



Don't turn a blind eye

Footpath Obstructions

Rubbish and Rubbish Bins

A recent survey conducted by Guide Dogs NSW/ACT found that 88% of people with impaired vision had encountered problems with footpath obstructions. They reported overhanging branches, footpath dining, rubbish bins, signs and uneven paths among the common hazards that affected their ability to safely, confidently and independently get out and about in their local community.

A person using a cane may not detect all hazards.

A person using a Guide Dog may be taken off the path to avoid the hazard.

A person with low vision may not see the hazard.

When a person with impaired vision encounters a footpath obstruction, they must:

- recover from the unexpected shock
- find their way around the hazard, which can force them into another hazardous situation
- relocate their path
- re-establish their direction
- continue on their journey with trepidation until their next encounter with a hazard
- In order to help reduce the incidence of this happening, a few simple actions can make a big difference.

The issue

A survey of clients by Guide Dogs NSW/ACT revealed that a staggering 88% reported difficulties negotiating footpath obstructions with 40% of clients specifically indicating that rubbish and rubbish bins on footpaths are a major problem.



Solution

Ensure that full or empty bins and rubbish for council clean ups is placed off the footpath.

What can the public do?

- Make sure your bins are placed appropriately and retrieved as soon as possible
- Keep an eye out for hazards and move bins and other rubbish off the footpath, if appropriate and possible
- Report dumped rubbish to Council

What can the councils do?

- Educate workers about this issue so that their practices minimise risk
- Provide timely collection of items placed out for council clean up
- Promptly clean up dumped items, particularly if they obstruct footpaths



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