

**Subject: RE: Will Litter Defeat Us?**

**Date:** Sun, 27 Feb 2005 15:14:02 -0800

**From:** "Ernie Crist" <ernie\_crist@dnv.org>

**To:** "Margaret Hansen" <Margaret.Hansen@shaw.ca>, <postmaster@city.burnaby.bc.ca>, <bsoprovich@westvancouver.ca>, <pgoldsmith-jones@westvancouver.ca>, <jferguson@westvancouver.ca>, <vdurman@westvancouver.ca>, <rday@westvancouver.ca>, <jclark@westvancouver.ca>, <rwood@westvancouver.ca>, <mayorandcouncil@vancouver.ca>, "DNVCouncil" <DNVCOUNCIL@dnv.org>, <bsharp@cnv.org>, <bperrault@cnv.org>, "Darrell Mussatto" <dmussatto@cnv.org>, <rclark@cnv.org>, <bfearnley@cnv.org>, <ckeating@cnv.org>, <rheywood@cnv.org>

**CC:** <tpeters@nsnews.com>, <mmaloney@vancourier.com>, <editorial@burnabynow.com>, <newsroom@northshoreoutlook.com>, <newsroom@burnabynewsleader.com>, <fonvca@fonvca.org>, <Cagebc@yahoo.com>, "James Ridge" <James\_Ridge@dnv.org>, "Senior Management Committee" <managcomm@dnv.org>

Dear Margaret Hansen;

Thank you very much for your initiative. I concur with you and have raised this issue many times on my own Council. If it is true for a household that cleanliness is next to godliness and that communities are judged by their appearance, then surely we must do more to fight the litter plague. There is a story somewhere that an angel was sent to a city to see whether it should be saved from destruction. The angel left in disgust so the story goes, after seeing filth in the streets.

In the final analysis this is a question of civic pride. It is the absence of such pride and a lack of cultural consciousness which is contributing to the growing litter plight. You are absolutely right, there was a time when North Vancouver was virtually litter free.

It is interesting also that you should connect cleanliness with cultural attraction and tourism. Nothing is more repulsive to tourists than to see litter, unkempt boulevards and dilapidated signs on the streets. I have compared it to walking into a restaurant, only to see parts of yesterday's breakfast on the menu. It does not exactly inspire confidence in the quality of food offered there. Who would you trust in such a dirty community. It is repulsive and would surely turn any civilised person away.

I have raised this matter on numerous occasions but it will take the public to change the mind of politicians most of whom, in my opinion, are not even conscious of such matters. It will take the public to educate them and convince them that we, the people, will not tolerate a pigsty.

Thank you for your efforts.

Yours truly,

Ernie Crist

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From: Margaret Hansen [<mailto:Margaret.Hansen@shaw.ca>]

Sent: Sunday, February 27, 2005 1:55 PM

To: postmaster@city.burnaby.bc.ca; bsoprovich@westvancouver.ca; pgoldsmith-jones@westvancouver.ca; jferguson@westvancouver.ca; vdurman@westvancouver.ca; rday@westvancouver.ca; jclark@westvancouver.ca; rwood@westvancouver.ca; mayorandcouncil@vancouver.ca; DNVCouncil; bsharp@cnv.org; bperrault@cnv.org; Darrell Mussatto; rclark@cnv.org; bfearnley@cnv.org; ckeating@cnv.org; rheywood@cnv.org

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newsroom@northshoreoutlook.com; newsroom@burnabynewsleader.com

Subject: Will Litter Defeat Us?

February 26, 2005

TO: Mayor and Council of Vancouver, West and North Vancouver, North Vancouver District and Burnaby;

CC: Editor, Vancouver Sun and Province, North Shore News, Burnaby News Leader and Now and Vancouver Courier.

Subject: Will Litter Defeat Us?

As a concerned citizen of Greater Vancouver I am writing to make you aware of a serious and growing litter problem in our communities. Although I live in the District of North Vancouver my concern extends to the City of Vancouver and its surrounding municipalities.

Litter is increasing at an alarming rate and I feel strongly that swift action is required to reverse the trend and eliminate this environmental blemish. Everywhere I go in the lower mainland I encounter cigarettes butts, pop cans, coffee cups, newspaper, fast-food packaging, gum and household refuse. Most often I encounter it on municipal property or adjacent to major arterial roadways.

Not only is litter unpleasant to look at, it takes a long time to decay; some litter contains toxic materials that are absorbed into the environment. E.g. an aluminum can takes between 200 and 500 years to break down and a plastic six-pack holder takes up to 450 years!

Litter removal is a costly problem, e.g. in London England taxpayer pays £100 million annually in street cleaning to remove the 177,000 tones of dropped litter. With the recent rapid growth of our population it is more important than ever to educate our citizens concerning this troubling trend and to encourage them to act responsibly. As a young woman growing up in Vancouver I often remember tourists remarking on the cleanness of Vancouver parks and streets, I am sorry to say that in recent years we have fallen by the wayside in maintaining this desirable standard.

Sadly, without education, people have, in recent years, become increasingly accepting of this lower standard and this attitude (e.g. 'how can one more pop can hurt?') is dangerous and further exasperates the problem. Not only will litter increase environmental restoration costs, and encourage rodents and disease it will foster a trash culture and lower citizens' self-esteem regarding the community in which they live.

Radically, Vancouver is at risk of loosing its tourist destination profile and will be hard pressed to achieve the 2010 Olympic showcase we envision unless this environmental blemish is addressed.

Through preliminary Internet research I discovered many urban cities such as:

- \* Richmond (<http://www.richmond.ca/services/recycling/environment.htm> <<http://www.richmond.ca/services/recycling/environment.htm>> );
  - \* Toronto (<http://www.city.toronto.on.ca/litter/> <<http://www.city.toronto.on.ca/litter/>> );
- and,
- \* London, England ([http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/environment/litter/litter\\_fairies.jsp](http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/environment/litter/litter_fairies.jsp) <[http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/environment/litter/litter\\_fairies.jsp](http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/environment/litter/litter_fairies.jsp)> )

have implemented environmental programs designed to control and improve litter. Lack of similar programs in the lower mainland suggests we are behind the times and is a definite setback for citizens who wish to live in clean and beautiful cities. You as the political leaders of our cities have an obligation to the citizens you represent to take proactive action now!

Please advise me on the actions you have planned and the programs you will implement in your jurisdiction to reverse this intolerable trend.

Sincerely,

Margaret Hansen, Concerned citizen.

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