

LITTER REPORT FY23 ACT

During the financial year of 2023, 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 litter.

While over a million joined us last year across 17,139 sites the Litter Report FY23 is a snapshot of litter removed by Clean Up Australia volunteers during Clean Up Australia Day and Every Day Clean Ups across a portion of these sites. Across the ACT, the Report is based on the count of 6,167 items from 28 surveyed locations (6,199 items from 36 locations in 2022).

ACT SITES REGISTERED:

362 (207 in 2022)

ACT ESTIMATED VOLUNTEERS:

36,092 (21,031 in 2022)

ACT ESTIMATED VOLUNTEER HOURS:

72,184 (42,062 in 2022)

MAJOR TYPES OF LITTER REPORTED

	FY23 Count	%
All Other Plastics	2,359	38.3%
Soft Plastics	1,534	24.9%
Hard Plastics	1,345	21.8%
Paper/Cardboard	368	6.0%
Metal	309	5.0%
Glass	135	2.2%
E-Waste	71	1.2%
Wood	16	0.3%
Rubber	15	0.2%
Miscellaneous	15	0.2%
	6,167	100.0%

NOTABLE % CHANGES FROM 2022

↑ Increases:	↓ Decreases:	Unchanged:
All Other Plastics 2.4%	Soft Plastics 4.8%	Paper/Cardboard
Hard plastics 5.9%	Metal 0.8%	Glass
	Wood 1.3%	E-Waste
	Miscellaneous 2.1%	Rubber

TOP 10 GROUPED ITEMS AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL LITTER SURVEYED

Grouped Items	FY23 Count	%
Non-Food Packaging	2,671	43.3%
Soft Plastics	1,534	24.9%
Food Packaging	843	13.7%
Beverage Containers	622	10.1%
Beverage Litter	212	3.4%
Household Items	111	1.8%
E-Waste	71	1.2%
Sanitary Items	42	0.7%
Toys & Sporting Equipment	26	0.4%
Construction Materials	16	0.3%

NOTABLE CHANGES

There are some changes in the top 10 grouped items when compared with 2022. Packaging leads litter counts, with non-food packaging increasing by 14%, taking the top place from soft plastics which saw a decrease of 5%. Food packaging has moved from fourth to third place with an increase of 3%. Beverage containers and beverage litter saw a decline of 2.9% and 2.5% respectively in fourth and fifth places.

The good news is sanitary items decreased by 6%, reflecting a significant reduction in the number of face masks reported.

All other items show minimal percentage changes over 2022.

TOP 10 INDIVIDUAL ITEMS AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL LITTER SURVEYED

Individual Items	FY23 Count	%
Cigarette Butts	2,268	36.8%
Soft Plastic	1,311	21.3%
Plastic Beverage Bottles (single-use)	307	5.0%
Takeaway Food Containers	291	4.7%
Aluminium Beverage Cans	222	3.6%
Chips and confectionery bags	192	3.1%
Straws	160	2.6%
Cutlery/utensils/plates (single-use)	156	2.5%
Fast-food packaging items	151	2.4%
Takeaway Coffee Cups	144	2.3%

NOTABLE CHANGES

The top five items remain relatively unchanged between FY23 and 2022, except for cigarette butts moving into first position over soft plastics, with a 14% increase in reported cigarette butts and a 5% decrease in reported soft plastics. Cigarette butts are a priority item in the ACT with butts accounting for 37% of all reported litter.

Single-use cutlery/utensils/plates and fast-food packaging items have moved into the top 10 individual items reported, while plastic packaging pieces and face masks moved out of the list.

LITTER DISTRIBUTION BY SITE TYPE

ACT	Number of sites	% of total litter count
Outdoor Transport	1	1.9%
Park	10	27.1%
Public Bushland	3	10.3%
River/Creek	5	8.2%
Roadway	3	7.9%
School Grounds	4	10.3%
Other	2	34.3%