

Checklist For The Reporting Of Illegally Dumped Rubbish

Illegal rubbish dumping is a serious environmental crime. Accurate information, properly preserved evidence and prompt reporting can assist Council and other enforcement authorities to identify offenders and take appropriate action.

1. Protect Your Immediate Safety

- ☐ Do not confront, approach or attempt to detain anyone involved.
- ☐ Remain at a safe distance.
- ☐ Do not enter private property or place yourself in danger to obtain evidence.
- ☐ Do not touch, open, move or search through dumped rubbish material.
- ☐ Treat chemicals, suspected asbestos, syringes, gas cylinders, batteries, medical waste and unidentified substances as potentially hazardous.
- ☐ Call **Triple Zero 000** where there is an immediate threat to human health, public safety or the environment, including:
 - a. fire;
 - b. toxic fumes;
 - c. a major chemical spill;
 - d. dangerous materials on a roadway;
 - e. an offender presenting an immediate danger; or
 - f. any situation requiring an urgent emergency response.

2. Record the Exact Location of the Dumped Rubbish

- ☐ Record the street name, nearest property number and suburb.
- ☐ Identify the nearest intersection, landmark, reserve, creek, roadway or access track.
- ☐ Record whether the rubbish is located on:
 - a. Council land;
 - b. a road or nature strip;
 - c. parkland or a reserve;

- d. private property;
- e. state managed land; or
- f. land near a creek, drain or waterway.

☐ Record the GPS coordinates including latitude and longitude or save a map location, where available; and

☐ Identify the safest and most practical access point for Council officers etc.

3. Record the Date and Time

☐ Record the date on which the rubbish dumping occurred or was discovered.

☐ Record the approximate time of the incident.

☐ Record the time the offender or vehicle arrived and departed, where known.

☐ Note whether the dumping appears to be recent, repeated or ongoing.

☐ Record the dates and times of any previous dumping at the same location.

4. Record What You Observed

☐ Describe exactly what occurred.

☐ Record the number of people involved.

☐ Provide a factual description of each person without speculation or assumption.

☐ Record the type and approximate quantity of rubbish.

☐ Note whether the dumped material includes:

- a. household rubbish;
- b. furniture or mattresses;
- c. building or demolition waste;
- d. soil, bricks or concrete;
- e. tyres;
- f. green waste;
- g. chemicals or liquids;
- h. suspected asbestos containing material;

- i. commercial or industrial waste;
- j. electronic waste;
- k. gas cylinders;
- l. syringes or medical waste; or
- m. identifying documents, labels or packaging.

☐ Record whether the rubbish is obstructing:

- a. a road;
- b. footpath;
- c. driveway;
- d. drain;
- e. waterway;
- f. emergency access point; or
- g. public entrance or thoroughfare.

5. Record Vehicle Information

Where it is safe to do so, record:

- ☐ The vehicle registration number.
- ☐ The state or territory of registration.
- ☐ The vehicle's make, model and colour.
- ☐ The vehicle type, including whether it is a:
 - a. car;
 - b. utility;
 - c. van;
 - d. truck;
 - e. trailer; or
 - f. skip bin vehicle.

- ☐ Any business name, logo, telephone number or signage displayed on the vehicle.
- ☐ Any distinguishing damage, accessories, markings or modifications.
- ☐ The direction in which the vehicle travelled after leaving the location.

Photographs of registration plates, vehicles and identifying business information can materially assist Council and other enforcement authorities.

6. Preserve Photographs and Video

- ☐ Take wide photographs showing the entire dumping location.
- ☐ Take medium range photographs showing the approximate quantity and type of rubbish.
- ☐ Take close photographs of identifying features without touching, opening or disturbing the material.
- ☐ Photograph vehicles and registration plates only where it is safe and lawful to do so.
- ☐ Preserve relevant:
 - a. CCTV footage;
 - b. dashcam footage;
 - c. mobile telephone recordings; and
 - d. photographs.
- ☐ Retain the original files at their full resolution.
- ☐ Do not crop, edit, filter, alter or overwrite the original recordings.
- ☐ Record who captured each photograph or video and the date and time it was taken, if possible record with the correct and current date and time recorded on the image.
- ☐ Secure relevant CCTV footage promptly before it is automatically overwritten or deleted.
- ☐ Create a backup copy while preserving the original file.

