



## For Immediate Release

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### **I Love A Clean San Diego Sets Sights on Cigarette Butt Litter *Cigarette Litter Prevention Program to Launch Locally***

San Diego, CA - I Love A Clean San Diego (ILACSD), Discover Pacific Beach, PB Town Council, Surfrider Foundation, and the Hospitality Task Force will take part this year in a program to curtail cigarette butt litter that plagues our beaches and our oceans by stopping it at its source. Thousands of cigarette butts are carelessly discarded along busy streets and sidewalks where they make their way into storm drains and pollute the marine environment. ILACSD and program partners are piloting an exciting program in the Pacific Beach community founded by Keep America Beautiful. The ***Cigarette Litter Prevention Program*** targets the heavily populated area along Garnet Avenue and Mission Boulevard through a concentrated and sustained effort.

The program uses a strategic approach and involves all stakeholders in the cigarette litter problem, including businesses, local governments, community organizations and, importantly, smokers themselves. The ***Cigarette Litter Prevention Program*** addresses the issue by integrating several proven strategies that include raising awareness about the issue; placing labeled ash receptacles at targeted areas; and distributing pocket ashtrays to adult smokers.

“Combining convenience with education is key to diminishing the cigarette litter problem in Pacific Beach,” said San Diego City Councilmember Kevin Faulconer. “I’m very pleased to see these local non-profit organizations making commendable strides to combat this significant problem.”

Cigarette butts are the most littered item in America, representing nearly 30 percent of all items documented in nationwide cleanup initiatives. In 2008, at Coastal Cleanup Day in San Diego County, cigarette butts accounted for a staggering 43 percent of all items collected by nearly 8,000 volunteers. In just one day, these volunteers removed over 53,000 cigarette butts littering our beaches, bays, city streets, canyons and parks. Not only are these discarded butts an unsightly eyesore, they pose a threat to wildlife when filters are mistaken for food.

“Many people do not realize that cigarette butts contain plastic that never biodegrades in the environment,” said ILACSD executive director Pauline Martinson. “When they are littered on the streets, they travel to the beach through the storm drains and pose a severe health threat to marine wildlife.” Through this comprehensive program, ILACSD and fellow stakeholders aim to curb Pacific Beach’s rampant cigarette litter problem for a cleaner and greener San Diego.

***I Love A Clean San Diego:*** Through outreach, community involvement and example, I Love A Clean San Diego leads and educates our community to actively conserve and enhance the environment. As one of San Diego County’s oldest and largest environmental education non-profit organizations, ILACSD promotes awareness of environmental issues including resource conservation, waste reduction, recycling, community enhancement, and pollution prevention

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