



2021

Pennsylvania's Litter Action Plan

Strategies for all Pennsylvanians
to help in the fight against litter



Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Introduction	6
Why Care About Litter?	6
Comprehensive Pennsylvania Litter Data	7
Overview of Litter Action Plan Workgroup Approach	10
Recommendations	12
How State Government Can Lead By Example	12
Assisting Local Government Partners	12
Enhanced Understanding and Enforcement of Litter Laws	12
Waste Infrastructure Improvements	14
Litter Education Campaign & Outreach	14
What the Pennsylvania General Assembly Can Do	16
Litter Laws Enhancements	16
New Litter Laws	19
What Local Governments Can Do	20
Litter Enforcement Ideas	20
Public Waste Infrastructure Opportunities	21
Waste Management Best Practices	22
Partnering on Litter Education	24
Creative Funding Mechanisms for Litter Prevention	25
How Businesses Can Help	26
Litter Prevention Ideas	26
Use Waste Infrastructure Best Practices	27
Litter Education & Outreach to Customers	28
How We All Can Fight Litter	29
Litter Prevention Best Practices	29
Help to Clean Up Pennsylvania	31
Conclusion	34
Appendix I: List of Participants	35
Appendix II: Additional Resources	38
DEP Resources	38
PennDOT Resources	38

Keep PA Beautiful Resources	38
Keep America Beautiful Resources	39
Municipal Resources	39
Other Resources.....	40
Appendix III: Litter Laws.....	41
Appendix IV: Sample MDJ Litter Letter	48
Appendix V: SWEEP Ticket Violation Example	50

Executive Summary

Pennsylvania is beautiful. Home to 21 scenic byways, historic landmarks such as Gettysburg National Military Park, streams and waterways, and 121 state parks covering 300,000 acres. Pennsylvanians are proud of our beautiful landscapes and take pride in our communities.

However, Pennsylvania has a littering problem.

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Department of Transportation (PennDOT) partnered with Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful (KPB), the state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, in 2018-2019 to perform a research study documenting the quantity, composition, and sources of litter in Pennsylvania as well as a survey of Pennsylvanian's attitudes towards littering.

The findings were significant. There are approximately 502.5 million pieces of litter on Pennsylvania's roadways, predominantly single use materials like cigarette butts and plastic bottles. The same survey found that over 90 percent of survey respondents reported that litter is a problem in the Commonwealth, impacting the environment and leading to decreased property values.

Concurrently, KPB commissioned a survey of nine cities on the money they spend to manage litter and illegal dumping. Participating cities included: Allentown, Altoona, Erie, Harrisburg, Lancaster, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Reading, and Scranton. Again, the findings were shocking. Collectively, these nine Pennsylvania cities spend more than \$68.5 million annually on prevention, education, abatement, and enforcement efforts to address litter and illegal dumping throughout their respective communities. Environmental justice is an additional factor that should be considered. The nine cities surveyed all contain environmental justice areas that have been historically overburdened by pollution. Spending \$68.5 million annually to remedy the results of preventable actions, like illegal dumping and littering, inadvertently diverts funding from other critical programs.

Using this Pennsylvania-specific litter data as a starting point, DEP and PennDOT are spearheading a litter reduction initiative aimed at changing Pennsylvanians' behaviors and preventing commonly littered items from being littered in the first place. As part of this initiative, working with stakeholders, DEP and PennDOT have developed Pennsylvania's first ever Statewide Litter Action Plan. The goal of Pennsylvania's Litter Action Plan is to prevent littering through the development and implementation of a research-based plan of recommended actions that can be used statewide to change littering behavior over time.

Our sense of community is strong, and we want to improve that by reducing litter. Whether we're driving to work, cycling on one of the 2,440 miles of Bicycle PA routes, walking with our friends, or dropping our kids off at daycare, we want to see clean spaces.

To develop Pennsylvania's Litter Action Plan, DEP and PennDOT formed 4 workgroups around 4 specific behavior change strategies. These strategies are part of Keep America Beautiful's behavior change model, which is based on a renowned social psychologist's nationally recognized model of behavior change. The four workgroups and their focus areas included:

1. Litter Education and Outreach – Education and outreach are essential components to making sure all Pennsylvanians know littering is unacceptable and there are better ways to manage their waste. This workgroup focused on potential outreach strategies and recommendations for a statewide anti-litter education campaign.

2. Infrastructure – Ensuring infrastructure, like trash cans and waste management services, are available to all Pennsylvania’s communities is key to addressing the issue of litter in Pennsylvania. This workgroup focused on ways to ensure Pennsylvania communities have the necessary infrastructure in place to help ensure there are ample ways to properly manage commonly littered items.
3. Litter Laws and Enforcement – Regulations and enforcement are a tool at preventing and deterring littering behavior. This workgroup evaluated the effectiveness of current ordinances, laws and statutes and their enforcement as it relates to reducing litter in Pennsylvania. The workgroup also identified possible statutory and enforcement updates to ensure littering regulations are enforced.
4. Partnerships – Government cannot tackle litter alone. This workgroup involved Pennsylvania businesses and industry leaders to provide feedback on the recommendations heard in other workgroups and work to identify ways to help reduce litter across the state.

Through the Litter Action Plan workgroups, DEP and PennDOT facilitated conversations between state agencies, local governments, community groups, members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly, and business stakeholders to create practical solutions to address Pennsylvania’s littering problem that will benefit all people who work, play, and reside in the Commonwealth.

