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Litter Best Practice

The Litter Best Practice section of the website has recently being updated. If you have any additional information that you would like put on the website, please contact Mairead Hogan on mairead.hogan@tesltd.ie

CURRENT NEWS**Update to Appendices 5 & 6**

The Litter Monitoring Body has increased the minimum number of surveys to be completed by all local authorities, this will allow for a more accurate and reflective picture of the composition, causative factors and litter pollution levels both at a national and local level.

2005 Systems Survey Databases and Forms

The 2005 Systems Survey Databases and Forms are available on the litter website, please ensure that all local authorities, save databases onto the network drive within the local authority. The Area Cleanliness Photos are also available on the website www.litter.ie please ensure that surveyors use these photos when carrying out the Litter Pollution Surveys.



Cavan County Council– ‘Adopt a Road’– Litter Reduction Programme see www.litter.ie

Systems Audit Report February 2005

In November and December 2004, the Litter Monitoring Body visited three local authorities –

- ✓ Cork County Council (West);
- ✓ Cork City Council; and
- ✓ Carlow County Council

to audit how each local authority implements and operates the system.

The Audit Report is available on the litter website on:

www.litter.ie

Thank you to all those local authorities who for their help and co-operation during the course of these audits.

Systems Audit Report February 2005 (Contd.)

The audit identified a number of areas where remedial action was required on part of the audited local authorities to ensure that the system operates as designed – details of these issues are set out below.

Management Structure

The Audit revealed that in some cases **Senior Management is not involved in System development as might be expected.** This approach can have serious repercussions for system development/implementation in the local authorities concerned e.g. it can result in the insufficient allocation of resources to carry out litter surveys as required. In addition, Senior Management should be aware of system surveys data and the Annual Systems Survey Report to ensure that the survey results are used appropriately by local authorities to extend and improve local litter management planning.

It is essential therefore that Senior Management, especially the Director of Service for the Environment, the Environment Education Officer and Area Cleanliness Officer, are aware of the benefits of the National Litter Pollution Monitoring System and the system results available, and ensure that (i) adequate resources are available annually for system implementation and that (ii) the system survey results, in particular, are reflected in the local authorities anti litter operations.

Litter Pollution Surveys Methodology

- The need to ensure that personnel carrying out the surveys are familiar with the Area Cleanliness Ratings.
- The Conclusion/Comment sections of the survey forms were not completed in all cases.
- At least one photograph is required of each survey location – in some cases photographs were not available to be examined although surveyors had taken photographs of each survey - these had been mislaid or not attached photos to the survey form.

Litter Quantification Surveys Methodology

- It is important that Litter Quantification surveys are completed as late as possible before the next cleansing of the survey area. It was noted during the Audit that some surveys were completed after cleansing.
- Surveys are required to be carried out in a range of locations e.g. town centre, suburban area, beach, national route etc.
- Surveyor's observations on littering factors in the surveyed areas were sometimes not provided.

Systems Audit Report February 2005 (Contd.)

Miscellaneous

- It is important that an **Internal Audit** is carried out by the Litter Monitoring Officer on a regular basis. Such an audit should combine a general review of:-
 1. System methodologies to ensure that they are conducted in accordance with the System manual and ensure their continuing efficiency and effectiveness in the light of the local authorities experience with the system, and
 2. Overall system implementation by the local authority concerned.

- Cork City Council prepare a **Litter Survey Plan** prior to surveying each year which sets out the number of surveys to be completed on a monthly basis throughout the survey period, the locations of surveys and the time of day/week surveys are required to be completed.

- This Litter Survey Plan could be in the form of a folder containing a set number of Litter Quantification and Pollution Survey forms together with Potential Litter Generator Maps, a booklet detailing a checklist of areas surveyed and a set of sample Area Cleanliness Photos. In addition,
 - ✓ in relation to the *Litter Pollution Surveys*, the Plan would entail a list of hot-spot, random and local authority knowledge areas, surveying times and frequency.

 - ✓ in relation to *the Litter Quantification Surveys*, the Plan would include a list of known hotspots or largest possible sample size locations detailing surveying times.

