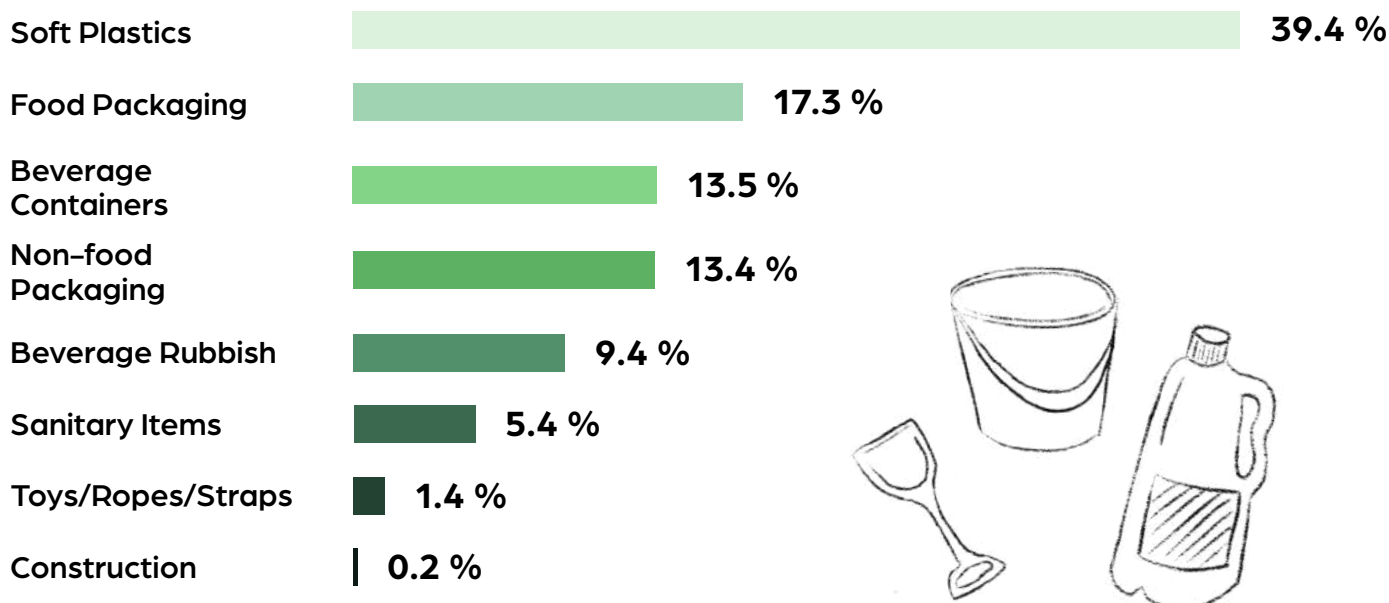
Year	Plastics	Foam/ Polystyrene	Glass	Rubber	Paper	Metals
1991	35.0	8.6	14.4	1.5	13.6	14.3
1992	26.8	9.5	17.1	1.2	24.9	11.9
1993	40.8	7.7	13.3	1.0	18.9	13.9
1994	41.4	6.3	13.0	0.7	21.6	12.3
1995	31.2	4.0	10.3	0.7	24.9	18.1
1996	33.4	8.7	10.1	1.3	19.9	13.6
1997	27.0	7.5	14.7	1.0	18.3	17.9
1998	29.1	6.6	13.4	1.2	19.5	14.5
1999	36.0	6.8	12.3	1.4	15.0	13.6
2000	32.1	4.9	10.1	1.2	15.2	19.1
2001	33.7	4.8	12.1	1.2	13.8	15.2
2002	33.4	6.9	11.8	1.2	14.1	14.1
2003	36.0	3.5	11.8	1.3	17.7	15.2
2004	37.3	4.8	11.8	1.0	12.7	13.5
2005	32.0	5.0	14.0	1.0	15.0	12.0
2006	33.7	5.2	11.7	1.8	15.9	13.2
2007	33.1	4.4	15.5	2.3	15.1	13.4
2008	31.7	4.8	13.1	1.7	12.6	14.6
2009	28.5	3.5	16.4	1.4	12.7	17.5
2010	31.3	7.7	10.5	1.1	14.7	12.4
2011	32.0	3.9	14.0	1.2	11.3	14.2
2012	38.3	4.9	13.3	1.7	11.2	15.7
2013	36.0	5.4	13.7	1.2	12.8	15.4
2014	30.1	5.6	12.1	1.3	13.3	14
2015	35.7	5.4	12.5	1.3	13.4	15.5
2016	38.9	5.1	11.6	1.4	13	13.9
2017	35.5	5.3	11.6	0.9	10.9	13.2
2018	38.6	5.2	11.4	1.3	12.3	13.5
2019	31.3	5.7	8.7	1.5	10.7	16.2
2020	35.9	4.9	13.5	1.2	11.6	11.6
2021	39.9	6.1	8.5	1.5	12.4	12.7
2022	51.8	11.4	7.3	0.6	4.6	8
YOY +/- %	30%	87%	-14%	-60%	-63%	-37%
5 Year Rolling Average	39.5	6.7	9.9	1.2	10.3	12.4
10 Year Rolling Average	37.4	6.0	11.1	1.2	11.5	13.4

