

Water Log

Put Your Garbage Where it Belongs: In the Trash Can

Litter is the most visible sign of pollution. It is anything that is deposited where it is not meant to be. Trash, including plastic bags, bottles and cigarette butts, that is discarded on the ground is picked up when it rains and enters into our local waters. Litter left in the streets and storm drains makes any neighborhood look bad and can contribute to flooded streets when it rains. Once the litter is carried away in a storm, it becomes a major source of pollution in our rivers, streams and beaches. This debris can inhibit the growth of aquatic plants, harm aquatic animals when they ingest or get caught in these items, and can transmit other pollutants, such as toxic substances.



Trash can form large accumulations in urban waters which impact water quality, hamper recreational use, and hinder flood control protection. In 2009 and 2010, Greenville County Solid Waste volunteers picked up 123,720 pounds of litter found around the county. The Sheriff collected 1.1 million tons of dumped litter in 2010.

Tip

Trash your Cigarette Butts

Put your cigarette butts in garbage bins, rather than dropping them.

Cigarettes take 15 years to break down into filter particles, and never actually biodegrade.

1.7 billion pounds of cigarette butts enter the world's waterways each year, adding carcinogens and plastic fibers to our waters.

Did you know: that **cigarette butts** are the most commonly littered item?



Greenville
County

Plastic pollution by numbers

- Thrown away: **35 billion** plastic water bottles a year in the US
- Approximately **500 billion** plastic bags used annually worldwide
- Over **40 percent** of plastic usage is in packaging
- Plastics are estimated to account for **8 percent** of world's oil production
- **Over 250 species** known to have ingested or become tangled in plastic
- A 2002 UN study estimated **\$7 trillion** a year of economic risk from plastic pollution

Source: Plastic Oceans

AFP



Litter Trashes Everyone

There are many simple ways you can help keep debris out of our water:

- Put your cigarette butts and other litter in garbage bins. Keep cans tightly covered.
- If there is no garbage bin handy, hold onto your litter until you find one.
- Avoid throwing litter into the street and pick up discarded trash on your street.
- Minimize the amount of trash you generate by using reusable or recyclable materials when possible.
- Use reusable bags when you are shopping to reduce the amount of disposable bags that are discarded in our community.
- Recycle reusable materials.
- Volunteer to help keep trash out of waters through clean up days like the ones hosted by Greenville County Soil Waste and Keep Greenville County Beautiful.

Greenville County can help your HOA become a Pollution Solution

Under the federal Clean Water Act, DHEC and Greenville County implement pollution prevention plans and perform public outreach education.

Greenville County can:

- ◆ Provide personal ashtrays so you can dispose of your cigarette butts when no public bins are nearby
- ◆ Share information regarding community clean up days and river sweeps during which your HOA can provide support
- ◆ Supply free educational signs and incentives
- ◆ Collect recycling at recycling drop boxes throughout the County
- ◆ Supply reusable shopping bags to be used rather than plastic bags
- ◆ Present information at HOA meetings

If your HOA is interested in participating in a model program to keep your neighborhood “waste free” please contact the Education Department at jcward@greenvillecounty.org or 864-467-2755 ext. 103.



For more information, visit www.greenvillecounty.org/Soil_and_Water/

