



# National Spring Clean 1st – 30th April



## Activity Pack

*for Youth and Uniform Groups*



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## AN TAIISCE

An Taisce means the gift, or the treasury. An Taisce - The National Trust for Ireland - is a long established non-governmental organisation. An Taisce's mission is to conserve and protect the best of Ireland's natural environment and built heritage. It also aims to promote environmental awareness through education. An Taisce is the Irish member of FEEE (Foundation for Environmental Education). The FEEE initiatives run by An Taisce are Green-Schools, LEAF (Learning about Forests), Young Reporters for the Environment and Blue Flag for beaches and marinas. Other initiatives run by An Taisce's Environmental Education Unit are: National Spring Clean and the Clean Coast initiative.

## NATIONAL SPRING CLEAN

An Taisce's National Spring Clean campaign is the largest anti-litter campaign in the country. An Taisce encourages action from individuals and organisations to work together to improve the local environment. It aims to create and maintain high quality environments locally and nationally.

## THIS BOOKLET

This booklet has information, ideas and activities for leaders to work on with individuals or groups to help them learn about the environment and how they can help to look after it.

All activities should be adapted to suit the relevant age group you are working with.

## UNIFORM GROUPS

Why not use the activities in this pack to help you obtain a badge? Relevant badges are listed at the end of each section.

## COMPETITION

There are fabulous prizes to be won in the National Spring Clean competitions. See flyer or contact the National Spring Clean Manager for further details.

## Learn and follow the Litter Code

### Information for your group

- Put your litter in a bin.
- If there is no bin, make sure you take your litter home. Chewing gum and sweet papers may only be small but they are still litter. The bin is the place for them.
- Protect the countryside from litter. Items made from plastic, tin and aluminium take a long time to decay.
- Make sure that any rubbish left out for the refuse collectors is securely contained in a bin or bag so that it does not escape and become litter.
- Report any litter eyesores to the Cleansing Service Department at your local council.
- Keep the area where you live litter free.
- It is OK to pick up someone else's litter and put it in a bin. However, young people should leave anything that is pointed, jagged or sharp for an adult to pick up instead. Leaders please see sheet 2 in the Kit for tips on Health and Safety before embarking on a clean up.



### The following suggested activities can be developed and carried out with your group:

#### Activity 1

- Devise a survey to measure the amount of litter outside the group's meeting place or at a particular litter 'grotspot'. Take care around busy areas.
- Monitor the area at the same time of day, once or twice a week for a set period of time (e.g. three/six weeks).
- Record the results in a table (see the example on page 6).
- Write about what has been learnt from the results and suggest ways of improving the area (about 100/150 words).

#### Activity 2

- Carry out a project to educate the local community regarding the dangers and effects of dropping litter.
- Survey an area (as mentioned above).
- Design posters to encourage members of the community to join in a clean up.
- Carry out the clean up. Look at your Clean-up Kit for help with organising a clean up.
- Design more posters to remind the community about the dangers of dropping litter.
- Survey the area again to see if the build up of litter has reduced compared with the first survey.

#### Activity 3

- Find a site.

- Photograph the site.
- Find out who owns the land.
- Suggest ways the area can be improved.

#### Activity 4

- Create a questionnaire to make people more aware of the litter problem.

#### Activity 5

- Write a presentation to talk to local people about litter problems.

#### Activity 6

- Write 150/200 words about the origins of litter and how it can be reduced. Send the report to the local council and local businesses.

#### Activity 7

- Make a musical instrument, toy or useful item out of household waste.

#### Activity 8

- An Taisce aims to inform and educate people on the effects of litter and waste and gives people practical ideas to help solve the problem.
- Think of other organisations that are also concerned about the environment.
- Visit a local library or look in a local business directory.

#### Activity 9

- What is the local council doing?
- How does the work of the council fit in with what central government is doing?
- Find out how other countries are dealing with similar problems.

## Notes for Leaders

Individuals or groups may use the example table below, and modify it if necessary. They can also add different types of litter they see to the given list.

In writing about what they have learned, encourage individuals or groups to notice patterns, if any, and pick up on such points as:

- What is the most common type of litter?
- Where does it accumulate most? (E.g. trapped in a bush, against a fence, etc.)
- Why is it there? (Has it been thrown over a wall, or was it blown there?)
- Where has it come from? (Sweet shops, houses, etc.)



