

# Illegal Dumping Vs Littering

Illegal dumping is different than littering:

1. Dumping doesn't happen by accident and always involves intent.
2. The amount or type of material left is different than litter (couch vs coffee cup or Household hazardous waste vs chip bag).
3. Dumping is considered a crime and the penalties reflect the seriousness of the offense (\$697.50 vs \$237.50 fine amount under West Hants Solid Waste Management By-Law).
4. Catching and penalizing is the best way to deter. Offenders do not hold the same social ties/bonds as the rest of the public and often have mental health, physical, personal life or financial issues. They do not feel accountable for their actions and it is difficult to make them take responsibility.

Littering:

1. Can be accidental, incidental, carelessness or purposeful. For example, a wrapper is on the ground. How it got there could be an accident (fell out of car and not noticed), an incident (blew out of car and unable/unwilling to retrieve), by carelessness (unsecured coffee cup in the bed of a pickup truck) or on purpose (dropped on the ground to make room for the next hot cup in the cup holder).
2. Most litter is not immediately harmful.
3. Fines, if ever applied, are considerably less than dumping as offender can always claim it was an accident or incident (not their fault).
4. These are behaviors that may be changed/curbed. Offenders may be shamed or convinced to do something to prevent littering once it is clear that the behavior is not socially acceptable.