

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**CONTACTS:**Kelly Taft, (602) 615-2086
Or Lisa Nicita, (480) 368-7999

Litter Program Helping Change Behavior, Awareness
Recent Survey Indicates *Don't Trash Arizona* Messaging Making Impact Among Primary Litterers

PHOENIX (Nov. 12, 2014) — A recent survey of Maricopa County residents has revealed that the [Don't Trash Arizona](#) campaign, sponsored by the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) and the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), is inspiring litterers to make changes in the way they discard trash. Data collected as part of the survey indicate that over the past year, the target audience has become more aware of the *Don't Trash Arizona* campaign, its anti-littering messaging, and the harmful effects litter has on the environment.

The [telephone survey](#), conducted by WestGroup Research, 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 ultimately changing littering behavior.

Twenty-five percent more men between the ages of 18 and 34 reported they had not littered in the past year, compared to a similar survey in 2013. In addition, the survey indicated a sharp increase (60%) in drivers who use an ashtray inside their vehicles to discard cigarette butts. The *Don't Trash Arizona* campaign also emphasizes the need for drivers to secure their vehicle loads. While survey results indicate a decrease in the percentage of truck drivers who “always” secure their loads, it indicated a 181 percent spike in drivers who secure their loads “most of the time.”

Overall, survey results demonstrated a significant, three-fold increase in awareness for the *Don't Trash Arizona* campaign among those who have heard anti-litter related messaging, as well as a 57% increase in awareness of the *Don't Trash Arizona* website, www.DontTrashArizona.com, compared to 2013. The campaign slogan, “No cups, cans or butts” also received higher recognition among the target audience of males 18 to 34 over the past year, with 39% of respondents reporting awareness of the slogan, compared to 28% in 2013.

Besides demonstrating more awareness of the campaign, those in the target demographic appear to be changing their behaviors. The survey revealed that 39% of those in the target audience are littering less frequently while driving.

“Ultimately, we want drivers to change their behavior when it comes to how and where they get rid of trash. The *Don't Trash Arizona* campaign aims to raise awareness about littering and to encourage drivers to make more responsible choices,” Michael LeVault, MAG chair and mayor of Youngtown, said. “This survey is an important tool to help us measure how well the *Don't Trash Arizona* campaign is working. Given the results among some key categories, it appears the message is resonating among the target audience.”

Results are based on 401 fifteen-minute interviews with Maricopa County residents. The survey had a margin of error of $\pm 5\%$ at a 95% confidence level. Additionally, a supplemental survey with 202 members of the target audience was conducted via telephone.

Since 2006, combined with public relations efforts, the *Don't Trash Arizona* Litter Prevention and Education program has achieved tens of millions of audience impressions. A full copy of the survey and key findings is available at 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.

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