The Litter Action Plan is structured to show that everyone has a role to play in the fight against litter. As such, there are 5 main sections outlining actions state government, the General Assembly, local governments, businesses, and the general public can take to prevent littering.

While these recommendations are not mandated actions, the success of the Pennsylvania Litter Action Plan will depend on everyone taking steps to implement these recommended behavior change strategies.

Successful implementation of these recommendations will result in a cleaner Pennsylvania with the general public, state and local government, the General Assembly, community and environmental organizations, and businesses all doing their part to prevent littering. **All Pennsylvanians should aspire that through implementation of the recommended actions in this report and individual behavior change to reduce the amount of litter in Pennsylvania by 30 percent within the next 5 years.** To gauge if Pennsylvania is successful in meeting this litter reduction goal, the state will sponsor visible litter surveys at multiple locations throughout the state every year for five years. Starting with data from these select locations in 2022 as the baseline data, the Commonwealth will revisit the same spots each year through 2027 to conduct visible litter surveys to see if litter is being reduced. Then, in 2027, the Commonwealth will embark on a follow up assessment of the Litter Action Plan to evaluate if Pennsylvania has been or has not been successful in changing residents’ behavior to prevent littering.

Changing Pennsylvanians’ behavior will not be easy. However, by increasing access to convenient waste disposal and recycling options and holding litterers and illegal dumpers accountable, Pennsylvania will be cleaner and more vibrant.



From rolling farmlands to majestic mountains to downtown urban centers, Pennsylvania's beauty cannot be denied. Unfortunately, littering tarnishes our landscapes and roadways. Each year, 500 million pieces of trash are needlessly tossed out of vehicles or dumped illegally. While we do what we can, it is not sustainable to continually use our limited resources to clean up litter. We must be proactive and work to change behavior to prevent littering from happening in the first place.

The commonwealth is proud to present Pennsylvania's first-ever Litter Action Plan, developed by a team of state agencies and private sector partners, to offer recommendations and actions that everyone can take to keep our communities clean and free of litter. By working together, we can stop littering and protect our environment and quality of life for generations to come.


TOM WOLF
Governor
2021



November 15, 2021

Pennsylvania has a littering problem that cleanup efforts alone can't solve. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has funded annual community and illegal dump site clean-ups around the state for over two decades. Thanks to these volunteer events, millions of pounds of litter have been removed from our land and water, but trash is accumulating faster than anyone can manage. Litter undercuts our quality of life and the health of our waters and soil. It shortchanges community improvements and economic development, as funds that could otherwise be spent more productively instead go to trash cleanup.

For these reasons, DEP is committed to developing and implementing a framework of litter reduction measures that, for the first time, have been guided by state-specific litter data and a nationally recognized model of behavior change. By working with our partners, we hope to use the recommendations in the Litter Action Plan Report strategically to shift the state's approach from litter clean-ups to litter prevention. Our vision is that through implementation of these recommendations, Pennsylvanians may gain the community, economic, and environmental advantages we're all currently sacrificing to litter cleanup.

Everyone has a part to play in the fight against litter, and we're excited to work with you to keep Pennsylvania beautiful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick McDonnell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Patrick" and last name "McDonnell" clearly distinguishable.

Patrick McDonnell
Secretary

2021



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120

October 18, 2021

Dear Trusted Partners:

PennDOT is excited to be a part of Pennsylvania's first ever Litter Action Plan, a pivotal step in the Commonwealth's fight against litter. PennDOT is responsible for maintaining nearly forty thousand miles of roadway: roads that wind through some of the most beautiful, scenic landscapes in the country. We're also responsible for picking up litter on our one hundred and fifty thousand acres of state maintained roadside. PennDOT spends nearly 14 million dollars every year to pick up litter. When our crews are out picking up litter, that means that they're not filling potholes or paving roads. By keeping a trash bag in your car or hanging on to your trash until you can dispose of it properly, you're making a difference.

The report is compiled of recommendations for all groups from individuals to local government and businesses. By shifting our approach and mindset to behavior change, our intention is to prevent litter on our roadways. Let's all work together to keep our communities clean and free of litter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Yassmin Gramian".

Yassmin Gramian, P.E.
Secretary of Transportation

Introduction

Why Care About Litter?

Litter is improperly managed waste. It can include waste that is intentionally improperly disposed, such as cigarette butts, food packaging, and other trash discarded by pedestrians and motorists. Litter also includes waste that is unintentionally improperly disposed, such as trash from overflowing trash cans, improperly secured loads that accidentally release trash from garbage trucks or pick-up truck beds, vehicle debris from vehicle accidents, or when there are not proper mechanisms in place to dispose of various items. Whether intentional or unintentional, litter negatively impacts the natural environment, as well as the quality of life and economic development in communities across Pennsylvania.¹

Litter and mismanaged trash can have serious consequences for our environment and health as it degrades the natural environment Pennsylvanians depend on. Most trash takes years, and even centuries, to break down. Wherever it lands, it's likely going to be there for a long time, leaching chemicals, rusting, breaking into microplastics, and creating hazards for unsuspecting wildlife. Heavy rains can also transport litter through storm drains into nearby streams or rivers releasing chemical pollutants, threatening aquatic life, and interfering with human uses of our bountiful marine resources. Litter also threatens public health by harboring bacteria and attracting disease-carrying mosquitoes and rodents.

