

Media Release



10 October 2012

Getting serious about litter to keep Taupō District beautiful

Taupō District Council is asking the community for help to keep the District beautiful. Council is giving people a friendly reminder to keep the District tidy as the Council's littering policy is updated to enable fines of up to \$400 to be issued to litterers.

Council has issued a public notice informing residents of its decision to fine those who litter between \$100 and \$400 depending on the seriousness of the incident. The proposed infringement offences and fees will be further considered by Council at the next Council meeting on 30 October.

At the lower end of the scale, a discarded cigarette butt or piece of chewing gum left in a public place will garner a \$100 fine. At the opposite end of the spectrum, dangerous litter discarded in a public place will see the litterer handed a \$400 fine.

Council is enabling the fines by adopting the provisions of sections 13 and 14 of the Litter Act 1979. Council has not altered the amounts it could fine since 1980. It was recently identified that Council needed to alter its littering policy in order to recoup some of the costs associated with cleaning up the litter as well as providing a disincentive for people who litter in our environment.

Group Manager Operational Services, Gareth Green, says that generally people are good about helping to keep our District beautiful. "There are rubbish bins and options for discarding litter and most people use them. This change is primarily to dissuade people from untidy actions."

Historically, those who were caught littering were ordered to clean up their rubbish but no fines were issued. Council responded to at least 68 litter complaints in the District in the 2011-12 financial year, but did not issue any infringement notices to deter offenders because the \$20 fine was not considered an adequate amount to change behaviour.

Council's compliance team are responsible for issuing the infringement notices. They will monitor the streets of the Taupo District for littering and seek the community's support by asking that people let Council know about litter in their area.

END

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

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