

MEDIA RELEASE

PUBLIC BIN BANKS – GONE FOR GOOD!

The last public bin banks in popular Murray River holiday communities at Brenda Park, Pelican Point and Scotts Creek will be removed in a bid to stop illegal dumping and improve waste management.

Mid Murray Council will upgrade the bin service within each of the areas, taking them from a public bin bank - to a rural individual waste bin collection service - in line with recent changes successfully made across the entire district.

Already, more than 95% of eligible properties in the Council area have improved waste collection services through the implementation of privately managed bin banks or individual bin collection. Council is in the process of removing the last of these facilities.

Following the October long weekend, Council was forced to spend almost \$1600 removing dumped rubbish from two of these bin banks alone. This follows similar incidents at public bin banks during peak visitor times.

Mid Murray Mayor Dave Burgess said illegal dumping presented not only a substantial cost to Council, but was also a significant environmental issue and a threat to the region's growing tourism economy.

"Illegal dumping is an increasing financial burden on Council and the local community. With the increase in the Solid Waste Levy it's now even more expensive for ratepayers to pick up the tab for these irresponsible people who choose to use the region as their dumping ground," Mayor Burgess says.

"This dumping is occurring in some of our most popular holiday spots.

"Our region is widely known for its beautiful Murray River environment and relaxed lifestyle, but holidaymakers are too often being left with overflowing, putrid bin banks as one of the final impressions of our region.

"The amount of rubbish left at these sites just reinforces to Council that public bin banks have to go. It's unfair for the whole community to be slugged for the ongoing costs of cleaning up these areas when there's a simple solution to the problem – new waste collection services and community education."

The Council has worked closely with the shack communities to explore options for waste collection services. It had proposed a shift to a privately managed bin bank, or a direct residential frontage kerbside bin collection service, but was ultimately unable to reach agreement with the associations.

Instead, leaseholders within the remaining areas will be provided with one 240 litre general waste bin per (leased) property and residents will be responsible for placing the bins in a designated, central collection point, for weekly collection.

Individual waste bin collection services were implemented across the southern part of the Council district in 2017 following a successful trial in 2016. The changeover in the northern area began in 2018.

The change has already improved waste management and reduced illegal dumping in other holiday areas.

"We have seen significant reductions in illegal dumping in other areas such as Swan Reach, Teal Flat, South Punyelroo, Beaumonts/North West Bend (Morgan) and Bowhill that have made the switch to either privately managed bin banks, or the new roadside collection service," Mayor Burgess says.

“Across SA and Australia we are seeing attitudes changing towards waste management and we have certainly seen that reflected in the way most of our communities have adapted to this new system.

“We understand that change isn’t always popular with everyone, however, Council is committed to service improvements and efficiency across our entire district. Each of us has a role to play in that, and responsible waste management begins at home, so we are urging ratepayers to do their bit to minimise the amount of waste they are producing.

“We can no longer afford to send substantial amounts of rubbish to landfill because of the sheer cost that will hit our communities once the State Government’s Solid Waste Levy increase comes into play from January 2020.”

Residents within the remaining sites have received information from Council about what these changes mean.

Council remains open to the establishment of private bin banks for the exclusive use of these communities or direct residential frontage (kerbside) collections if requested by the relevant association.

As part of this process, the Council is also working with the Morgan Primary School on the relocation of its recycling cages for cans and bottles from these sites in order to find a positive solution to ensure the school can continue its fundraising activities.

For more information visit www.mid-murray.sa.gov.au/services/waste-management2/recyclingandwaste.

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