No one enjoys seeing littered or illegally dumped goods in their communities. It negatively impacts community pride as well as others' perceptions of the health of a community. This has implications for business development, tourism and property values. According to a 2009 Keep America Beautiful survey, 36 percent of business development officials say that litter impacts a decision of whether or not they locate to a community. Additionally, 55 percent of realtors think that litter reduces property values by about 9 percent, and 60 percent of property appraisers would reduce a home's value if it was littered.²

The amount of litter and illegal dumping in Pennsylvania is also a significant drain on resources for state and local governments, especially for communities dealing with issues of poverty and communities of color. DEP and PennDOT spend millions of dollars each year to aid in cleaning up litter and illegally dumped sites. DEP has spent over



Photo Credit: PA DEP

¹ [Pennsylvania Litter Research Study](#), January 2020.

² Keep America Beautiful's [Litter in America Fact Sheet](#), January 2010.

\$10 million to support volunteer litter cleanup events. There are also more than 6,200 illegal dumps identified across the Commonwealth that cost on average \$3,000 per site to clean up. During the current fiscal year, DEP spent \$1,105,000 on illegal dumping cleanups and anticipates spending at least \$4,045,000 to address cleaning up illegal dumps over the next 3 years. PennDOT spends roughly \$14 million annually on statewide litter efforts. Every dollar that is spent supporting litter and illegal dump cleanups and other efforts is money that could be used for other beneficial services, like improving our state's roads.

Pennsylvania has been relying on volunteer efforts to keep litter in check. In 2019 alone, the Pick Up Pennsylvania campaign had 92,342 invaluable volunteers pick up over 6 million pounds of trash along 7,345 miles of roads, shorelines, and trails. However, despite these collective efforts, litter and illegal dumping keeps piling up in our communities.

Since cleaning up litter is a significant use of valuable resources, the state is shifting its focus to litter and illegal dumping prevention, in addition to supporting continued litter and illegal dumping cleanups. To have the best chance of success in preventing and reducing littering in Pennsylvania, current state litter data are key to developing strategies, actions and tools that will be effective.

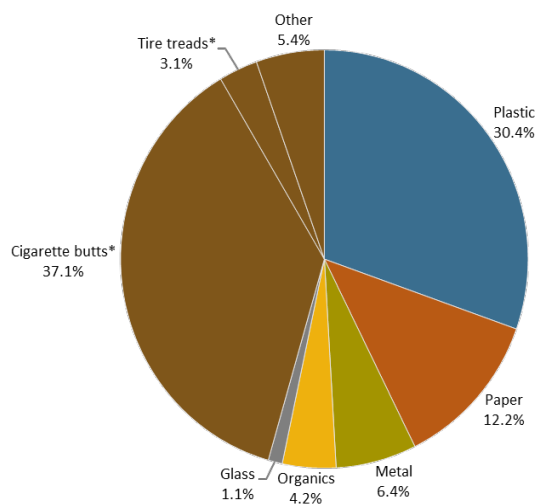
Comprehensive Pennsylvania Litter Data

Pennsylvania Litter Research Study

DEP and PennDOT partnered with Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful (KPB), the state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, in 2018-2019 to perform a research study documenting the quantity, composition, and sources of litter as well as attitudes towards littering in Pennsylvania. DEP, PennDOT, and KPB retained Burns & McDonnell, Cascadia Consulting Group, and the Docking Institute of Public Affairs, collectively referred to as the Burns & McDonnell Project Team, to conduct the Pennsylvania Litter Research Study. The Burns & McDonnell Project Team in collaboration with DEP, PennDOT, and KPB conducted a visible litter survey of 180 locations around the state, a public attitude phone survey of 500 residents statewide, and a Litter Summit conference that provided the foundation for the Litter Research Study.

The visible litter study conducted as part of this effort provides a comprehensive understanding of the quantity, composition, and sources of litter on Pennsylvania's roadways. The key findings from the visible litter study include:

**AGGREGATE COMPOSITION OF LITTER
(ALL PENNSYLVANIA ROADWAYS)**



Graphic Credit: Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful

- Pennsylvania roadways are littered with approximately 502.5 million pieces of litter.
- Of the total estimated litter on Pennsylvania roadways, 186.2 million (37.1 percent) pieces were cigarette butts followed by 152.9 million (30.4 percent) pieces of plastic. Plastic film is the most

- prevalent type of plastic littered on Pennsylvania roadways followed by plastic beverage containers.
- The majority of litter on Pennsylvania roadways (429.8 million pieces or 85.5 percent) is 4-inches or smaller in size; however, the Study estimates there is still a significant quantity (72.7 million pieces or 15.5 percent) of larger, and often more visible, litter on Pennsylvania roadways.
- Beverage containers and plastic film were the most predominant types of larger litter. Cigarette butts are the most common of the smaller items littered. Some material categories, such as tire tread, food packaging film, other plastic, and other organics, are within the top ten materials for both large and small littered items.
- An estimated 29.3 million beverage containers and 12.3 million fast food items are currently littered on Pennsylvania roadways.
- Motorists and pedestrians are leading sources of litter for both small and large items. For litter items greater than four inches, improperly secured loads also become a leading source.
- In aggregate, local roads had the highest percentage (34.9 percent) of total litter items by roadway type statewide.
- The primary distinction identified by roadway types was the litter source. Motorists contributed the most litter to interstate roadways (69.7 percent) and decreasing amounts to arterial (65.6 percent), collector (58.0 percent), and local (50.0 percent) roadways. In contrast, pedestrians contributed the most to local roadways (32.9 percent) and decreasing amounts to collector (32.0 percent), arterial (23.3 percent), and interstate (0.1 percent) roadways. Improperly secured loads contributed more to interstates (11.3 percent) than to any other roadway type.
- Urban roads had approximately 2,585 litter items per mile. In comparison, rural roads had approximately 1,635 litter items per mile.

