

Northern Nevada Cleans Up!

Rural Nevada experiences its share and more of illegal dumping despite efforts by authorities and individuals to curb this activity. Recently many Nevadans decided to do something about it. During the months of April and May of 2005 several northern Nevada communities and Native American Tribes conducted clean up activities of their neighborhoods, public and tribal lands. “Free Dumping Days” were held at both the Eureka and Elko County Regional Landfills in May. The City of Carlin held its annual week long clean up event. The City of Elko held “Take Pride in Elko Day”. BLM crews cleaned up illegal dumps on public land in Elko County. The South Fork Band of Te-Moak Tribe of Western Shoshone conducted a clean up of an illegal dump on tribal lands near the community of Spring Creek. In April, and continuing on into May, the Yomba Shoshone Tribe conducted an abandoned vehicle clean up in Nye County.

The Carlin Clean Up took place from May 15 through May 22 with residents participating along with city crews in activities aimed at cleaning up the town and surrounding areas. The city opened up its yard to residents in order to collect yard waste, tires, propane cylinders, car batteries, appliances and furniture. Dumpsters were placed in the city yard for residents to dispose of bulky items. City crews made pick ups of large bulky items at local residences with trailers and dump trucks, transporting the items to the city yard, where they could be crushed and placed into roll dumpsters. As the dumpsters were filled they were removed by workers from Elko Sanitation Company and taken to the Elko Regional Landfill. The Carlin Clean Up resulted in the collection of 350 tires; 28 refrigerators and freezers (after Freon removal), stoves, washers and driers; numerous car batteries and propane cylinders. Twenty eight roll off dumpsters totaling over 60 tons were taken to the Elko Landfill during the week’s events.



Bill Kohbarger and Bob Brown from the City of Carlin load an oven range during the Carlin Clean Up.

On May 21, the Elko Regional Landfill waived tipping fees for the entire day to encourage Elko County residents to bring their large items, yard waste, car bodies' batteries and anything they would choose to dispose of, rather than dump it in the desert. This event was held in conjunction with "Take Pride in Elko Days" community clean up. The goal of the clean up was to clean up problem areas around the city of Elko and its rural surroundings where sites have been identified as being problem areas that attract illegal dumping. Items collected at the Elko Landfill were 375 tons of total materials, including 700 tires, 4 truck loads of car bodies, a travel trailer and 40 tons of metals that were recycled. The community clean up had 270 volunteers ranging from small children to senior citizen groups and college students.



The Elko Regional Landfill at the end of "Take Pride in Elko Day" community clean up.

Corporation, has provided a dumpster to combat illegal dumping in this area for approximately the past year and a half. To date this year alone, the Newmont dumpster has received over 73 tons of trash.

Federal lands were also cleaned up during the week of May 15 through 22. On May 17, the Ruby Mountain Hot Shots fire fighting crew worked with BLM personnel cleaning up two illegal dumps on BLM lands in the Carlin area. The Hot Shots cleaned up an open dump near the Carlin Honors Camp that has been a problem site for some time. The second site, also on BLM land, is located near the Mary's Wash Area north of I-80 outside the City of Carlin. This is an area that has been repeatedly subjected to illegal dumping activities, and become a personal battle for Carlin resident Rick Folkmire. Mr. Folkmire's employer, Newmont Mining



Ruby Mountain Hot Shots and BLM Ranger Jeff Miller clean up an illegal dumpsite north of I-80, Mary's Wash area, Elko County.

In May, Eureka County hosted two “Free Dump Days” at the county landfill in Eureka and at the transfer station in Crescent Valley. The two day totals for the landfill are: 2019 tires, 26 refrigerators, 159 car batteries and numerous white goods. Approximately 143 Eureka County residents brought loads to the landfill. At the Crescent Valley transfer site, 45 loads of trash were accepted, including 220 tires and 33 white goods. In addition to the “Free Dump Days,” Eureka County also offered town site pick ups at residences in Crescent Valley and Eureka for bulky items.

On May 21, the South Fork Band of Te-Moak Tribe of Western Shoshone cleaned up an illegal dump on approximately 2.5 acres of tribal lands. Items collected during this clean up included boxes of advertising fliers, bottles and cans, straw bails, appliances, construction debris and several animal carcasses. The tribe removed approximately 14 yards of trash.

In April, the Yomba Shoshone Tribe initiated an Integrated Solid Waste Management Program. This program includes the construction of a transfer site with a roll off trailer on tribal lands that will serve tribal residents, Berlin Ichthyosaur State Park and the residents of Ione. As part of this program the tribe began collecting and disposing of abandoned vehicles from residents and areas of open desert that have become havens for illegally dumped cars and trash. As this article went to press, the Yomba Tribe’s Office of Environmental Protection had collected 120 automobiles and still counting!



Abandoned automobile clean up at the Yomba Shoshone Indian Reservation, Nye County.

Congratulations on a job well done to all of the communities and volunteers who did their part to make the desert a little more beautiful and lot cleaner than it previously was! Special thanks is owed to the following people for providing data for this article: Bill Kohbarger, Rick Folkmire Delmo Andreozzi, Kim Podd, Bonnie Bobb, Sonia Corleto and Dallas Smales.