




Speech By
Hon. Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (3.16 am): I want to congratulate the organisers of Clean Up Australia Day and thank the many volunteers across Queensland who helped improve their local environments by removing rubbish on Sunday, 3 March this year. There are a couple of events in my electorate that I want to pay particular attention to this morning. Firstly, thank you to the year 7 students at Wamuran State School who a little later than this on Friday morning of last week got stuck into cleaning up both sides of the D'Aguiar Highway at Wamuran. Unfortunately, most of the rubbish we found was cigarette butts. We have managed to stamp out a few things but seeing those cigarette butts left on the ground is quite appalling.

It was also my pleasure to join a band of soggy but dedicated volunteers and lend a hand to clean up Beerburrum Forest on Sunday. I joined approximately 50 volunteers who filled the equivalent of 26 one-tonne utes with waste from just 1.2 kilometres of forest tracks. We collected televisions, lounges, a sink, a bird cage, washing machines, fridges and roughly 150 tyres and even a bag of used nappies. As I helped a couple of four-wheel drive enthusiasts push a fridge out of the forest, I thought to myself, 'Wouldn't it be great if we could do away with the need for Clean Up Australia Day altogether?' I wish we did not have to do it. I wish people had the mindset that they should not litter and they need to do the right thing.

We in the Newman government are certainly doing our bit to ensure that littering is not the easy option. We are making it harder for those who are dumping in places like Beerburrum state forest. We did get rid of the waste tax. We are working on a new waste strategy and we are working in partnership with organisations like Keep Australia Beautiful Queensland and the Australian Packaging Council.

We had a couple of other things going on on Clean Up Australia Day, and I want to acknowledge that through funding allocated in Everyone's Environment grants we had a fantastic effort from Reef Check Australia. They received \$40,000 which they put to good use on the weekend by holding a Moreton Bay Clean Up Australia Day event on North Stradbroke Island. They had a range of partners including the Quandamooka people, Wild Mob and Stradbroke Wildlife Rescue. Unfortunately, they too were very successful. They picked up 124 kilograms of litter which included things like 767 cigarette butts, 659 pieces of plastic consumer items, 226 metal bottle caps and an estimated 1,000 metres of fishing line.

Litter impacts our public spaces. It affects our recreational spaces and our tourism industry, and it impacts on property values. We must do better, but in the meantime I thank all of those tireless volunteers and the many members in this chamber who did their bit last Sunday