

Media Release

Environment Protection Authority



GPO Box 2607 Adelaide SA 5001
250 Victoria Square Adelaide SA
T (08) 8204 2000 F (08) 8204 2020
Country areas 1800 623 445

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Covert surveillance reduces illegal dumping

A joint initiative between the EPA and the City of Onkaparinga has been attributed to a reduction in illegal dumping of rubbish and waste but there are still opportunities for further improvements with support and help from the public.

An EPA project known as “*Operation Respect*” was introduced in the Onkaparinga Council area more than a year ago using hidden surveillance cameras to crack down on illegal dumping activities.

EPA Manager Investigations & Tactical Support, Stephen Barry, said the exercise involved training Onkaparinga enforcement officers to use covert methods in areas that were becoming waste dumping hot spots.

“This program has supported an existing campaign initiative of the City of Onkaparinga to raise awareness of the issues and costs to a community attributed to the selfish activity of illegal dumping,” Mr Barry said.

It is estimated that it costs ratepayers in the City of Onkaparinga more than \$250,000 each year to clean up illegal dumping.

Illegal dumping generally involves the disposal of rubbish onto private or public land, waterways or bushland in isolated areas and can range from small bags of household rubbish, TVs and mattresses, to larger scale demolition or building waste and sometimes hazardous waste.

“Most people who illegally dump rubbish think it is a better option than paying a reasonable charge at a waste management facility or landfill to dispose of it correctly but they risk facing a maximum penalty of \$120,000 or two years’ imprisonment if prosecuted” Mr Barry said.

“In the past two months there have been five expiation notices of \$360 each issued to people who were detected dumping and we have seen a significant reduction in the number of illegal dumping incidents over the same period.”

Operation Respect has also been deployed in other council areas including Murray Bridge, Tea Tree Gully, Yankalilla and soon in Alexandrina and Victor Harbor.

The EPA encourages the reporting of illegal dumping activities anywhere in South Australia by contacting its Pollution Hotline on (08) 8204 2004, outside of the metropolitan area on 1800 623 445 or by email at epainfo@epa.sa.gov.au

For further information please contact Chris Metevelis: 0439 137 641