The public attitude survey provides an understanding of Pennsylvania residents' opinion of the effects of litter, prevalence of litter, instance of littering, tobacco littering, consequences of littering, and litter prevention and abatement in the Commonwealth. Some takeaways from the public input received include:

- Over 90 percent of survey respondents reported that litter is a problem in the Commonwealth.
- Respondents believe the presence of litter has an impact on the environment, waterways, property taxes, home values, tourism and businesses, and safety of communities.
- Respondents reported that the primary types of litter are fast food packaging, plastic film, beverage containers and tobacco products. Their perceptions are generally in line with the survey findings, as these four categories were among the most commonly identified litter items along roadways.
- Respondents believe that the two primary causes of litter are:
 - People don't care about the effects of litter and
 - Littering happens when a convenient receptacle is not available.
- Approximately 80 percent of respondents said, "Not likely at all." when asked how likely it is for someone to actually get caught or fined for littering.
- About one-half of the survey respondents expressed that they could recall seeing or hearing litter abatement advertisements in Pennsylvania. Of survey respondents that could recall litter public education and outreach, about one-half reported such litter public education and outreach was rare.

The Litter Summit was held on November 14, 2019, and brought together key stakeholders from across the Commonwealth to discuss the results of the Pennsylvania Litter Research Study. The Summit was attended by 124 representatives from state and local governments, non-profits and private industry. Feedback received from attendees on how to reduce and eradicate litter in Pennsylvania included:

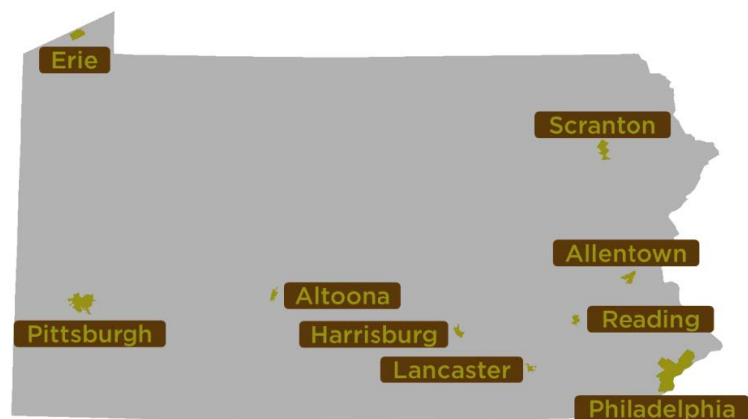
- The majority of Litter Summit attendees responded that regulations and enforcement (51.7 percent) and infrastructure (37.2 percent) should be the focus for reducing littering and illegal dumping.
- Litter Summit attendees identified the need to educate the public as to the negative impacts of litter. For example, attendees stated the need to increase awareness that litter on land will end up in Pennsylvania waterways.
- Attendees stated that additional funding was needed for enforcement personnel and infrastructure.
- Solid waste management infrastructure and recycling facilities for electronics and household hazardous waste were identified by Litter Summit attendees as a means to decrease littering and illegal dumping. In addition, attendees stated more litter receptacles and cigarette butt stations would assist with reducing litter in Pennsylvania communities.

The [Pennsylvania Litter Research Study](#) was ultimately published in January 2020 and provided a thorough understanding of the littering issue in Pennsylvania.

Cost of Litter & Illegal Dumping in Pennsylvania Study

To learn more about the economic impact of litter and illegal dumping on local governments, KPB also commissioned Burns & McDonnell in 2019 to survey nine cities on the money they spend to manage litter and illegal dumping. Participating cities included: Allentown, Altoona, Erie, Harrisburg, Lancaster, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Reading, and Scranton.

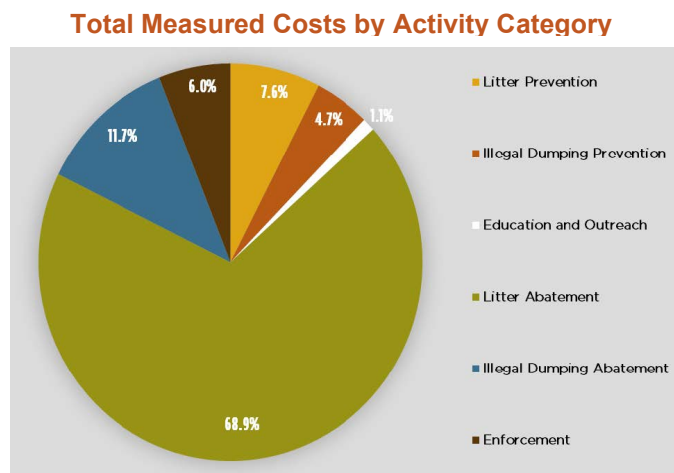
[The Cost of Litter & Illegal Dumping in Pennsylvania](#) report was released in January 2020 and found that collectively these nine Pennsylvania cities spend more than \$68.5 million annually on prevention, education, abatement, and enforcement



Graphic Credit: Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful

efforts to address litter and illegal dumping throughout their respective communities. Overall, communities collectively spent the most money on litter and illegal dumping abatement activities (about \$54.5 million or 80 percent). This includes activities such as street sweeping or other cleaning programs and volunteer cleanup events designed to keep their streets and other public rights-of-way free of litter and illegally dumped goods. While abatement and clean ups are an important part in the fight against litter, those efforts do not address the root causes of littering or illegal dumping.

