



# LITTER AND TRASH PREVENTION TOOLKIT

## Keep Frederick County, Maryland Waterways Clean and Beautiful

Litter along roads or in parks can make a scenic landscape look unsightly, but did you also know that can impact ecosystems hundreds of miles away?

Unfortunately, many areas are currently covered in litter. There are over 51 billion pieces of litter along roads in the United States. An estimated 269 thousand tons of plastic are floating in oceans around the world, with more entering the sea each year.



## THE DIRTY TRUTH ABOUT LITTER



Litter cleanup costs an estimated **\$11.5 billion** in the United States each year. The overall financial damage of plastics to marine ecosystems is \$13 billion each year.



Tobacco related litter (mostly cigarette butts) makes up almost **38% of all litter** in the United States. Cigarette butts contain toxic chemicals that leach into the environment overtime.



The amount of trash entering the ocean each year is about **8 million tons**. That's the same as five grocery bags of trash per foot of global coastline.



**90% of all sea birds** have plastic in their stomachs.



**80% of plastics in the ocean** come from land-based sources. Plastic items have been found in all areas of the ocean, including in the deep sea and frozen in Arctic sea ice.



Plastics do not biodegrade in the ocean but instead break down into little pieces that are **consumed by fish**. Toxic chemicals in plastics are absorbed by fish and are more concentrated in larger fish higher up on the food chain, like tuna and swordfish, and can be transferred to humans via seafood.





# WHAT YOU CAN DO TO REDUCE LITTER

Put litter in its proper place. Community members can help reduce the litter in their neighborhood by organizing or participating in cleanup events and helping to spread the word about litter. Every small action helps!

## 1 Host a Litter Cleanup

### Choose your location and date

Have you noticed specific spots that seem to collect a lot of litter and trash?

### Register your event

The Division of Energy and Environment partners with [Project Clean Stream](#) and the [Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup](#). We can supply you with the necessary items for your cleanup (bags and gloves) after you register.

### Log your data with the host organization

When you are finished with your event, log the amount, weight, and types of trash that you collected. This helps tally the impact volunteer efforts have in our watershed!

## 2 Participate in a Cleanup

Visit the following sites to join an organized effort to keep our watersheds clean:

- [Frederick County Adopt-A-Road Program](#)
- [Maryland Adopt-a-Highway Program](#) (Frederick County)
- [Project Clean Stream](#) (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay)
- [Annual Potomac River Watershed Cleanup](#) (Alice Ferguson Foundation)

## 3 Share on social media

**Tag us on social media so that we can share your efforts!**

Please use the following hashtags when posting on social media:

#SustainableFrederickCounty #EveryLitterBitMattersFCG

Click this link to download our FREE social media graphics.

## HERE ARE FIVE THINGS YOU CAN DO TO HELP PROTECT YOUR WATERSHED:



**Pick up litter.** Trash reduces water quality, clogs stormwater drains, and endangers wildlife.



**Scoop the poop.** Dog waste pollutes the environment and harms aquatic habitats.



**Plant native trees.** Trees help reduce flooding, prevent erosion and filter pollutants.



**Pump your tank.** Regular septic tank maintenance protects our groundwater.



**Be less salty.** Use the correct amount of de-icer in winter and sweep up any that remains after a storm.



This is a publication of the Frederick County Division of Energy and Environment. Join our community conversation about sustainability issues and environmental health!

@SustainableFCMD

For additional fact sheets or other publications: [www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/DEEdocs](http://www.FrederickCountyMD.gov/DEEdocs)

[sustainability@frederickcountymd.gov](mailto:sustainability@frederickcountymd.gov) | 301.600.1416