Survey Results Databases

It is essential that the litter pollution and quantification databases are set up on a **local network** within the local authorities, this will ensure the timely delivery of results data to the Litter Monitoring Body and ensure that litter results databases are not mislaid.

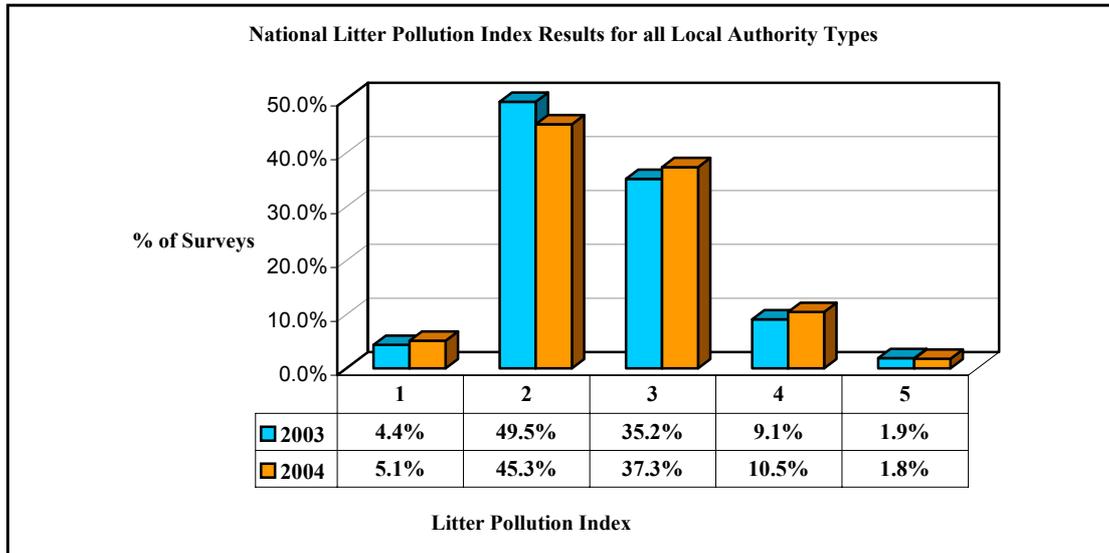
Systems Audit Report February 2005 (Contd.)

Local Authority Recommendations

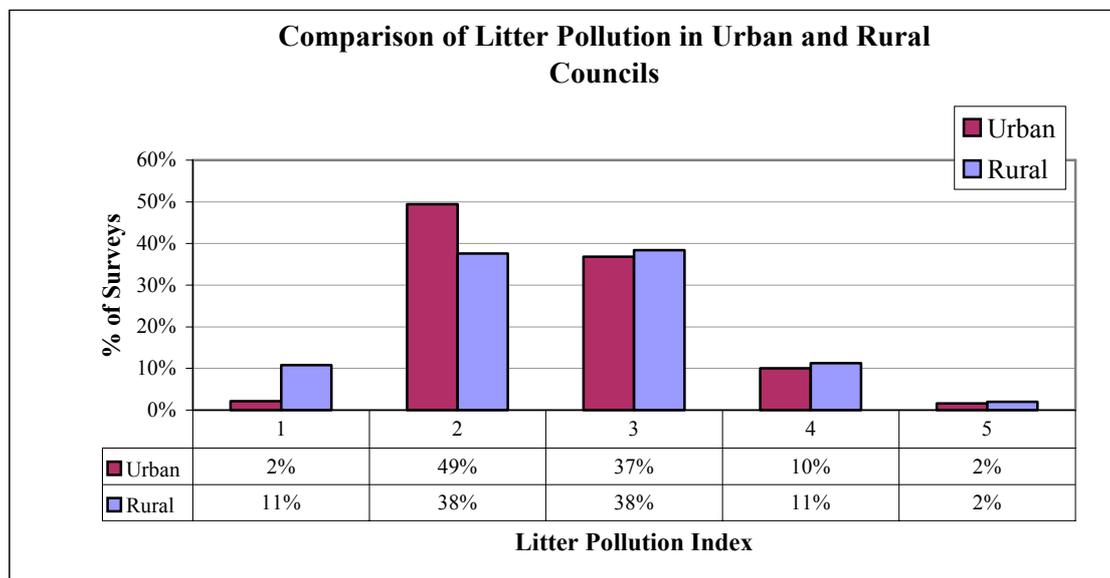
During the Audit the Litter Monitoring Body spoke with all those involved in Systems implementation in each of the three local authorities; in these discussions a number of recommendations and comments were made about the System. These include:

- ◆ Local Authorities feel that more **training is required on Systems Implementation** as the majority of those staff which were trained in the past have moved from the Environment Section and new staff require training. The Litter Monitoring Body has completed a number of training sessions in the past six months. Please contact the LMB if training is required.
- ◆ The three audited local authorities strongly support the use of a **Litter Survey Plan** to manage / co-ordinate the annual programme of litter surveys.
- ◆ It is essential that those staff involved in the implementation of the system are aware of the uses to which the system data (collected by them) is employed. So in addition to the detailed Systems Survey Report to be given to each local authority, the Litter Monitoring Body will also produce a **Systems Summary Report**, which will contain a brief summary of the key findings of the survey data submitted by each Local Authority.
- ◆ It was thought that the annual National Litter Seminar would also include **workshops** to discuss policies and strategies based on local authority surveys results and experiences with the System. The outcomes of Seminar workshops will be published and can be drawn upon by local authorities, the Litter Monitoring Body and the Department, as required, in the **development of policies and guidelines** for future litter abatement at national or local level.

National Litter Pollution Survey Results 2004

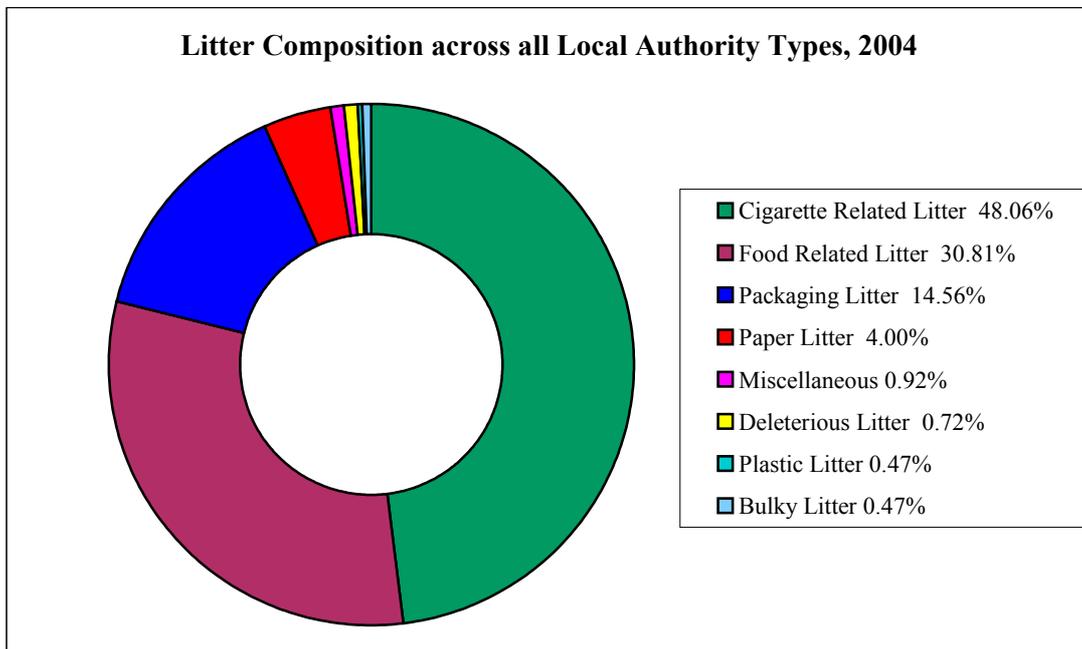


A comparison of the results from 2003-2004 indicates that while the percentage of unpolluted areas (LPI 1) has increased, the percentage of slightly polluted areas (LPI 2) has decreased. Therefore overall there has been a slight disimprovement in results from the 2003 results. This result was not unexpected given that the % changes were small with double the survey data available compared to 2003. The % changes from 2004 to 2003 may be due to more comprehensive data, which gives a more accurate representation of the national litter problem, rather than a worsening position.