Using funding to implement behavior change strategies of infrastructure, education and enforcement would be an effective way at addressing the root causes of littering and illegal dumping.



Graphic Credit: Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful

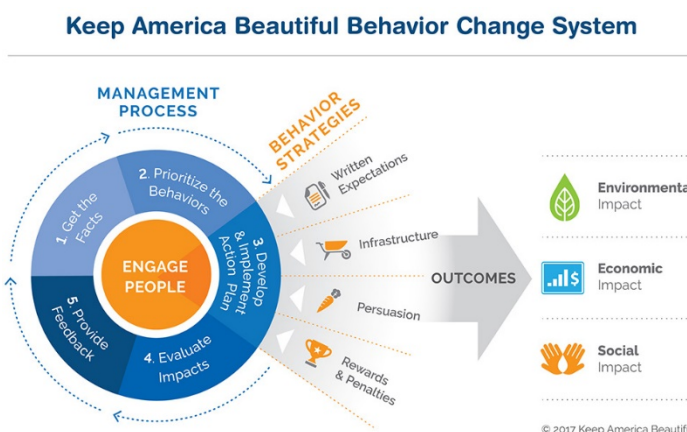
However, litter and illegal dumping prevention activities, like providing ample trash and recycling receptacles in public places or providing convenient and affordable disposal options for materials that are commonly dumped such as tires, appliances, and electronics, collectively only received 13 percent of the total funding analyzed. Education and outreach aimed at educating the public regarding the impacts of litter and illegal dumping and how to avoid them is receiving just one percent of the total funding, while enforcement activities received about six percent of total funding.

Overall, the findings from this study show that these cities spend about four times as much to remove litter and illegally dumped items from their communities as they do to prevent it from being generated in the first place.

Overview of Litter Action Plan Workgroup Approach

Given the large volumes of litter found across Pennsylvania and the high costs that state and local governments spend each year to try to address it as demonstrated by the *Pennsylvania Litter Research Study* and the *Cost of Litter & Illegal Dumping in Pennsylvania* report, DEP and PennDOT, with support from Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, began development of a multi-stakeholder initiative to identify ways to change Pennsylvanians' behaviors to end littering. The recommendations on how to end littering developed as part of this initiative would then be included in Pennsylvania's first ever Litter Action Plan Report as a reference tool for all Pennsylvanians on how they can be a part of the solution to Pennsylvania's littering problem.

The initiative formally began in spring 2021 with the development of four workgroups made up of state and local government representatives, members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly, environmental and community groups, and businesses across Pennsylvania. A complete list of workgroup participants is included in Appendix I. These workgroups were centered around Keep America Beautiful's [model for change](#), which is based on social psychologist Wes Schulz's nationally recognized model of behavior change. This model includes four behavior change strategies that can be applied to mobilize people to create sustainable change.



Accordingly, the four workgroups that were formed as part of the Litter Action Plan initiative were:

1. **The Litter Education and Outreach Workgroup** – Education and outreach are essential components to making sure all Pennsylvanians know littering is unacceptable and there are better ways to manage their waste. This workgroup focused on potential outreach strategies and recommendations for a statewide anti-litter education campaign.
2. **The Infrastructure Workgroup** – Ensuring infrastructure, like trash cans and waste management services, are available to all Pennsylvania's communities is key to addressing the issue of litter in Pennsylvania. This workgroup focused on ways to ensure Pennsylvania communities have the necessary infrastructure in place to help ensure there are ample ways to properly manage commonly littered items.
3. **The Litter Laws and Enforcement Workgroup** – Regulations and enforcement are a tool at preventing and deterring littering behavior. This workgroup evaluated the effectiveness of current ordinances, laws and statutes and their enforcement as it relates to reducing litter in Pennsylvania. The workgroup also identified possible statutory and enforcement updates to ensure littering regulations are enforced.
4. **The Partnerships Workgroup** – Government cannot tackle litter alone. This workgroup involved businesses and industry leaders to provide feedback on the recommendations heard in other workgroups and work to identify ways to help reduce litter across the state.

The four workgroups met virtually in April, May and June 2021 to brainstorm possible recommendations relative to the workgroup focus areas. DEP and PennDOT staff facilitated these conversations, and workgroup participants had robust discussions about potential solutions. Following these brainstorming meetings, the recommendations provided by the workgroups were formatted into draft recommendations, and the workgroups reconvened in September 2021 to provide feedback on the draft recommendations. This report reflects the final recommendations from the four workgroups.



Photo Credit: PA DEP

Recommendations

This report is structured to show that everyone has a role to play in the fight against litter. There are 5 main sections outlining actions state government, the General Assembly, local governments, businesses, and the general public can take to prevent littering.

