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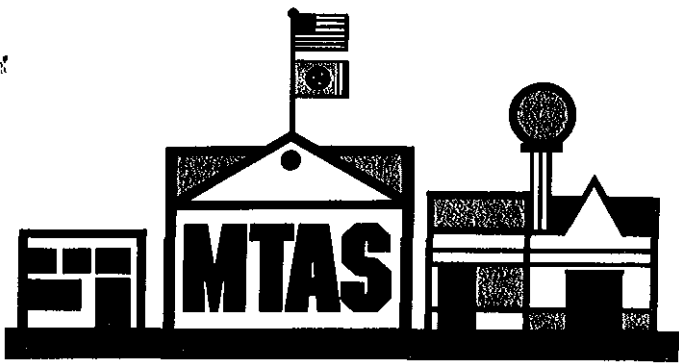
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TECHNICAL BULLETIN

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
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June 25, 1984

LITTER GOT YOU STUMPED? TRY CLEAN COMMUNITY SYSTEMS' ATTITUDE CHANGE APPROACH!

By Edith W. Beaty, State Coordinator, Clean Tennessee

Litter is not the problem. Littering is the problem in the communities of Tennessee. Litter is only the symptom of the real problem--people's habits and attitudes. Littering is a social problem caused by people, consciously or unconsciously, mishandling their solid waste. A number of city officials understand this fact. But, too often, the symptom--litter--is approached with cleanup programs. There is a feeling that "if we just clean it all up once, then it will go away for good." Unfortunately, the litter keeps coming back. So another cleanup is organized. This cleanup syndrome is a dangerous cycle because it is expensive, very labor intensive, and frustrating.

After more than two decades of promoting cleanup campaigns and anti-litter awareness programs, Keep America Beautiful, Inc., began researching solutions to the real problem--people's attitudes. Keep America Beautiful, Inc., (KAB) is a national non-profit, public-service organization dedicated to the development of individual participation in a cleaner America. KAB contracted with Human Resources Institute of Morristown, NJ, to study the "why" of littering and to apply behavioral science principles to the problem.

The Institute began with the study of norms that make littering acceptable. Once these "unwritten rules" were identified, it developed a program to change them and reinforce responsible behavior. The CLEAN COMMUNITY SYSTEM (CCS) was born as a result of three years of study and field research in three communities. During this time, litter in those cities was reduced 64%-69%. In 1975, the CCS was made available nationally on a certification basis. Today there are 323 certified CCS communities in 40 states. Truly, it is one of the fastest growing social change programs in America today. Why? Because it works!

Six cities in Tennessee currently are a part of the Clean Community System: Memphis, Bristol, Jackson, Chattanooga, Kingsport, and Knoxville-Knox County. County programs (which also include the cities in each county) are in place in Loudon, Maury, and Tipton, and Roane County is in the organizational stage.

The issue of solid waste management is a complicated one. Beyond the intricacies of the rapid changes in technology, strong community sentiments exist about how waste should be handled, who should be responsible, who should pay for it, and why. Indeed, as anyone involved in community relations knows, people get very emotional about "their garbage." The CLEAN COMMUNITY SYSTEM

is unique in the waste management area because it creates a sharing environment in which those involved in a problem become involved in finding solutions. Cooperation becomes the key, channeled through the high credibility of the city's CCS Committee.

The organizational structure of the CCS is a microcosm of the city (public and private sector) working through committees--business, government, media, schools, and community organizations. The CCS community education programs turn public concern into public support for better sanitation. A partnership is developed that enables the residents and businesspeople to understand the problems related to waste management and the special difficulties of the sanitation routepeople.

The CCS organization applies a five step "Attitude Change Process" to all programs and develops projects to support these programs. Four basic components underlie the planning process:

- a unified, enforceable sanitation code;
- public education workshops specifically geared for each segment of the community;
- upgraded sanitation procedures and technology; and
- fair and consistent ordinance enforcement.

Good business and management structure is married with the behavioral system to accomplish noted efficiency. A salaried coordinator is essential to operate the day-to-day needs of the organization.

All activities in the CCS are geared toward measureable results and actions that will aid in achieving quantifiable reductions of litter. Each CCS documents its results through the Photometric Index (PI). The PI, designed in 1974 by the Research Foundation of the American Public Works Association exclusively for the CCS, is a statistical analysis of litter accumulations in randomly selected sites throughout the community. The number of photographs taken corresponds to the percentage of land use within the community. Each photo is taken in a prescribed, unbiased manner so that litter is neither avoided nor sought. Taken twice a year, the PI provides the CCS Committee members with a gauge to evaluate the program's effectiveness and a planning tool for future programs.

CCS IMPACT

<u>Years in CCS</u>	<u>Average Litter Reduction</u>
5+ years	72.5%
5 years	65.9%
4 years	62.1%
3 years	46.3%
2 years	46.0%
1 year	
or less	32.3%

The CCS is cost effective. In 1982, the American Public Works Association conducted a Cost/Benefit Analysis of 10 CCS communities which demonstrated the cost efficiency of CCS to local government. APWA found that, while the 10 programs consistently followed the KAB concepts of behavioral change, the adoption of these techniques varied substantially to meet local situations.

The six areas of comparison were budget reduction, cost avoidance, volunteer goods and services, volunteer hours, intangible benefits, and litter reduction. The cost/benefit figures ranged from \$2.00 to \$110.00 return per municipal dollar invested. This compares with the "break even" \$1.00 return for \$1.00 investment that many municipal officials consider satisfactory for continued government funding.

COST/BENEFIT ANALYSIS

<u>Community</u>	<u>Benefits Compared To Government Funding</u>
Cincinnati, OH	1:18.4
Denver, CO	1:2.2
Henderson, KY	1:5.5
Indianapolis, IN	1:26.8
Macon-Bibb County, GA	1:52.5
Memphis, TN	1:110.9
Muncie, IN	1:5.5
San Diego, CA	1:7.3
Tifton-Tift County, GA	1:7.7
Worcester, MA	1:9.9

The CLEAN COMMUNITY SYSTEM is a workable, realistic approach to the litter problem. Once the CCS begins to marshal support for better sanitation, it generates interest in recycling and resource recovery. Litter is the place to begin!

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The MTAS Library (615/974-1008) has examples of what other communities are doing about the problem of litter and copies of sample litter ordinances. For assistance in involving your citizens and promoting your program, contact the MTAS Municipal Information Consultant (615/974-1004) or your Municipal Management Consultant.

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