



ARE CIGARETTE BUTTS LITTER?

When it ends up on the ground and not in a receptacle, a cigarette butt is litter. Partially smoked cigarettes, matches, disposable lighters, packaging, and cigarette butts are all part of Rochester's litter problem.

Individuals who would never litter beverage cans or paper packaging often don't consider tossing butts on the ground as littering. In fact, some people think it's the right thing to do to prevent fires.

IMPACTS TO YOUR COMMUNITY

Although it's one of the smallest pieces of litter, many volunteers report cigarette butts as the top item collected during the *Help Make Rochester A Litter Bit Better!* city-wide litter clean up event. All those butts have an impact on our community:

Creates blight. Cigarette butts are unsightly. They create a sense that no one cares about the community.

Pollutes waterways. Butts are easily carried in storm water runoff through drainage systems and eventually to local streams, rivers, and waterways. Cigarette filters contain cellulose acetate; a form of plastic that does not biodegrade. Cigarette butts contain about 4,000 chemicals that degrade water quality and cause problems for aquatic life.

Costly to clean up. Property owners and municipalities bear the expense of cigarette litter cleanup at building entrances and exits, sidewalks, parking lots, streets and storm drains.



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TIPS FOR REDUCING CIGARETTE BUTT LITTER

Here's how smokers can *Help Make Rochester A Litter Butt Better!*:

- **Carry a portable or pocket ashtray when smoking outside.** If you can't find one to buy, make one out of an old pill tin or coin purse.
- **Use a receptacle to dispose of cigarette butts, packaging, and lighting materials.** If receptacles are not available where you work or shop, discuss this problem with the appropriate manager.
- **Don't throw butts out of car windows.** Place butts in a car ashtray, portable ashtray, or container with a secure top such as an empty water bottle.
- **Be aware of local litter ordinances.** Rochester has a litter ordinance that includes cigarette butt litter. These are enforceable and carry penalties.
- **Learn about managing your waste.** Visit the "What You Can Do" page on the storm water website (www.rochesterstormwater.com) for more information.
- **Save the Date: A Litter Bit Better! 2011 will be April 16-23.** Join the thousands of volunteers working to eliminate litter in Rochester. Find out more at www.RNeighbors.org.



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