It can be seen from the figure above that there is a significant disparity in terms of the extent and severity of litter problems between these local authority types, with 11% of rural areas unpolluted (LPI 1) compared to only 2% in urban areas. This may be as a result of denser populations and the concentration of potential litter generators.

Litter Quantification Survey Results 2004



- ◆ Cigarette related litter constitutes the highest percentage (48.06%) of litter in the locations surveyed.
- ◆ Food related litter at 30.81% is the second largest category of litter pollution recorded. Chewing gum is the single largest litter component in the food related litter category, and also the second largest component nationally, comprising 29.16% of all litter recorded in the litter quantification surveys carried out in 2004 compared to 28.26% in the 2003 surveys.
- ◆ Packaging litter (14.56%) is the third largest litter component of national litter pollution recorded.



Impact of the Ban on Smoking in the Workplace

The results of litter quantification surveys can be used to examine trends in cigarette related litter since the introduction of the Ban on Smoking in the Workplace in Ireland as part of the Public Health (Tobacco) Act, 2002 (Section 47) Regulations.

The graph below compares the percentage of litter items that are cigarette related (and each of the components of this litter type) from 2003 to 2004.

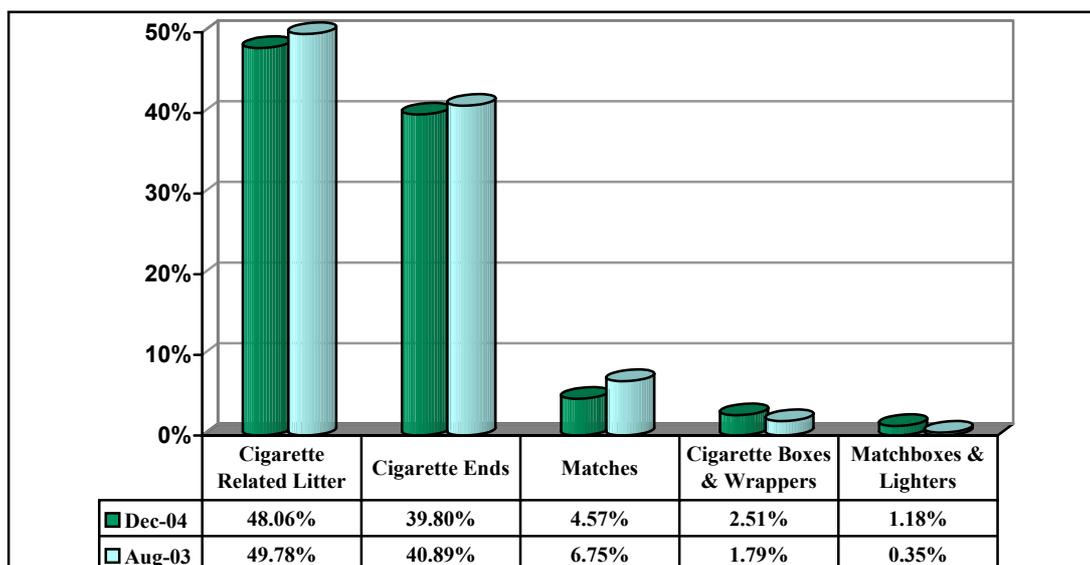
Cigarette litter has decreased slightly by 1.72% and this is due to a reduction in the proportion of cigarette ends and matches being littered.

However when comparing the incidence of cigarette related; that is the count of cigarette related litter from 2004 to 2003 in the Dublin Local Authorities, this shows a 16.8% increase in the number of cigarette related litter dropped in 2004.