Wood	Misc.	Total
2.8	9.6	100.0
3.7	4.8	100.0
1.7	2.8	100.0
2.0	2.6	100.0
3.0	7.8	100.0
1.8	11.2	100.0
2.3	11.2	100.0
2.4	13.3	100.0
1.9	13.0	100.0
2.5	14.9	100.0
2.0	17.2	100.0
2.3	16.2	100.0
1.7	12.7	100.0
1.9	17.0	100.0
2.0	19.0	100.0
2.1	16.4	100.0
1.8	14.4	100.0
3.8	17.7	100.0
2.2	17.8	100.0
1.1	21.2	100.0
1.5	22.0	100.0
1.4	13.5	100.0
1.5	14.0	100.0
1.5	22.1	100.0
1.7	14.5	100.0
1.3	14.9	100.0
0.9	21.7	100.0
1.4	16.3	100.0
1	24.9	100.0
0.9	20.4	100.0
1.2	17.7	100.0
0.5	15.8	100.0
-58%	-11%	100.0
1.0	19.0	100.0
1.2	18.2	100.0



Major Sources of Rubbish

Plastics



In 2022, plastics remained the dominant waste type reported by volunteers. Making up 63.3% of all rubbish removed, plastics accounted for 231,601 of surveyed items.

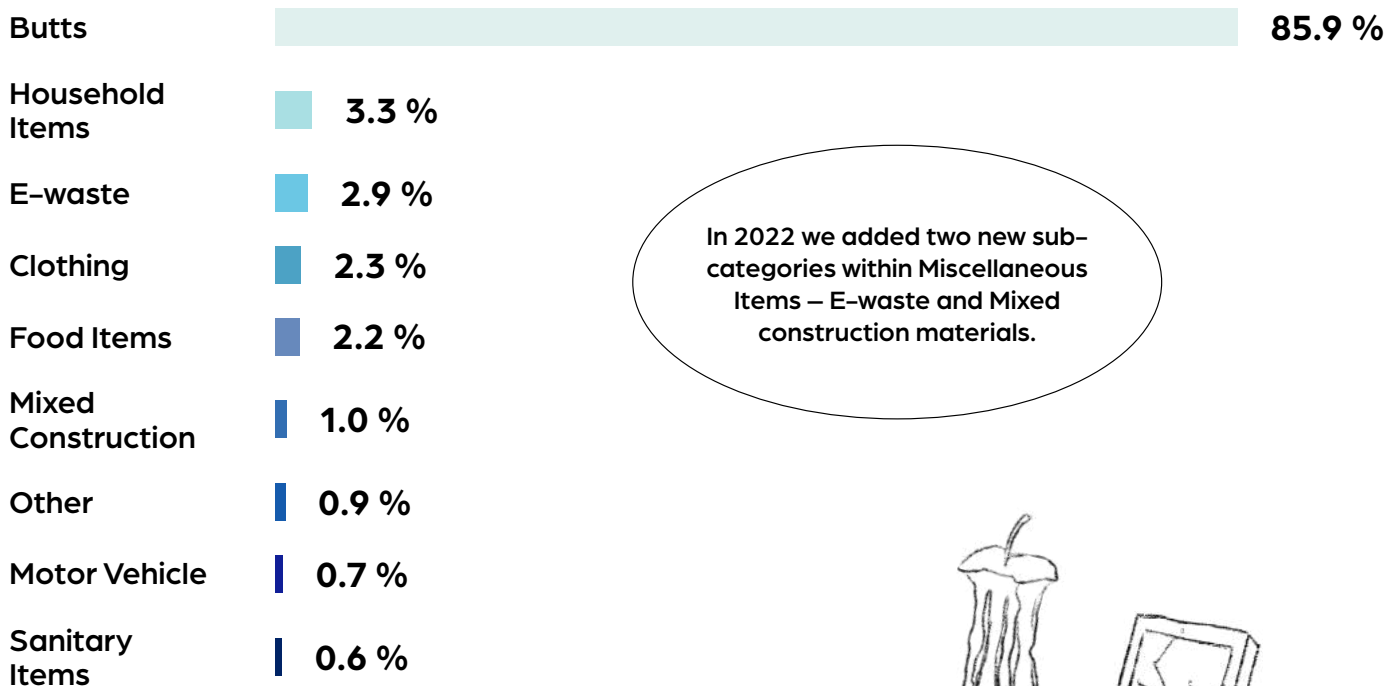
Made from non-renewable, oil-based resources, plastics removed by Clean Up volunteers are not biodegradable and could, if left in situ, survive in the environment for hundreds of years. At best, plastic breaks up into smaller and smaller pieces – which is a worse environmental outcome.