How State Government Can Lead By Example

State government expends significant resources each year to address litter throughout Pennsylvania. This is time and resources that could be better spent addressing road improvements in Pennsylvania or addressing other human health and environmental hazards. While state government cannot solve Pennsylvania's litter problem alone, it is critical that state government agencies work together to lead by example and implement programs and policies that help Pennsylvanians reduce litter.

Assisting Local Government Partners

1. **Share waste-related model ordinances for local governments.** To aid local governments in responsibly managing their waste and better preventing littering and illegal dumping, DEP has compiled a [webpage](#) with links to ordinances currently used throughout Pennsylvania that interested municipalities can reference when looking to update their waste and recycling programs. This webpage contains ordinances that include information on topics such as effective waste and recycling management education programs, program requirements, drop-off program ideas, and transportation and collection considerations. The many sample ordinances that are provided on this webpage can help municipalities to find ideas that could be beneficial for their community's unique situation and help to reduce littering and illegal dumping through implementation of strong waste and recycling programs.
2. **Allow for rural transfer stations to aid in waste management in rural Pennsylvania.** Based on findings from the DEP-sponsored Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's [Illegal Dumping in Pennsylvania: A Decade of Discovery. Recommended Policies and Programs for Future Prevention and Enforcement 2014](#) report, distance influences both good and poor waste management practices. Studies have shown that people are willing to drive up to ten miles to use a drop-off location for discarded items, particularly in rural areas. Based on this and other information, DEP is working on a rulemaking to permit the development of small transfer stations in rural areas of Pennsylvania where residents could drop off their waste and recycling at a convenient location. Doing so would ensure that Pennsylvanians in rural areas where it isn't currently economical to have curbside waste and recycling collection still have a convenient way to appropriately and responsibly dispose of their trash rather than littering or illegally dumping it.

Enhanced Understanding and Enforcement of Litter Laws

1. **Provide education on litter provisions of the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code.** On all vehicle registration cards, there is language acknowledging that it is illegal to litter as stated in the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code in Title 75, Section 3709. Therefore, by signing a vehicle registration, Pennsylvanians agree to not litter. Since the language currently on the registration cards is written to mirror the statutory language, PennDOT is working to provide easy-to-understand messaging regarding these provisions. This includes informative videos to be played at Driver's License Centers throughout Pennsylvania and infographics to share on social media. PennDOT hopes to reduce the amount of litter motorists generate by educating Pennsylvania motorists that littering is in direct violation of the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code.

2. **Provide education on littering to the judicial system.** It is important to make the judicial system aware of both the environmental and economic impacts that litter has on communities to ensure appropriate enforcement of litter and illegal dumping violations. The costs of illegal dumping can range up to \$100,000 and are costly to local communities and state agencies. DEP and Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful partnered with the Minor Judiciary Education Board starting in 2017 to provide education on these topics to magisterial district judges. Pennsylvania should continue to support the ongoing education of magisterial district judges, through the Minor Judiciary Education Board, and explain why placing fines on litter violators is important and why the amount of the fine, as well as the option to sentence a violator to pick up litter in some instances, matters.



Photo Credit: PennDOT

3. **Educate local law enforcement, tow companies and first responders on accident clean-up requirements.** As required by the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code (Title 75, Chapter 37 § 3709), debris from accidents must be properly disposed of and cannot be left on the side of a road or in a median. However, it is more common to see accident debris left behind after an accident has occurred when driving along Pennsylvania roadways. PennDOT is developing educational materials on these requirements that the Pennsylvania State Police will help share with law enforcement, tow companies, local fire companies and first responders aiding in the cleanup of an accident. This way they can become a partner in preventing debris from accidents becoming litter and ensuring the debris is properly disposed of while proper safety measures are in place as an accident scene is being managed.
4. **Continue enforcement of litter laws.** The Pennsylvania State Police work to enforce Pennsylvania's vehicle code, including handling littering and illegal dumping on state roads and areas not covered by a local police department. In addition to continuing to enforce the law, the State Police should consider creative programs, like their "Operation Clean Sweep", which highlighted the importance of enforcement of the littering-related provisions of Vehicle Code § 3709 (Depositing waste and other material on highway, property or waters) and § 4903 (securing loads in vehicles), as well as Crimes Code § 6501 (Scattering Rubbish). Additionally, the program helped to inform State Police that PennDOT has designated litter enforcement corridors and encourage the enforcement of Vehicle Code § 3329 (Duty of driver in litter enforcement corridors). Enforcement officers from the Pennsylvania Game Commission, Fish and Boat Commission, and DCNR also work to catch litterers and illegal dumpers and issue citations. These groups should continue to enforce litter laws and find innovative ways to catch individuals who litter and illegal dump.

Waste Infrastructure Improvements

1. **Provide ample waste and recycling receptacles on state-owned property.** As discussed earlier in this report, research has shown that proximity to public waste receptacles helps to determine if someone will litter or not. The state can lead by example and ensure there are ample waste and recycling receptacles at their facilities to make it convenient for members of the public to responsibly dispose of their trash and conveniently recycle items rather than litter. This includes in state parks, at rest stops, and in front of state-owned buildings.
2. **Continue expansion of cigarette butt stations for proper disposal on state-owned property.** Similarly, the state can lead by example to provide adequate cigarette butt stations to make sure cigarette butts are disposed of properly on state-owned land. For example, DCNR recently collaborated with Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful in 2020 to reduce the number of cigarette butts carelessly left behind in Pennsylvania state parks. Ash receptacles were placed at points of entry into the parks, and portable ashtrays were distributed to smokers who visited the parks. By providing this basic infrastructure, cigarette butt litter was reduced by a combined total of 42 percent. Continuing to provide these resources to employees and visitors of state-owned properties can help the state lead by example and further reduce the amount of cigarette litter in PA.