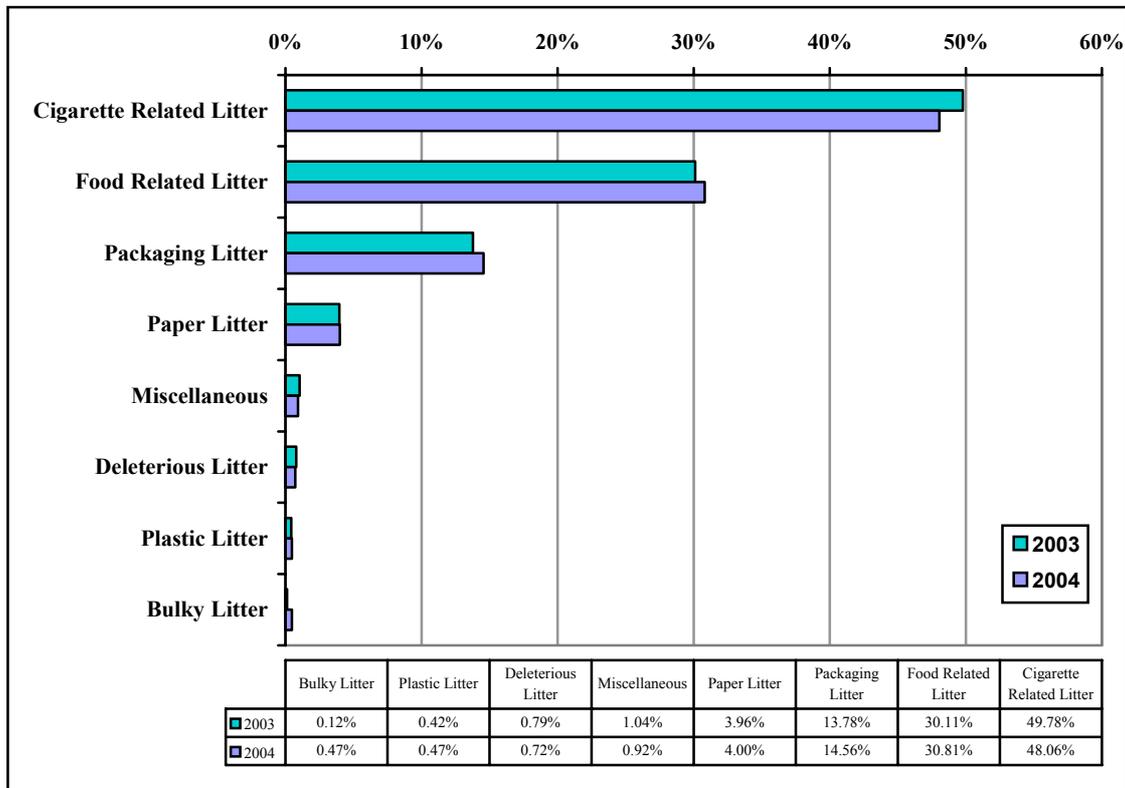
This can be explained by a number of factors;



- ⇒ Litter Quantification survey results were submitted by 58 local authorities compared to 34 in 2003.
- ⇒ Gathering points as a causative factor have become more significant and cigarette litter is concentrated in these locations.
- ⇒ Surveys carried out in a range of locations and some areas may be less concentrated in Cigarette related litter.
- ⇒ “Smoke Free at Work” website indicates that there are 7,000 fewer smokers since the ban has been introduced.