A total of 45 different forms of plastic waste were categorised in 2022 End of Clean Up reports.

Plastics are the most common item reported across all locations, accounting for:

- 79% of items reported in school grounds
- 74% of bushland rubbish
- 60% of rubbish reported within parks
- 62% along roadsides footpaths
- 54% of waterway items [rivers + beach/coastal areas + dive sites]

Miscellaneous Items



Volunteers reported 57,695 miscellaneous items this year [67,129 in 2021].

Cigarette butts remain the #1 item reported by volunteers, representing 85.9% of items recorded in this category [80.7% in 2021].

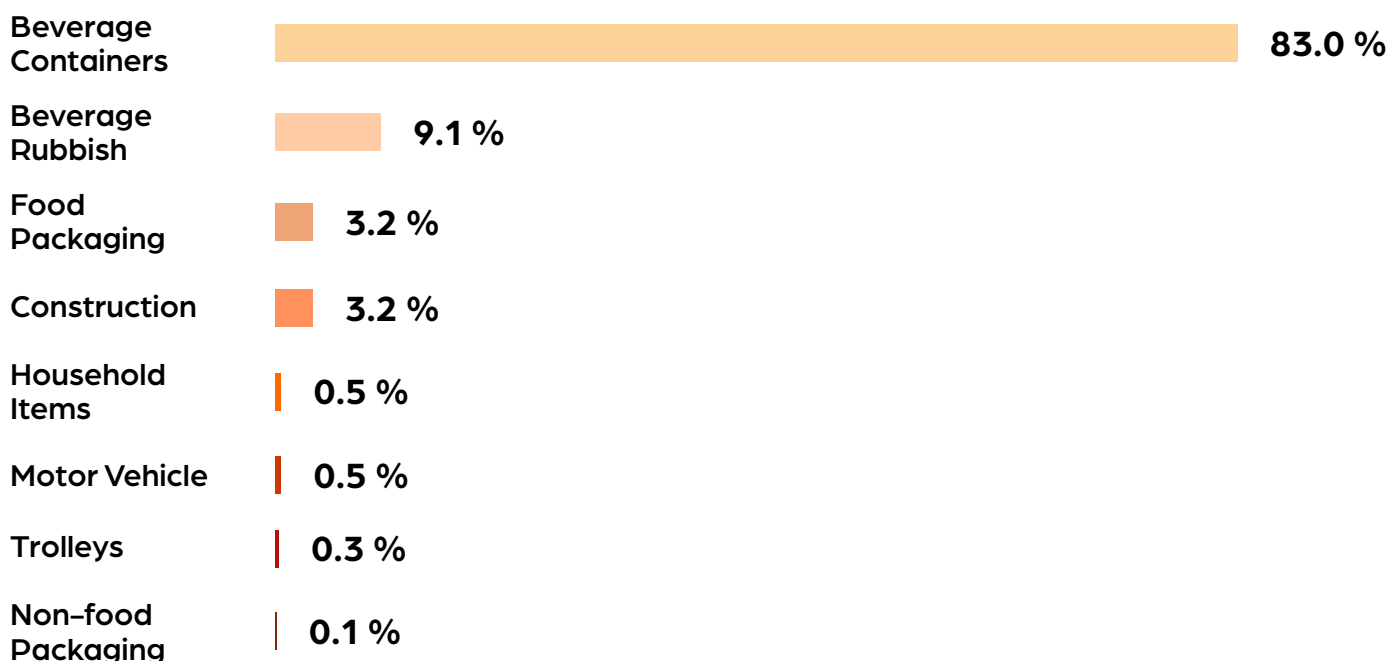
While small, butts leach toxins and leave small pieces of plastic in their wake, providing immediate, short and long-term danger for our precious flora and fauna.

