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Every year, the celebration of Earth Day inspires each of us to do what we can to positively impact the environment. From cleaning up littered roadways to recycling, there are hundreds of small things you can do to make a big impact. One action that can be taken this Earth Day is really a non-action - *Don't Trash Arizona!*

Litter on Arizona's freeways costs taxpayers more than \$3 million in cleanup costs and results in numerous impacts to our environment. For instance, cigarette butts make up 38 percent of litter on Valley roadways, the most of any item littered. Cigarette butts contain toxic chemicals that can contaminate the soil and our water supply when they end up in storm drains or leach into our water supply. Additionally, work vehicles not loaded or secured properly can lead to loss of chemicals and hazardous spills on the road, thereby endangering other drivers.

Further, those cans and plastic bottles so easily and commonly tossed from the car window can be recycled. Without recycling, cans and plastic bottles can take up to 500 years to decompose.

The Maricopa Association of Government (MAG) hopes that the *Don't Trash Arizona* program reminds motorists to think twice about trashing roadways.

To empower you, here are a few tips to make the non-action of not littering a little easier on this Earth Day and every day afterward!

- Use litterbags in your vehicle.
- If you smoke, use a portable ashtray in your vehicle.
- Secure large loads with straps, ropes or bungee cords.
- Cover up loose loads like lawn clippings with a tarp or net.
- Properly maintain tires to avoid the degeneration of tire treads.

Do some empowering yourself. Are you an educator looking for content for an upcoming class or event focused on the environment and/or litter? A representative of MAG can conduct a *Don't Trash Arizona* presentation in your classroom. Contact Kelly Taft at 602-254-6300.



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