7. Record Potential Identifying Evidence

Without touching, opening or searching through the rubbish, record any clearly visible:

- ☐ Names or addresses.
- ☐ Invoices, receipts or delivery labels.
- ☐ Business documents.
- ☐ Serial numbers.
- ☐ Builder, contractor or tradesperson details.
- ☐ Vehicle or trailer details.
- ☐ Packaging linked to a business, supplier or property; and
- ☐ CCTV cameras overlooking the location.

Documents, receipts, serial numbers, labels and business information may assist authorised investigators to trace waste to its source or identify those responsible.

8. Identify Witnesses

- ☐ Record the names and contact details of witnesses who consent to providing that information.
- ☐ Encourage each witness to prepare their own independent account of what they observed.
- ☐ Record nearby properties or businesses that may possess CCTV footage.
- ☐ Do not coordinate, influence or alter witness accounts.
- ☐ Do not publish allegations, photographs, number plates or identifying information on social media.
- ☐ Advise Council if a witness is willing to provide a formal statement.

A person reporting illegal rubbish dumping may become a witness and may be required to provide evidence during an investigation or court proceeding.

9. Report the Incident to the City of Whittlesea

Reports may be made:

- ☐ Through the City of Whittlesea's online **Report Dumped Rubbish or Litter** service.
- ☐ Through **Snap Send Solve**.
- ☐ By telephone on **03 9217 2170**.
- ☐ By email to resource.recovery@whittlesea.vic.gov.au.

Include the following information:

- ☐ The exact location.
- ☐ The date and approximate time.
- ☐ A factual description of the incident.
- ☐ Vehicle and offender descriptions.
- ☐ Photographs, video or CCTV footage.
- ☐ Witness information.
- ☐ The type and estimated quantity of waste.
- ☐ Details of any immediate safety, health or environmental risks.
- ☐ Whether the location has been repeatedly targeted.
- ☐ Details of any previous report concerning the same location.

Alternative Confidential Reporting Through Your Councillor

If you have concerns about making a report directly to the City of Whittlesea Council, contact me as your Councillor.

I will receive your information and supporting evidence confidentially and refer it to Council on your behalf for proper assessment, investigation and appropriate action.

Where possible, provide:

- a. the exact location of the dumped rubbish;
- b. the date and approximate time;
- c. photographs, video or CCTV footage;
- d. vehicle registration and identifying details;
- e. a factual description of the people involved;
- f. witness information;
- g. details of any immediate risks; and
- h. any previous reports concerning the same location.

Your information may assist Council officers to assess the incident, identify those responsible and determine the appropriate investigative or enforcement response.

10. Report Serious Pollution or Hazardous Dumping to EPA Victoria

Illegal waste dumping may also be reported to EPA Victoria:

- ☐ Through EPA Victoria's online reporting service.
- ☐ Through the **24 hour pollution hotline — 1300 372 842.**

EPA reporting may be particularly appropriate where the incident involves:

- ☐ Large scale or commercial dumping.
- ☐ Hazardous, industrial or contaminated waste.
- ☐ Large quantities of tyres.
- ☐ Chemicals, liquids or other pollutants.
- ☐ Dumping affecting a creek, drain, waterway or environmentally sensitive area.
- ☐ Repeated or organised dumping.
- ☐ Waste transporters, commercial operators or industrial premises.
- ☐ A significant risk to human health or the environment.

11. Retain the Report Details

- ☐ Record the Council or EPA reference number.
- ☐ Save a copy of the submitted report.
- ☐ Retain all original evidence.
- ☐ Record the date, time and method of reporting.
- ☐ Record the name of the agency or officer contacted, where provided.
- ☐ Submit additional evidence using the same reference number.
- ☐ Report any further dumping as a new incident while referring to the earlier report.
- ☐ Maintain a simple chronological record of all reports, communications and evidence provided.

12. Do Not Interfere With the Investigation

- ☐ Do not remove dumped material unless directed or authorised by the responsible authority.
- ☐ Do not contact, warn or confront a suspected offender.
- ☐ Do not publish number plates, faces, names or accusations online.
- ☐ Do not trespass to obtain evidence.
- ☐ Do not place yourself or another person at risk.
- ☐ Do not disturb evidence that may assist an investigation.
- ☐ Allow authorised Council, EPA or police officers to assess the location, preserve evidence and conduct the investigation.

REMEMBER

Observe Safely. Record Accurately. Preserve Evidence. Report Promptly.

Illegal rubbish dumping is a serious environmental crime.

Strong community reporting can assist Council and other enforcement authorities to identify offenders, take enforcement action, recover cleanup costs and protect our great City of Whittlesea.

Our environment is a shared responsibility. Illegal rubbish dumping must not be accepted, ignored or allowed to continue.