## Keep a tally of each piece of litter you see.

Type of Litter	Number of Pieces		
	Week One	Week Two	Week Three
Crisp Packets	///	//	//
Sweet Wrappers	////	///	//
Lolly Sticks	/	///	
Cans	////	////	
Bottles	/	////	
Food		/	//
Cigarettes	////	////	////

## Improvements to the area could include:

- providing more bins in the area and perhaps at the source of the litter (e.g. outside a take-away or sweet shop);
- anti-litter and penalty fine warning signs in the area;
- cleaning up and landscaping of the area and planting trees or flowerbeds.

Individuals or groups may also notice that once an area is clean and pleasant, it is less likely to attract litter in the future.

The suggested litter campaigning activities will help the uniform groups achieve the following badges:

### Beavers

- The Conservation Badge.

### Cubs

- Survey (Bronze, Silver and Gold Arrow Award in "Kubuk").
- World Conservation Badge (Proficiency Badge Scheme in "Kubuk").

### Guides

- The Conservation Badge.

Scouts! Don't forget your Country Code - "Take your Litter home!" Consult your leader for the other badges that these activities help to achieve.



The following suggested activities can be developed and carried out with your group:

## Conserving water

### Activity 1

- Work out how much water households use in one week and list everything it is used for. To work out how much water is used in one week, measuring jugs should be used for drinks, cooking, etc.
- Ask the group to measure how much its own household uses.

### Activity 2

- Suggest ways of reducing the amount of water households use.

### Activity 3

- Work out how much water households can realistically save.

**Estimates (calculated by North West Water) may be used for the following:**

Shower	30 litres (6 gallons)
Bath	90 litres (20 gallons)
Washing machine	136 litres (30 gallons)
Dishwasher	50 litres (10 gallons)
Single flush toilet	9 litres (2 gallons)
Running tap	9 litres (2 gallons) per minute
Hosepipe	9 litres (2 gallons) per minute
Dripping tap	1 litre (0.22 gallons) per hour

The volumes given are for each shower, bath, dishwasher, etc - not for a week's use.



## Notes for Leaders

### Examples of water saving:

- Never leave taps dripping.
- Never leave taps running needlessly (e.g. when cleaning teeth).
- Have a shower instead of a bath - if you must have a bath, don't overfill it.
- Reuse clean boiling water for washing up (e.g. water from boiling eggs or boil-in-the-bag food).
- Collect rainwater for watering the garden and houseplants.
- Don't use dishwashers or washing machines unless they are full.

## Wildlife

The following suggested activities can be developed and carried out with your group:

### Activity 1

Look for the following in a local beauty spot or park, and make records using drawings or photographs:

- Five species of tree. Find out the names of its fruit and when it is produced.
- Five species of wild flower/plant.
- Five species of insect.
- Five species of bird.
- Mount and label drawings or photographs.

### Activity 2

- Write about the importance of looking after the countryside and wildlife. Explain why litter can be dangerous to wildlife (about 150 words).

## Notes for Leaders

When writing about wildlife, individuals and groups should understand the following:



- The importance of the countryside as a habitat for birds and animals.
- The importance of conserving the countryside for everyone to enjoy.
- The importance of protecting rare and endangered species from extinction.
- The consequences of destroying ecosystems that are dependent on each other (e.g. destroying insect populations with pesticides will affect bird populations).
- The difficulty of reversing the destruction of habitats and populations.

**The suggested wildlife campaigning activities will help the uniform groups achieve the following badges:**

### Beavers

- The Conservation Badge.

### Cubs

- Nature Challenge (Bronze, Silver and Gold Arrow Award Schemes in "Kubuk").
- Naturalist Badge (Proficiency Badge Scheme in "Kubuk").
- World Conservation Badge (Proficiency Badge Scheme in "Kubuk").

### Guides

- The Nature Lover Badge.
- The Conservation Badge.
- The Gardener Badge.

**Consult your leader for the other badges that these activities help to achieve.**

The following suggested activities can be developed and carried out with your group:

### Activity 1

- Find out what services the local council offer for the removal of rubbish from households or the meeting place.
- How often do they collect rubbish?
- What equipment do they use?
- What happens to the rubbish once it has been removed?

