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## Survey: Fewer Arizona Motorists Littering

Annual *Don't Trash Arizona* Survey Indicates Behavior Changes, Increases in Awareness

**PHOENIX (November 9, 2015)**—Fewer Valley drivers littered over the past year. That finding from a recent survey conducted by the *Don't Trash Arizona* campaign, sponsored by the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) and the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). In fact, the decline in littering may be behind another of the survey's key findings: The level of concern among Valley residents about highway litter has dropped to its lowest level in eight years.

The survey, conducted by WestGroup Research on behalf of MAG, found that seven in ten (71 percent) of residents surveyed indicated they have not littered in the past year. This is a significant change from the 62 percent recorded in 2014. Put another way, the survey showed a 15 percent decrease in admitted littering among the general population between 2014 and 2015.

The number of people who believed highway trash to be a big or moderate problem dropped to 60 percent among the general population. This is the lowest level of concern measured to date and is much lower than five of the eight prior study years. Results are based on 401 fifteen-minute interviews with Maricopa County residents with results at a 95 percent confidence level. Here are a few other key findings:

- In addition to the decrease in littering, the survey revealed a sharp, 40 percent decline over the past year in motorists who admitted to tossing small wrappers and paper scraps out the window.
- Cigarette butt litter remains a concern. The number of drivers who reported using an ashtray to dispose of cigarettes declined between 2014 and 2015. However, the number using ashtrays is still significantly higher than in 2013.
- The survey reaffirmed that primary litterers in the region continue to be males between the ages of 18 and 34. Throughout the past year, *Don't Trash Arizona* has focused key messages toward this demographic, with the goal of increasing awareness and changing littering behavior.
- Among those who did admit to littering, food/organic material continues to be the most common type of litter mentioned by residents (50%), followed by small pieces of paper (27%) and other food wrappers (12%).
- Similar to recent years, residents reported the most common littering situation they have experienced in the past three months is trash falling out of a vehicle (26%), followed by having problems with a vehicle and leaving debris on the roadside (13%).

The *Don't Trash Arizona* campaign also encourages drivers to secure their loads to avoid a dangerous situation involving accidental litter or falling debris. Among the target audience, the survey revealed a marked increase in truck drivers who always secure their loads, up from 38 percent in 2014 to 69 percent in 2015.

A full copy of the survey and key findings is available at [www.DontTrashAZ.com](http://www.DontTrashAZ.com). The site also includes information about littering, activities and resources for students and teachers, a page to report littering violations and other information.

### About *Don't Trash Arizona*

*Don't Trash Arizona* is a joint effort between the Maricopa Association of Governments and the Arizona Department of Transportation to address the economic, safety, and health impacts of freeway litter along regional and state highways. The program is funded through Proposition 400, which was approved by voters in 2004. That funding encompasses litter pickup, sweeping, and landscape maintenance, as well as litter education and prevention. *Don't Trash Arizona* seeks to change attitudes, awareness, and most importantly, behavior, when it comes to roadway littering. Visit [www.DontTrashArizona.com](http://www.DontTrashArizona.com).