Litter Education Campaign & Outreach

1. **Develop a statewide anti-litter educational campaign.** DEP, PennDOT and DCED are leading the development of a state-wide anti-litter educational campaign. The campaign will include a branded toolkit of a logo, materials, graphics, messaging and other items for partners to use and promote that focus on educating residents and visitors about the impact of litter.
2. **Promote anti-littering messaging.** The state will also develop videos and other graphics to push out through a media buy to share the anti-litter message with all Commonwealth residents. The message sharing should include both traditional and online media.
3. **Continue to build partnerships.** Through the development of the Statewide Litter Action Plan, DEP and PennDOT have facilitated conversations between fellow state agencies, local governments, community groups, communities facing environmental justice issues, and businesses to recommend practical solutions to address Pennsylvania's littering problem. This kind of collaboration helps to ensure sustainable behavior change. State government will continue to nurture these partnerships and expand connections to help in the fight against litter. At a minimum this will include the continuation of an Interagency Litter Task Force to ensure state government is continuing to take action to prevent litter in Pennsylvania.



Photo Credit: PA DEP

4. **Create a littering component to environmental education grant program.** To ensure Pennsylvania's youth understand the importance of preventing littering, DEP should prioritize littering as a topic eligible for its environmental education grant program. The Environmental Education Grant Program was established by the Environmental Education Act of 1993, which mandates that five percent of all pollution fines and penalties collected annually by DEP be set aside for environmental education. The funds can be used for projects ranging from creative, hands-on lessons for students, teacher training programs, and outdoor learning resources to conservation education for adults. By adding litter as a priority topic for grant funding, DEP can help to expand anti-litter education throughout the state.
5. **Work with the Department of Education on anti-littering curriculum.** Providing curriculum and materials for educators can help share the anti-litter message to younger children in schools. This instills a sense of responsibility at a young age and the added benefit of children bringing the anti-littering message home to share with their families. DEP and DCNR have worked with the Department of Education to develop anti-littering educational resources historically, including for the [PA Pathway to Green Schools program](#). and DEP and the Department of Education are currently working with Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful to update the associated curriculum materials.
6. **Conduct outreach to public using state-owned land.** Park rangers, Game Commission and Fish and Boat Commission staff are often in contact with members of the public frequenting state-owned park or game lands. These individuals can help to share information on where to properly dispose of their trash while visiting state-owned land and on the principles of "leave no trace."
7. **Develop a Young Ambassador program.** Engaging Pennsylvania youth to take a lead role in the fight against litter can help to keep our communities clean and instill a sense of volunteerism in younger generations. PennDOT should develop a Pennsylvania-based Young Ambassador program to engage young Pennsylvanians in spreading awareness on the impacts of litter in their local communities and helping to organize activities to keep their communities litter free. [Keep Texas Beautiful](#) currently has a program with a focus on anti-litter and community pride that could serve as a model for Pennsylvania. Additionally, there are already programs in Pennsylvania to engage young people and educate them on the importance of not littering that could also serve as models. For example, [in Harrisburg](#), teens spend the summer cleaning up neighborhoods through the Environmental Teen Corp. (ETC) Program. By providing an ambassador program along these lines, Pennsylvania youth can be empowered to help keep their communities litter-free.
8. **Continue support for the Pick Up Pennsylvania Campaign.** As mentioned above, each year between March 1–May 31 and September 1–November 30 during [Pick Up Pennsylvania](#), registered events can get free cleanup supplies, such as bags, gloves and vests donated by PennDOT, the DEP, and Keep America Beautiful. Through this program, thousands of volunteers help each year to clean up Pennsylvania's roadways and communities. PennDOT and DEP should continue to support and promote this vitally important initiative to keep Pennsylvania clean.



Photo Credit: PA DEP

What the Pennsylvania General Assembly Can Do

The Pennsylvania General Assembly has a critical role to play in helping to prevent littering in Pennsylvania. While it is already illegal to litter in Pennsylvania, there are multiple current litter laws the legislature should review and update to ensure prevention and enforcement. It's also critical that the Pennsylvania General Assembly identify dedicated funding mechanisms to help local communities in the fight against litter. Without dedicated resources, many of the recommendations in this report will not be feasible. The Pennsylvania General Assembly has a unique opportunity to lead by example and help to end Pennsylvania's littering problem.