### Activity 2

- What recycling facilities are available in the local area?

## Recycling

### Activity 1

- Make a musical instrument out of household rubbish.

### Activity 2

- Make a table of all the things households throw away in one week.
- Which of these could be:
  - reused?
  - recycled? (Give examples.)

### Activity 3

- Design and make something useful out of household rubbish.

### Activity 4

- Write about the importance of reducing, reusing and recycling waste, and explain why landfilling of waste is harmful to the environment (about 150 words). Most of the waste that we throw away is put into large holes in the ground and buried. This is landfilling.

### Activity 5

- Produce posters to promote the five Rs - refuse, recycle, reuse, reduce and repair.

### Activity 6

- Set up a recycling scheme with the group.
- Arrange for any materials that can be recycled in the area to be collected.
- On a regular basis (e.g. weekly) take all the materials to the local recycling facilities at one time to save on transport costs.

## Keep a tally of everything your family throws in the bin.

Rubbish	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fi	Sat	Sun
Paper Bags	///		/		/		
Cooked Food (leftovers, etc..)	/	/	/	/	//	//	//
Raw Food (peelings, etc..)		/	//		/	//	
Glass Bottles					/	////	
Magazines	///				/	//	
Packets	/		//			/	//
Boxes		//				/	//

## Notes for Leaders

### Examples of reusable items:

Milk bottles can be reused.

Glass jars can be reused for storage (home-made jam, rice, biscuits, etc.).

Plastic tubs can be reused for storage (salad, sandwiches, small toys, etc.).

Plastic bottles can be reused as containers (e.g. plant pots or funnels by cutting them in half).

Old clothes can be reused as dusters or given to charity.

Toys can be given to charity.

Books/magazines can be given to charity.

### Examples of items that can be recycled:

Glass bottles, jars.

Plastic lemonade bottles, shampoo bottles.

Paper newspapers and old letters.

Aluminium drinks cans.

Steel drinks cans and food tins.

Organic waste leftover food scraps, peelings, etc. (can be composted).

When writing about the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste, individuals or groups should make points such as:

- the reduction and reuse of waste saves money and reduces environmental impact, because less recycling or disposal is needed - this saves energy and natural resources;

- recycling is the next best way of dealing with waste because it helps preserve natural resources and reduces incineration and landfill.

The main environmental problems caused by landfill sites are:

- they may smell and attract vermin;
- they spoil the look of the countryside whilst operational (i.e. until full and covered over);
- transporting the waste to a site means more traffic and pollution in the area;
- rainwater travelling down through the waste becomes contaminated (leachate) and may pollute groundwater and rivers - this can lead to the destruction of local wildlife;
- methane gas is produced which contributes to global warming.

**The suggested waste and recycling activities will help the uniform groups achieve the following badges:**

### Beavers

- The Conservation Badge.

### Cubs

- World Conservation Badge (Proficiency Badge Scheme in "Kubuk").

### Guides

- The Environmentalist Badge or the Green Consumer Badge.

**Consult your leader for the other badges that these activities help to achieve.**

## Composting

Composting is the best way to deal with organic waste. It returns valuable organic matter to the place it does the most good, the soil, in the form that it is best able to handle, compost. Anything that has lived and died can be composted. The best results will be obtained from items such as vegetable peelings, tea leaves, coffee grounds, eggshells, stale bread, etc.

### Activity 1

Make a simple compost bin. See how it works and then use the produce to grow flowers or even vegetables.

- Find an old plastic bucket or container with a lid.
- Wash it out and place it in your garden.
- Start to fill it with kitchen waste such as potato peelings and cabbage leaves.
- Put in pieces of an old newspaper every now and then. This will keep the compost dry.
- After six to eight months it will be usable compost.



For more information on composting please see sheet 6 of the Clean-up Kit.

The suggested composting activity will help uniform groups achieve the following badge:

### Cubs

- Challenge 1 of the World Conservation Badge.

The following suggested activity can be developed and carried out with your group:

### Activity 1

- Suggest 15 ways in which energy consumption could be reduced in the home.

