

Clean Up Australia Day – How to volunteer on March 1st

EARTH FIRST

By Peter West

It's that time of year again when communities all over Australia join forces to collect rubbish as part of Clean up Australia Day. This year's event is being held next weekend, Sunday March 1, and hundreds of thousands of volunteers are expected to turn up to help clean up the environment.

It has been 20 years since Ian Keirnan (chairman and founder) had a vision to drive a community-based clean up campaign in Sydney Harbour. The initiative has now grown to become Australia's largest single clean-up initiative involving people and communities from across the entire nation.

According to the Clean up Australia Day organisers, Australian's are among the highest producers of waste rubbish in the world, and billions of waste items are discarded thoughtlessly each year ending up in our waterways, streets and parklands. To date, Clean up Australia Day volunteers have collected over 200,000 tonnes of rubbish – equivalent to 4.7 million household wheelie bins!

When to get involved

There are three separate events you can participate in this year: Clean up Australia Day on March 1; Schools Clean up Day on February 27; and Business Clean up Day on February 24. For more information about these separate events, see the Clean up Australia Day website – www.cleanup.com.au

Clean up sites in Orange

A large number of sites have been registered in and around Orange this year. The ECCO community group in conjunction with the Orange City Councils Tidy Town Committee have registered 5 sites that anyone can help at on March 1st:

- Elephant Park, Woodward Street 10am – 12noon
- Moulder Park, Anson Street 10am – 12noon
- Anson Street Skate Park, Anson Street 10am – 12noon
- Hill Park, Jilba Street, Bowen 1230pm – 230pm
- Gosling Creek Reserve, Bargwana Road 1230pm – 230pm

These sites have been selected to help protect our water catchments. Collecting rubbish in these areas will contribute to higher quality water in the Blackman's Swamp Creek (thereby preventing rubbish entering the stormwater harvesting scheme) and Gosling Creek catchments.

To register or find an alternative site in Orange, go to <http://events.cleanup.org.au/>

Benefits of participating

Clean up Australia Day is a fun, easy and enjoyable event. Not only are there direct benefits to our environment, parks, gardens, waterways, wildlife and water catchment areas, but participants contribute to a truly worthwhile cause.

If you have a little time on Sunday March 1, please consider volunteering in Australia largest community based clean up initiative. All you have to do is turn up on the day at a registered site. Don't forget to wear sturdy shoes, gloves, a hat and sunscreen. For more information, contact Orange City Council, ECCO or visit the Clean up Australia Day website.

Green dates for the calendar

Sunday, March 1 – Entries open for Autumn Local Environment Awards.

Saturday, March 28 – Earth Hour.