

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Organizations: I Love A Clean San Diego & Surfrider Foundation, San Diego Chapter

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**Local Collaboration to Kick Butts Along University Avenue Corridor**

**San Diego, CA** – A local collaboration between I Love A Clean San Diego and the Surfrider Foundation, San Diego Chapter will result in fewer cigarette butts plaguing the local environment by improving infrastructure in North Park and La Mesa. Next Tuesday September 4th, volunteers will install a total of 18 ashcan receptacles in targeted locations in popular downtown business districts along the University Avenue corridor. The group estimates that these receptacles will collect more than 7,000 cigarette butts each month from the communities of North Park and La Mesa. This installation, as part of the I Love A Clean San Diego Cigarette Litter Prevention Program and the Surfrider Foundation's Hold Onto Your Butt Campaign, should prevent close to 100,000 cigarette butts from reaching the ocean in its first year alone.

In order to place ash receptacles where they will be most useful, I Love A Clean San Diego and Surfrider Foundation, San Diego Chapter volunteers conducted litter scans throughout the North Park and La Mesa business districts. A total of 700 butts were found in proposed installation locations in North Park, and another 670 in La Mesa. Volunteers identified that the types of locations with high incidents of cigarette litter included: bus stops, bars, coffee shops and other establishments in which customers tend to linger.

The Cigarette Litter Prevention Program and Hold Onto Your Butt Campaign take a proactive approach to stopping the flow of cigarette litter from sidewalks to storm drains and eventually out to the ocean. In San Diego County, cigarette litter has been identified as the most pervasive pollution problem. The Surfrider Foundation, San Diego Chapter reported that cigarette butts accounted for 38% of the items removed from local beaches during the course of its 2011 beach cleanups. In a recent Pacific Beach cleanup, over 9,000 cigarette butts were collected in two hours by volunteers. This problem isn't exclusive to San Diego, the California Coastal Commission reports that 36% of debris removed as part of its annual California Coastal Cleanup Day are cigarette butts and other smoking related items.

The Surfrider Foundation, San Diego Chapter and I Love A Clean San Diego have worked together to implement this program in other communities, including Mission Beach, Pacific Beach, La Jolla, Point Loma and are working on another implementation in Oceanside. The recent program implementation in La Jolla resulted in the collection of more than 12,000 cigarette butts in the first 3 months after installing 10 ashcans. The Surfrider Foundation, San Diego Chapter has worked with community groups and the State Parks to install 130 receptacles in the additional communities of Ocean Beach, Hillcrest, Downtown, Carlsbad State Beach, South Carlsbad State Beach and San Elijo State Beach.

I Love A Clean San Diego and the Surfrider Foundation, San Diego Chapter will come together with North Park Main Street Association and the City of La Mesa on Tuesday September 4th to install 18 ash receptacles along the University Avenue corridor. Please contact I Love A Clean San Diego or Surfrider Foundation San Diego Chapter for more information on the installation.

***I Love A Clean San Diego** is the go-to organization for programs that enhance and conserve the local environment. Through recycling, education and cleanups of our most beloved areas, I Love A Clean San Diego is the only community-based organization dedicated to the future of the entire county – from inland to the coast, in every community, for generations to come. For more information, visit [www.cleansd.org](http://www.cleansd.org).*

*The **Surfrider Foundation** is a grassroots nonprofit environmental organization dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of oceans, waves and beaches through a powerful activist network. Founded in 1984 by a group of visionary surfers in Malibu, California, the organization now maintains over 60,000 members and 100 chapters worldwide. For more information on the Surfrider Foundation San Diego Chapter, go to <http://sandiego.surfrider.org>.*

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