### Notes for Leaders

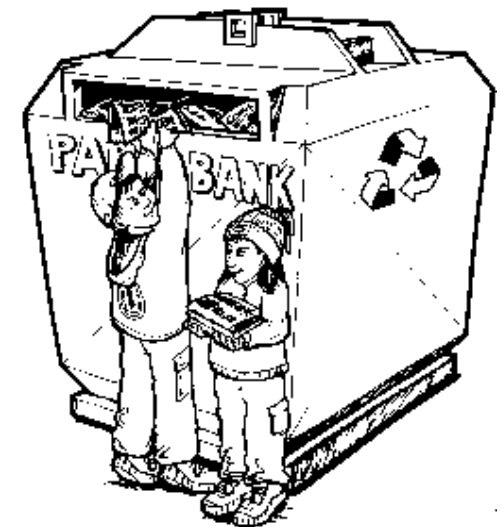
When writing about reductions, individuals and groups are encouraged to make points such as:

- Turn down heating (turning down heating by 1% could cut bills by 10% and save €13-€19 per year);
- ensure a dishwasher/washing machine is full before it is used or use an economy program;
- cooking - do not fill a kettle if only a small amount of boiling water is needed;
- fridges and freezers - defrost regularly;
- lights - use energy saving light bulbs;
- draughts - fit a letter-box flap, insulate walls and lofts;
- water - see page 8;
- electrical appliances - turn off TVs, videos and hi-fis when they are not in use. The television still uses 80% of electricity when left on stand-by.

The suggested energy activity will help the uniform groups achieve the following badge:

### Guides

- The Environmentalist Badge or the Green Consumer Badge.



# activities

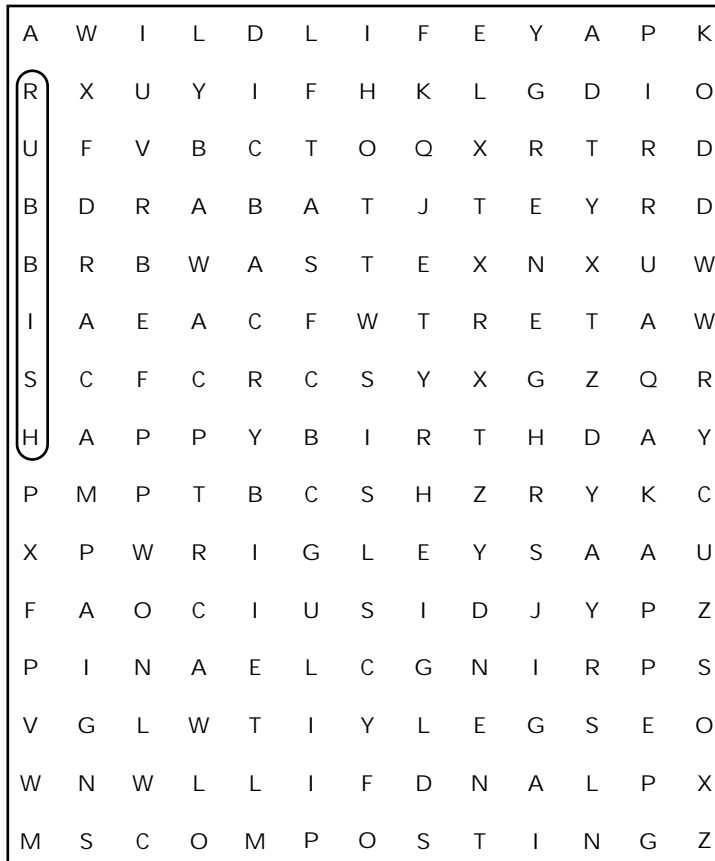


These pages can be photocopied and distributed to your group.