E-waste is Australia's fastest growing waste stream. As a result, our e-waste output is growing three times faster than general waste.

Every year, 88% of the four million computers and three million televisions replaced in Australia end up in landfill, contributing to over 140,000 tonnes of electronic waste^[1]. Mixed construction waste items represent those which combine plastics, metals and often wood in one item. Frequently battery powered, they pose disposal problems reflecting the need for dismantling to allow reprocessing of their elements.

[1] <https://www.cos.net.au/c/cospedia/problem-of-e-waste-in-australia> October 2022

Metal and Aluminum



In 2022, beverage containers represented 83% of all metal waste surveyed, a 50% increase over 2021 when they represented 33% of counted metals.

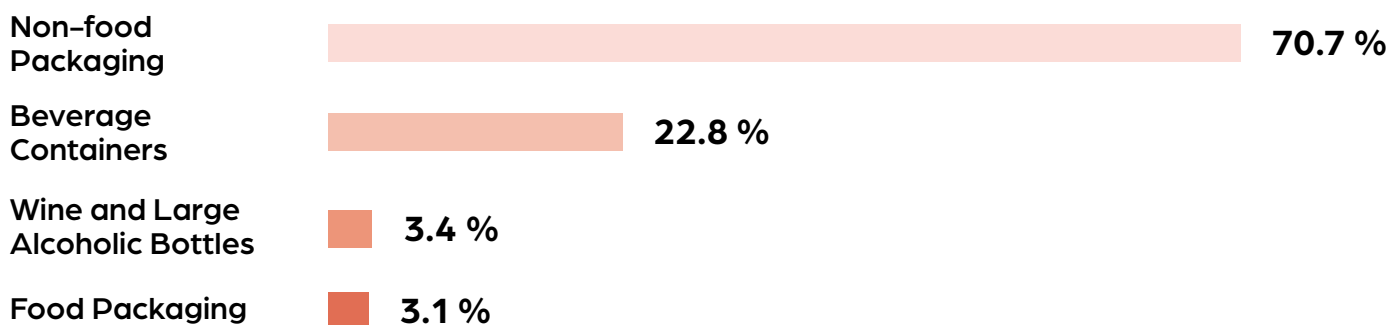
Part of this increase can be attributed to a volunteer focus on aluminium beverage cans, the count of which hit the Top 10 Individual Item list in every state and territory. Nationally these items alone reflected 78.6% of all metal items.

On a positive note, food packaging decreased its presence by 19.3%, beverage related rubbish by 13.4% and construction waste by 10.6%.

Bottle caps represented 9.1% of all metal items.



Glass



In 2022, glass accounted for 7.3% of surveyed items, 1.7% lower than 2021.

Reflective of the impact of well-established container refund schemes, the good news is beverage bottle counts continue to fall as a percentage of reported glass in states where a container refund scheme [CRS] is established. In 2022 glass beverage containers represented 22.8% of reported glass [50.8% of glass items in 2021].

