



Fighting Back Against the Environmental Impact of Tobacco Products



Tobacco product waste seriously impacts the health of our environment. Cigarette butts continue to be the #1 litter item found on beaches and roadsides, and represent 34% of the total litter collected in California.^{1,2}

Tobacco product waste poses a serious and costly threat to our natural areas and communities:

- California agencies spend over \$41 million each year on tobacco waste cleanup.²
- Littered cigarette butts have been linked to costly, destructive wildfires which threaten both wildlife and communities.²
- Cigarette butts release toxic chemicals into the environment including arsenic, lead, and nicotine.¹
- Children, pets, and wildlife can be poisoned by discarded cigarette butts or e-liquid residue.
- Toxic chemicals in tobacco waste threaten our precious aquatic ecosystems and are toxic to freshwater micro-organisms.^{3,4}

How smart policy can protect California's natural spaces from the harms of tobacco litter:

- Strong local smokefree outdoor air regulations and strict enforcement can reduce the amount of tobacco products consumed and reduce tobacco litter.
- Shift the burden of responsibility to tobacco manufacturers and distributors by passing local policies requiring them to either take responsibility for their products' litter or pay fees to help communities develop tobacco litter control programs.
- Continue to pass policies proven effective at reducing the number of tobacco users, particularly policies aimed at keeping kids from getting hooked in the first place.

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SOURCES

¹ California Department of Public Health Tobacco Control Program. Tobacco Waste Infographic

<http://tobaccofreeca.com/environment/cigarette-butts-are-toxic-to-the-environment/>

² California Department of Public Health Tobacco Control Program. Environmental Impact of Tobacco Fact Sheet

<http://tcspartners.org/Files.cfm?FilesID=469>

³ Slaughter, E., Gersberg, R., Watanabe, K., Rudolph, J., Novotny, T.E., “Toxicity of Cigarette Butts, and their Chemical Components to Marine and Freshwater Fish, *Atherinops affinis* and *Pimephales promelas*”

⁴ Moerman JW, Potts GE. “Analysis of Metals Leached from Smoked Cigarette Litter,” In Press, Tobacco Control. 2010.