Word Search: **Can you find and circle the hidden words?**

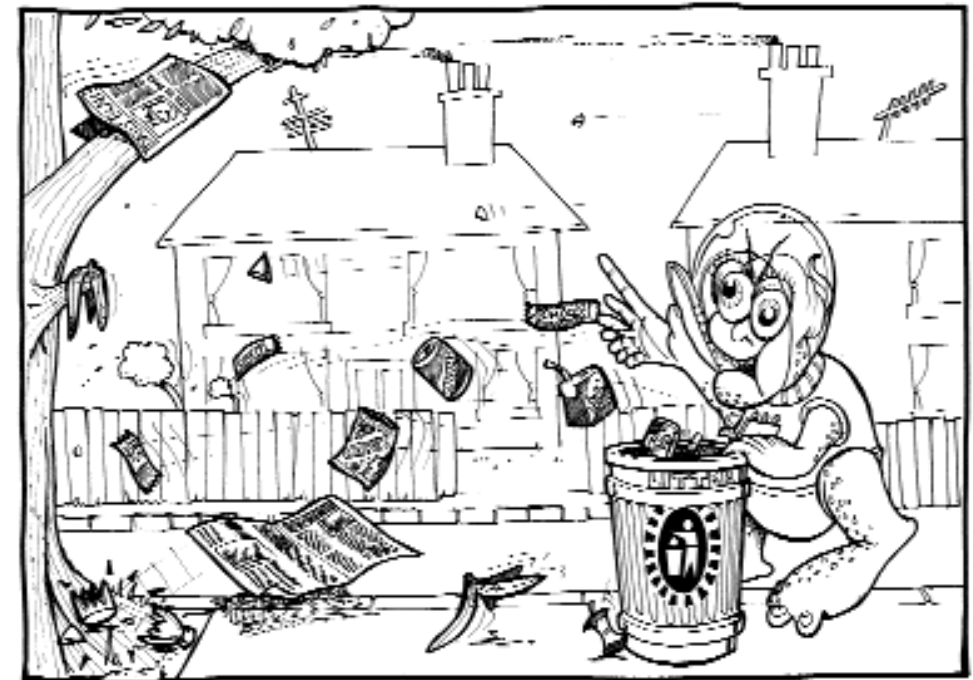
The hidden words are:

- Litter
- Waste
- Wildlife
- Composting
- Recycling
- Energy
- Water
- Rubbish
- Landfill
- Campaigns
- Spring Clean
- April
- Happy Birthday
- Party
- Wrigleys
- Tabard
- Kit



The Great Spring Clean! - Colouring Picture

- Use bright coloured pencils to colour this picture.
- When you spot a piece of litter, colour it in grey, with an ordinary pencil.
- Your picture will look bright and cheerful apart from the grubby grey patches of litter.





# Some useful addresses

## **An Taisce's Environmental Education Unit**

5A Swift's Alley  
Francis Street  
Dublin 8  
Tel: 01 400 2219  
Fax: 01 400 2285  
Email: [nsc@antaisce.org](mailto:nsc@antaisce.org)  
Website: [www.antaisce.org](http://www.antaisce.org)

## **EPA**

P.O. Box 3000  
Johnstown Castle Estate  
County Wexford  
Tel: 053 60600  
Fax: 053 60699  
website: [www.epa.ie](http://www.epa.ie)

## **ENFO - Environmental Information Service**

17 St. Andrew Street  
Dublin 2  
Tel: 01 888 2001  
Lo-Call: 1890 20 01 91  
website: [www.enfo.ie](http://www.enfo.ie)  
email: [info@enfo.ie](mailto:info@enfo.ie)

## **Conservation Volunteers Ireland**

Steward's House  
Rathfarnham Castle  
Dublin 14  
Tel: 01 495287  
Fax: 01 495289  
Website: [www.cvi.ie](http://www.cvi.ie)  
Email: [cvi@cvi.ie](mailto:cvi@cvi.ie)

## **Irish Youth Work Centre**

20 Lower Dominick Street  
Dublin 1  
Tel: 01 872 9933  
Fax: 01 872 4183  
email: [info@youthworkireland.ie](mailto:info@youthworkireland.ie)

## **The Irish Girl Guides**

27 Pembroke Park  
Dublin 4  
Tel: 01 6683898  
Fax: 01 6602779  
Website: [www.irishgirlguides.ie](http://www.irishgirlguides.ie)  
Email: [info@irishgirlguides.ie](mailto:info@irishgirlguides.ie)

## **Federation of Irish Scout Associations**

National Office  
Larch Hill  
Dublin 18  
Tel: 01 6761598  
Fax: 01 6768059  
Website: [www.scouts.ie](http://www.scouts.ie)  
Email: [questions@scouts.ie](mailto:questions@scouts.ie)

## **Foróige, National Youth Development Organisation**

Block 12D  
Joyce Way  
Carquest  
Dublin 12  
Tel: 01 6301560  
Website: [www.foroige.ie](http://www.foroige.ie)  
Email: [info@foroige.ie](mailto:info@foroige.ie)