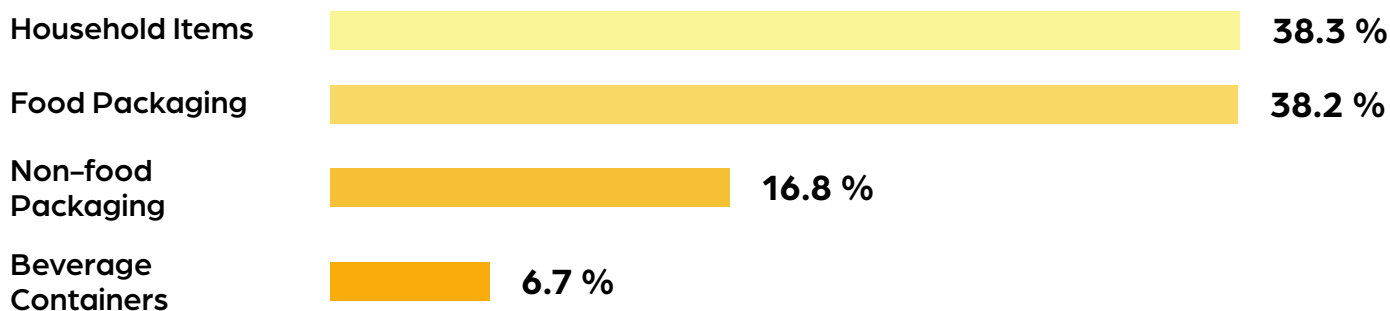


For the first time we asked volunteers to further segregate wine and large alcoholic bottles which are currently not included in a CRS. They advised 3.4% of all counted glass were these items – further reinforcing Clean Up Australia's advocacy for inclusion of these bottles in updated schemes.

Victorian and Tasmanian beverage container counts, where a CRS is yet to be implemented, were 6.4% and 8.9% higher than the national percentage ratings.

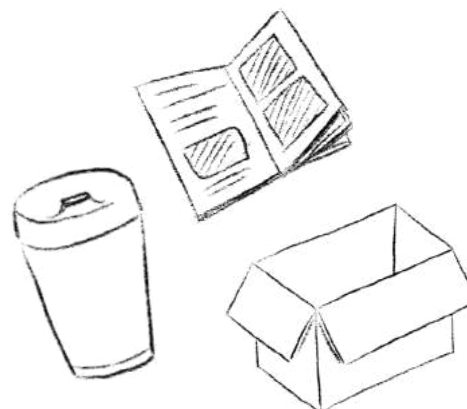
Glass pieces, both a safety and fire hazard, increased by 2.1% within national counts.

Paper and Cardboard



Household items [newspapers, books, magazines, large & small pieces of paper and cardboard] accounted for 38.3% of all paper, up 2% on 2021.

This was very closely followed by food packaging which includes paper cups, milk cartons [the flavoured variety of which are included in container refund schemes], egg cartons, fast food packaging, napkins and tissues which recorded 38.2% of paper items. This sub-category rose by 4.1% in 2022.

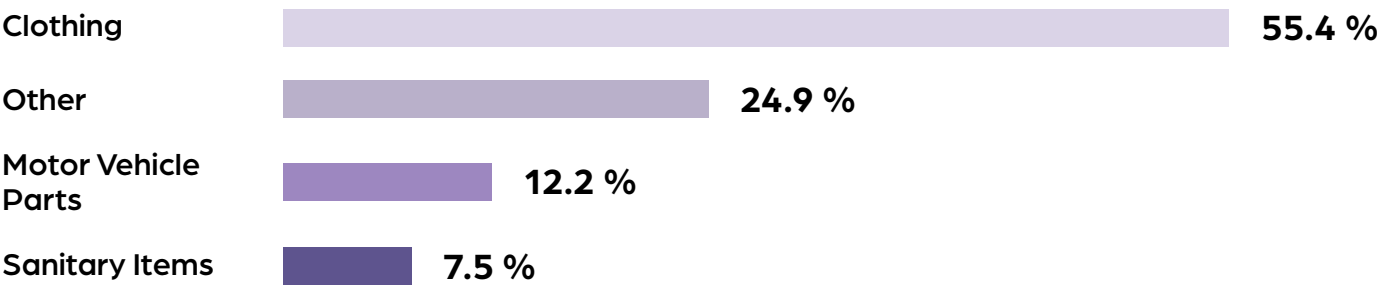


Clean Up Australia supports community calls for the inclusion of plain milk containers in CRS. The packaging is the same material as that used for flavoured milks, and while large bottles and cartons are less likely to be consumed in-transit, they are still found by volunteers, signalling that these items continue to be a wasted resource.