Comparison of Litter Composition between 2003 and 2004



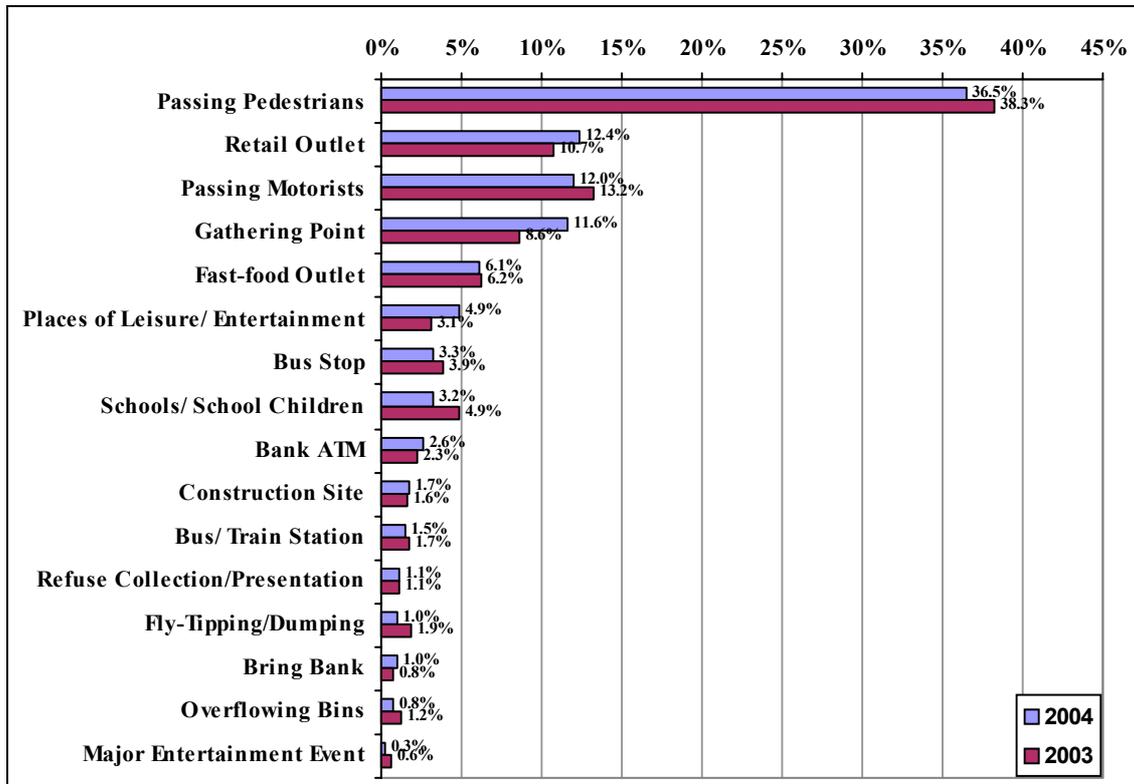
A comparison of the results of Litter Quantification Surveys carried out in 2003 and 2004 shows a similar composition of litter. However, analyses revealed differences in the relative quantities of certain components. The percentages of cigarette related litter has decreased slightly while the percentage of food related litter and packaging litter have both increased slightly.

Cigarette related litter has remained a greater component of litter in Dublin Local Authorities than in other local authority types. Food related litter is significantly greater component of litter in city councils than other local authority types.

This is due to a high proportion of chewing gum litter in City Councils (46%). Packaging litter is more significant in county councils than in other local authority types. Cigarette and food related litter are the highest components of litter in all local authority types with bulky litter contributing to the lowest percentage of litter in all local authority types.

It is apparent that the composition of litter is similar across local authority types with some variances from the national trend being noted. This is not attributed to any one individual packaging item in particular, but to an overall increased level of littered packaging items in county council area.

Causative Factors of Litter Pollution 2003/2004



The greater volume of surveys data available in 2004 confirms the relative ranking of causative factors identified in 2003. The % fluctuations in the comparative data for 2003 and 2004 was expected due to the larger volume of data available in 2004 and therefore is accurately representing the picture on the ground.

- ⇒ Passing pedestrians continue to constitute the greatest single causative factor of litter pollution, accounting to over 36% across all local authorities.
- ⇒ Retail outlets (from 10.7% in 2003 to 12.5% in 2004) and gathering points (from 8.6% in 2003 to 11.5% in 2004) have increased as a causative factor, this is as a result of the Ban on Smoking in the Workplace as more people congregate outside this type of buildings to smoke since the Ban.
- ⇒ Passing motorists (11.7%) are the second largest causative factor in County Councils (excluding Dublin), Borough and Town Councils, and City Council's.

Passing pedestrians constituted 36.5% of all causative factors identified in 2004. Data is therefore compiled on the basis of the most obvious source of litter. The other causative factors are retail outlets, passing motorists and gathering points.