
The Problem Of Illegal Dumping And Littering, And Solutions To It

An environment is the green place that surrounds us as living beings. We must for ever keep it clean pollution free in order to live healthy and peaceful life. However, the environmental issues have become a threat to the environment and those living in it. Surely the planet is our home, but people aren't the only inhabitants, unfortunately they quite often forget about this point. In most cases the environmental issues are caused by harmful human activities on the biophysical environment. The illegal dumping and littering of human can affect our future one day. Humans suffer from their own faults. Pollution endangers the environment and destroys it at the same time. The future will either be green or not at all.

Litter is an important environmental problem in my community Kagiso EXT13 Krugersdorp, South Africa. The Litter consists of waste products that have been disposed of improperly, without consent which is the Rubbish such as paper, chewed gum, cans, and bottles left lying in an open or public place, Cigarette butts are the most littered item in my community and other townships. The Litter comes from different sources, and different people. For instance, it may be intentional litter by motorists discarding litter out of windows, pedestrians dropping litter on the street or footpaths, or people on picnics and at other public space events. The litter in our communities is too much and everywhere, in our home yards, streets, roadways, schools, parks and every open field. The litter has been so extent that it has now blocked our drain systems. When it rains the streets become flooded due to blocked drains blocked by litter causing a big problem in our communities.

Litter can come in many different ways and mainly because people can sometimes be rather careless and negligent. Illegal dumping, Pedestrians dropping garbage in streets and roadways, a lot of times we see someone driving ahead of us, toss an empty bottle out their window. Or it could also be someone crumbling up a receipt and missing the garbage can outside. It could even be a young child that may not know any better, carelessly dropping candy wrappers on the playground. Some do it by mistake without realizing it, and unfortunately, some simply are too careless and purposely throw trash out of their car window, or just toss an empty can across an open field. Whenever you go to an event and there are going to be thousands and thousands of people there, it is going to be hard to control the amount of trash left around. As some people will throw their trash away in the proper bins, sadly, some will leave their trash careless on the ground. Smokers are the big problem, after smoking they just throw their cigarette butts everywhere am connected to the environmental problems because its humans that are causing this problems by illegal dumping and littering.

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These contaminants can have dire effects on entire ecosystems, making life more difficult for humans, plants and animals. Humans are particularly susceptible to the health effects from these toxins. We live in an ecosystem where the action of one has the potential to affect the many. Litter can cause a whole range of problems for everyone in our communities. Litter discarded in streets and parks can travel through the storm water system to our rivers and creeks, where it can cause harm to wildlife. Not only is littering affecting us on the streets and our backyards. Litter costs money. Removing litter from the environment costs everyone money. Litter is a threat to public health. Litter attracts vermin and is a breeding ground for bacteria. Items such as broken glass and syringes can be a health hazard in public places. Litter can be a fire hazard. Accumulated litter and carelessly discarded cigarette butts are potential fire hazards. Litter looks bad. Litter negatively affects the image of places, especially the appearance of communities. Litter attracts litter. Litter sends out a message that people do not care about their area and that it is acceptable to litter.

I took the step to try and solve the problem of illegal dumping and littering in my community. Kagiso Extension 13 is not a very big township everyone knows each other. Lucky for me my grandparents have a church in the community and are well known Pastors. I asked permission from my grandfather to use the church to hold my meetings and educate the community especially the youth about the illegal dumping and littering the effects it has on the environment. This can be a good or a bad thing, depending on what the action is. Our mistakes have polluted the environment that we live in and we are waking up and owning to the fact. The community promised to try and reverse the damage. The good news is that every positive action counts. The small effort they make towards a greener environment can start a healing ripple effect. We may still save what is left of our natural resources and make the world a better place to live in for our future generation.

Due to the unhealthy illegal dumping sites in the community, I started a project a Clean-up Campaign, called the community to come together to clean up the sites that have been used as illegal dumping sites by the community. The community came in numbers to assist. The date set was on the 27th of April 2019. I chose this date because it's also Freedom Day a public holiday everyone is at home. Also choose this day of Freedom day because we also have the right to live in a clean community. The theme for the campaign was "YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE" The day came and the community came in numbers and all the resources we will need for the clean-up. Signs and posters containing catchy themes were placed around to encourage cleanliness, rewards and incentives would be given to those who report or warn those who litter. Also a punishment as a fine or an increased service hours will be given to those caught dumping illegally. Environmental cleanliness can be enhanced by cleaning the litter created around us all the time. Try avoiding plastic bag usage, not littering the roads by throwing the garbage, effective disposal of used materials. Also the community must adopt the reusing and recycling techniques and always monitor the pollution levels.

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After the clean-up campaign thought it was wise to have another session (01 May 2019) to educate the community about littering, we had a talk about the 3 R's: Reduce, Reuse, And Recycle. The importance of recycling and how it can be done. The benefits of recycling:

1. Recycling conserves natural resources
2. Recycling protects ecosystems
3. Recycling protects people
4. Recycling saves energy
5. Recycling cuts climate changing carbon emission
6. Recycling reduces landfill waste
7. Recycling reduce incineration
8. Recycling is cheaper than waste collection and disposal
9. Recycling creates jobs.

During the discussion we found out that a lot of people are not working and they can use recycling to get an income. So the community will keep plastic and glass for the unemployed to recycle and send it to the Drop-Off site that's close to us. Now we are using the waste for good use. The community said they will put the plastics and bottles next to the bin they won't mix it with the other waste on Thursdays when the rubbish track comes for collections of waste. No recycling is creating work for the unemployed. They can now take the plastics and glass bottles to the drop off sites and get paid. People complained that they don't have enough space to do they own recycling. The yards are small and they can't store the waste at their place for recycling so it was better to give it to the needy to take and recycle. Space is a problem to most people, it was also the cause of dumping because they didn't have a place to store the waste. Recycling is important in today's world if we want to leave this planet for our future generations.

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