The good news is drink cartons covered by a CRS decreased by 7.1%.

Non-food packaging [bags, boxes, cigarette packets and wine casks] rose by 1% this year to account for 16.8% of reported paper.

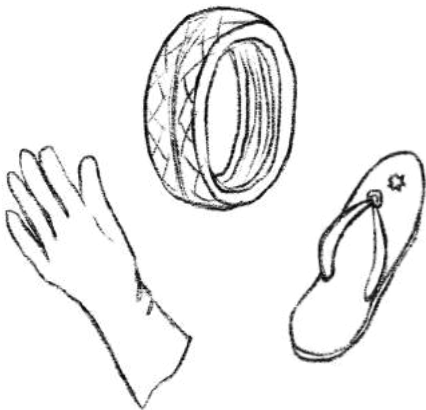
Rubber



In 2022, rubber again accounted for 0.6% of rubbish reported – a 0.4% drop and the first time we have seen rubber decrease as a proportion of total rubbish since 2014.

All item groupings within this category recorded decreased percentage ratings this year.

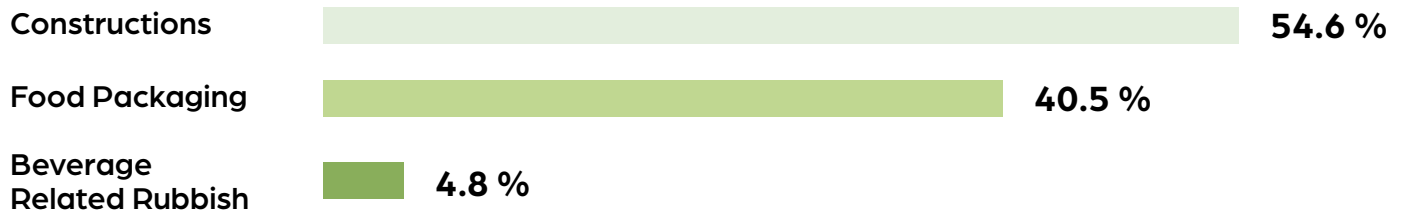
While clothing [gloves, thongs and shoes] dominated these counts, representing 55.4% of all rubber items, this result was a welcome decrease of 18.5% over 2021.



Other items, which include hoses and non-identified pieces of rubber accounted for 24.9% of reported rubber, also a welcome decrease of 13.6% over last year.

Tyres represented 12.2% of rubber, 6% less than their 2021 counts.

Wood

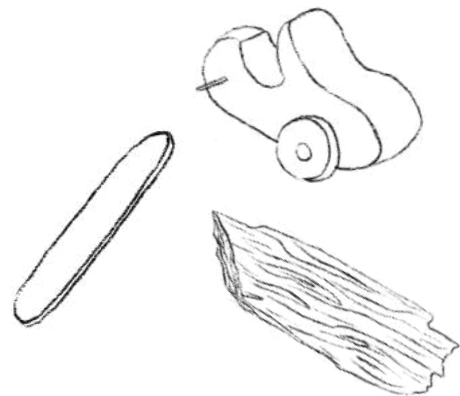


At 0.5% of reported items, wood halved its percentage impact this year.

Ice-cream stick counts reflected 40.5% of counts [37.9% of wooden items in 2021], again making them consistently the most reported wooden item.

Bottle cork counts also rose slightly this year to reflect 4.8% of reported wooden items [4.5% in 2021].

Construction materials dropped by 3% to account for 54.5% of counts, [57.6% of surveyed wood in 2021].



