

# Let's Keep Our Tribal Lands Clean

Commercial tobacco product waste harms our people, animals, land, and water

## What is Tobacco Product Waste?

Tobacco Product Waste (TPW) is the trash and pollution associated with discarded and used commercial tobacco products.

### Cigarette litter

- Cigarette filters are made of a type of plastic that breaks apart into tiny particles, called microplastics, that stay in soil and water for many years.<sup>1</sup>



- **Filters made up 34% of the total litter collected in California from 1988 to 2020—they are the #1 trash item found on beaches and roadsides.**<sup>2</sup>
- Filters and other tobacco trash have nicotine and chemicals that are toxic to people, animals, land, and water.



### E-cigarette litter



- **E-cigarettes are harmful for the environment because they have metal parts and batteries along with plastic and toxic chemicals.**<sup>3</sup>
- The batteries in e-cigarettes can explode and cause fires, including fires in garbage trucks and waste management plants.<sup>3</sup>
- Many e-cigarette companies tell people to take their waste to hazardous waste/electronic waste disposal facilities, but sometimes these places don't accept it because it is too difficult to recycle.<sup>3</sup>



## Tips for Proper Disposal

Tobacco products are harmful to children, wildlife, and the environment and need to be properly disposed of.

Put used cigarette butts in an ashtray or ashcan. If an ashtray is not available, use a trash can but make sure the cigarette is not still burning.

**Used e-cigarette parts are hazardous waste. Be careful because you can absorb liquid nicotine through your skin and get poisoned.**



- Turn off the device and remove the battery.
- Don't rinse the device because the water used will become toxic.
- Take used batteries to an electronic recycling center.<sup>4</sup>
- Take the rest of the device to a household hazardous waste program that accepts e-cigarettes. If this is not possible, you can take them to Drug Enforcement Agency National Prescription Take Back Days.<sup>5</sup>



## What can we do?

We all deserve a clean environment, and a strong community. We can get there by helping people understand the environmental impact of TPW and holding tobacco companies responsible for the toxic waste.

**Visit [UNDO.org](https://undo.org) to learn more and get involved.**

We can also encourage people who smoke and vape to quit in order to protect our land from commercial tobacco waste.

## For free help quitting tobacco and nicotine:

Call **800-300-8086** | Visit **[kickitca.org](https://kickitca.org)**  
Text **"Quit Smoking"** or **"Quit Vaping"** to **66819**

### References

1. Novotny TE, & Slaughter E. Tobacco Product Waste: An Environmental Approach to Reduce Tobacco Consumption. Current Environmental Health Report, 1,3, (2014). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40572-014-0016-x>
2. California Coastal Commission. Statewide Results for Cleanups Between 1988 and 2020 [dataset]. <https://www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/ccd/history.html> [Accessed 9/15/2022].
3. Truth Initiative. Tobacco and the Environment. 2021. [https://truthinitiative.org/sites/default/files/media/files/2022/07/Truth\\_Environment%20FactSheet%20Update%202021\\_071222.pdf](https://truthinitiative.org/sites/default/files/media/files/2022/07/Truth_Environment%20FactSheet%20Update%202021_071222.pdf)
4. CalRecycle. Local Government Household Hazardous Waste Websites. 2022. <https://calrecycle.ca.gov/homehazwaste/directory/>
5. U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration. National Prescription Drug Take Back Day. [https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug\\_disposal/takeback/index.html](https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/index.html) [Accessed 9/15/2022]