Newsletter & Social Media Example Content

Topic: Illegal Dumping

Newsletter Content:

Illegal dumping is simply disposing of any trash in a place where you have no legal right to do so, such as throwing old tires in a ditch, leaving old furniture on the side of the road, or tossing garbage in a vacant lot. Illegally dumped trash is not only unsightly, but it can also be dangerous to human health and the environment. Some debris can contain sharp items that can cause injury, or chemicals that can seep into the soil and local waterways. Plus, many sites with illegally dumped trash can be breeding grounds for disease-carrying rodents or mosquitoes which creates a major health risk for people living nearby.

Depending on the weight and type of trash dumped (commercial or non-commercial) illegal dumping in Texas is a misdemeanor or state jail felony and can be punishable by fines or even jail time. If you see someone illegally dumping trash, call the police. You can also report illegal dumping and water pollution using the [Galveston Bay Action Network (GBAN) pollution reporting tool](https://galvbay.org/take-action/#report-pollution) available online or using an app available in the iTunes store or Google Play store. Or, you can use the Texas Department of Transportation’s [Report a Litterer website](http://www.dontmesswithtexas.org/get-involved/report-a-litterer/) or app.

[Insert any additional information specific to your community such as phone numbers to report illegal dumping if there is a local or county program for reporting, information on locations or events where common illegally dumped items can be properly disposed of, or any local programs working to monitor for and stop illegal dumping. This information can also be added to the example social media post language below.]

Social Media Content:

* Illegal dumping is against the law in Texas and can lead to fines or even jail time. If you see someone illegally dumping trash, report them to the police or other authorities. Be sure to safely make note of the location, time of day, description of suspects and vehicles, license plate numbers, or types of garbage being dumped. Never approach someone illegally dumping; it could be dangerous for you.
* Illegal dumping covers many improper disposal of trash activities, including but not limited to throwing litter out of your car or boat, disposing of old vehicles or appliances on public or private property, letting someone else dump trash on your property, pouring used motor oil or grease in storm drains, or dumping mattresses or furniture on the side of the road. It is also illegal to use commercial dumpsters for trash disposal without permission. If you are wondering if you are illegally dumping, you may be if you are disposing of trash on property that doesn’t belong to you or that isn’t specifically designated for public trash disposal. Check with [your municipality or waste hauler] to find out what trash disposal options are available in our community.
* If you’ve discovered an illegal dump site or witness someone illegally dumping trash, safely make note of what you saw and report it to the proper authorities, such as the police or sheriff's office. You can also report illegal dumping through the [Galveston Bay Action Network (GBAN) pollution reporting tool](https://galvbay.org/take-action/#report-pollution) or the Texas Department of Transportation’s [Report a Litterer website.](http://www.dontmesswithtexas.org/get-involved/report-a-litterer/) Apps for both tools are available by searching your device’s app store.
* What can you do about illegal dumping? Always properly dispose of your own trash. If you are transporting debris in your vehicle, make sure it is secured inside the vehicle or with a tarp outside of the vehicle. Tell your friends and neighbors about the consequences of illegal dumping. Organize or participate in a community cleanup event. Let your local elected officials know that illegal dumping is a concern in your neighborhood. And check with [your municipality or waste hauler] to find out what trash disposal options are available in our community.

Other Helpful Links & Resources:

* Galveston Bay Foundation’s Galveston Bay Action Network to report pollution: <https://galvbay.org/take-action/#report-pollution>
* Don’t mess with Texas Report a Litterer Tool: <https://www.dontmesswithtexas.org/get-involved/report-a-litterer/>

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