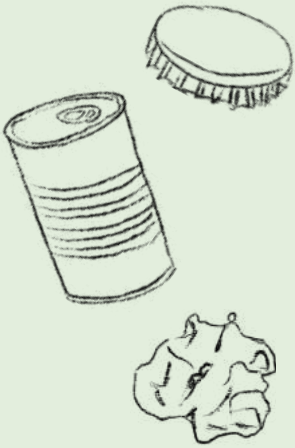
Site Rubbish Composition

The following table shows the proportions of different types of rubbish removed from each site as a percentage of all rubbish reported.

	Waterways	Parks	Beach/ Coast	Roadsides	Footpaths	Bushland	Shops/ Mall	Schools
Plastic	46.2	50.7	57.5	44.3	52.7	60.4	32.5	72.6
Polystyrene	16.4	8.9	7.8	12.4	14.1	13.2	8.9	6.6
Glass	14.2	4.5	0.0	5.6	1.8	8.2	6.0	1.7
Rubber	0.5	0.5	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.5	1.0	0.3
Paper/ Cardboard	2.8	6.2	4.8	8.0	4.0	3.7	8.5	4.4
Metals	7.1	7.2	5.7	16.6	11.8	7.5	10.2	4.0
Wood	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.2	0.6	1.5	0.4
Miscellaneous	12.5	21.5	22.8	11.8	14.6	5.8	31.4	10.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

	Outdoor Transport	Drive Sites	Other	Total
Plastic	64.0	24.7	51.2	52.5
Polystyrene	21.9	9.7	11.1	11.5
Glass	0.0	3.8	4.9	6.1
Rubber	0.0	0.6	0.6	0.6
Paper/ Cardboard	0.0	4.3	4.7	4.7
Metals	4.4	34.7	9.5	8.1
Wood	0.0	0.2	0.5	0.5
Miscellaneous	9.6	22.0	17.5	16.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0





Plastics [plastic and polystyrene] account for 63% [46% in 2021] of all reported rubbish and are the most common item reported across all locations, accounting for:

- 79% of items reported in school grounds
- 74% of bushland rubbish
- 60% of rubbish reported within parks
- 62% along roadsides footpaths
- 54% of waterway items [rivers + beach/coastal areas + dive sites].

26% of if items reported along roadways/footpaths are miscellaneous items [prime individual item of which is cigarette butts]. In parks this is 22% of all rubbish and in waterways it averaged 19%.

35% of rubbish reported at dive sites was metal.

9% of waterway rubbish is glass, followed by 8% in bushland [where it is a fire hazard] and 6% of that in shops/malls.

Paper reported in shops/malls accounted for 9% of all reported rubbish.



The Great Northern Clean Up 2022

The Great Northern Clean Up (GNCU) is Clean Up Australia's Clean Up event dedicated to communities north of the Tropic of Capricorn. It is the northern sibling of Australia's largest environmental day of action, Clean Up Australia Day, and has been an annual event since 2009. The GNCU gives northern Australian communities the flexibility to participate in Clean Up events in the cooler months, after the peak tourist period and prior to the cyclone season.

Since 2009, an estimated total of 46,686 volunteers have participated at 1,488 registered locations, achieving:

- 173 sites, approximately 6,133 volunteers, donating an estimated 12,266 hours to Clean Up activities in the **Northern Territory**
- 1,029 sites, approximately 40,206 volunteers, donating an estimated 80,412 hours to Clean Up activities in **Queensland**, and
- 186 sites, approximately 6,325 volunteers, donating an estimated 12,650 hours to Clean Up activities in **Western Australia**

A special thank you to the local councils who worked with us in supporting the GNCU volunteer efforts.



In 2022, the GNCU campaign ran throughout the months of August to early November.

New initiatives included:

- **Clean Up Cairns**, under which over 200 volunteers came together at 15 events to remove rubbish from 16kms of the region's urban creeks and waterways, was held in September. Together volunteers removed 137 bags or 34 wheelie bins of litter. In 2022, The Big Butt Hunt, a Clean Up pilot event in partnership with Cairns Regional Council and No More Butts – focused on cigarette butts; resulting in a haul of 4,500 butts.
- **Clean Up Mackay** was held over the period August and September. Attracting an estimated 97 volunteers across 11 council hosted events, volunteers reported 3,278 tonnes of collected rubbish.