

Keep Arizona Beautiful Stop Illegal Dumping Tip Sheet

Who

It takes a village to stop illegal dumping.

A successful illegal dumping prevention program will have the support of local law enforcement, local government environment, health, public works, and sanitation officials, and, most importantly, community members. Each of these groups will have to make a coordinated and sustained effort using their various areas of expertise to create and enforce illegal dumping regulations and raising public awareness of the issue.

What

Illegal dumping may go by many other names such as wildcat dumping, open dumping, fly by dumping, or midnight dumping, but it simply means that waste has been disposed of in an unregulated manner at an unregulated location.

Illegal dump sites aren't just ugly, they pose a myriad of health and safety risks to the environment and to humans directly. Often illegal dump sites are easily accessible to children who are more susceptible to any physical and chemical hazards present. They also attract rodents, insects, and other vermin, and provide a breeding ground for mosquitos that have been found to carry West Nile virus and encephalitis. Fires at illegal dump sites cause property damage and contaminate air quality. Illegal dumping in washes can cause flooding and runoff from illegal dumps contaminate surface water and ground water.

When

Illegal dumping often occurs at night or in the early morning but it can take place any time of day.

Partners in illegal dumping prevention should be vigilant around the clock, particularly in areas that are known to have a high-crime rate

or is densely populated by renters. Gang and drug related crimes contribute to illegal dumping and are generally a higher priority for law enforcement than illegal dumping. Renters may not be aware of anti-dumping regulations and may not have the means or motivation to properly dispose of waste.

Where

Because waste attracts waste, illegal dumping often occurs in an already polluted area.

Poorly maintained, poorly lit areas are especially vulnerable. Illegal dumps are often found in abandon buildings, vacant lots, along desert highways and train tracks. Areas that are sparsely populated, dark, and lack a police presence are also often targeted.

Why

When the proper disposal of waste is costly or difficult to determine, a person may turn to illegal dumping.

How

By working together taking sustainable steps toward public education and awareness and ensuring accessible services illegal dumping can be stopped in your community.

- Build an anti-dumping coalition
- Create a public education campaign to explain the regulations and health risks of illegal dumping
- Organized clean ups of existing illegal dump sites
- Install additional lighting, cameras, or increase patrols in areas known to attract dumpers
- Organize waste collection events to provide residents opportunities to dispose of waste in an appropriate manner