Litter Laws Enhancements

1. **Evaluate and update littering and illegal dumping fines.** Civil penalties associated with littering and illegal dumping are often considered to be either too high or too low and therefore, not an effective deterrent to preventing an individual from littering or illegal dumping in the first place. One example provided was the cost for a small waste hauler or contractor to retrofit a vehicle to have a closed bed to secure waste is far more expensive than just paying a fine for not securing their load. Possible options for improving the efficacy of fines are to establish weight-based or category-based fines. For example, South Carolina instituted a weight-based fine system as their local magistrates disagreed with previously higher fines for littering offenses. Now, someone convicted of littering items of less than 15 pounds (i.e. cigarette butts, food wrapper or beverage container), receives a \$25 - \$100 fine and 8 hours of mandatory litter pick up community service time. If someone is convicted of illegal dumping 15 to 500 pounds, they would receive a \$200 - \$500 fine and 16 -32 hours of community service. Someone who is convicted of illegally dumping over 500 pounds worth of items would receive a \$500 - \$1,000 fine and be required to cleanup the illegal dump site. This has resulted in a higher conviction rate from the judicial community in South Carolina and more litterers being held accountable. Many other states use category-based fines. For example, if a littering offense occurs along a Delaware byway, a federal wildlife refuge, a State park, or land that belong to the US Department of Interior, offenders receive an additional penalty of \$500 for every offense. In Indiana, if a littering offense occurs within 100 feet of a body of water, the infraction class is upgraded with a fine of up to \$1,000.
2. **Create a dedicated fund for littering and illegal dumping fines.** To ensure that any fines for littering and illegal dumping are used to help address the issues of littering and illegal dumping, a dedicated fund for littering and illegal dumping fines should be created. The monies in this fund should be spent solely on littering and illegal dumping prevention activities and programs.
3. **Mandate litter pick-up.** Currently, some litter-related laws only state that violators *may* be sentenced to help pick up litter on their second or third offenses. To have violators better understand the impacts



Photo Credit: PA DEP

of their actions and help to clean up the litter they have contributed to our communities and roads, the appropriate litter laws should be updated to include mandatory litter pick-up as a sentence.

4. **Specifically link community service to litter clean-ups.** Litter laws and community service sentences should be updated to include litter clean-ups as an option. See Appendix III for information on Pennsylvania's existing litter laws.
5. **Update litter-related language on vehicle registration cards.** As noted above, all vehicle registration cards have language acknowledging the litter provisions of the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code in Title 75, Section 3709. However, the language currently on the registration cards is written to mirror the statutory language as required by law and may be difficult to understand. The law should be updated to allow this language pertaining to littering on vehicle registration to be more user friendly and in plain English, so all Pennsylvanians know they are attesting they will not litter when signing a vehicle registration.

§ 1317. Acknowledgment of littering provisions.
On every vehicle registration card, the following statement shall be printed immediately above or below the signature of the applicant:
I hereby acknowledge this day that I have received notice of the provisions of section 3709 of the Vehicle Code.
Also printed on the registration card shall be the following:
Section 3709 provides for a fine of up to \$300 for dropping, throwing or depositing, upon any highway, or upon any other public or private property without the consent of the owner thereof or into or on the waters of this Commonwealth from a vehicle, any waste paper, sweepings, ashes, household waste, glass, metal, refuse or rubbish or any dangerous or detrimental substance, or permitting any of the preceding without immediately removing such items or causing their removal.
For any violation of section 3709, I may be subject to a fine of up to \$300 upon conviction, including any violation resulting from the conduct of any other persons operating, in possession of or present within this vehicle with my permission, if I do not with reasonable certainty identify the driver of the vehicle at the time the violation occurred.
(Mar. 27, 1986, P.L.71, No.24, eff. July 1, 1986)
6. **Ensure universal access to convenient and affordable trash disposal and recycling.** Presently, it is not convenient for all Pennsylvanians to dispose of their waste or recycling responsibly rather than through littering or illegal dumping. Pennsylvania's current laws do not require a municipality to mandate curbside trash collection. For recycling, Act 101 of 1988 only requires municipalities with a population greater than 5,000 to implement curbside recycling programs and pass related ordinances. This leaves many Pennsylvanians without access to convenient waste disposal and recycling further contributing to Pennsylvania's littering and illegal dumping problems. Pennsylvania's Solid Waste Management Act and Act 101 of 1988 should be amended to require all Pennsylvanians have access to convenient waste and recycling services, but local governments should be given flexibility on how to provide that access. For example, more populated municipalities can use curbside services, while more rural areas of the state can have rural convenience centers to collect waste and recycling or have community collection events.
7. **Update cover your load.** Current Title 75, section 4903 states that trucks with loose garbage are required to cover any garbage going to a disposal site. This helps to prevent loose garbage from escaping out of a truck and becoming litter or causing any accidents on roadways. Additionally, 25 Pa. Code §285.214(b)(1) states "...It is imperative that municipal waste be removed from the vehicle at the disposal site to prevent scattering of litter on the highway during the return trip." However, there is no law for coverage of trucks once they have dropped off their load to address the scenario where items are accidentally left behind. For optimal impact, the law should be updated to include that trucks also be covered leaving a disposal site to reduce any residual garbage from escaping.
8. **Ensure adequate support for managing waste tires.** Waste tires are a commonly illegally dumped item found in Pennsylvania. When illegally dumped, they contribute to mosquito-borne illnesses such as West Nile Virus and can leach toxic chemicals into soil and water causing harm to humans, wildlife and the environment. To help address Pennsylvania's waste tire issue, the Waste Tire Recycling Act

Photo Credit: PennDOT

(WTRA) established a special fund called the Used Tire Pile Remediation Restricted Account (UTPRRA) for DEP to carry out the remediation of priority abandoned waste tire piles. Currently, the UTPRRA is funded solely from waste tire hauler annual authorization fees, totaling on average \$29,200 per year, and any penalties collected under the WTRA. While DEP has successfully disposed of over 40 million waste tires, there are still approximately 700,000 tires estimated at remaining priority sites. Based on the average cost to cleanup compared to the annual funding currently received via the annual authorization fee and penalties, cleaning these abandoned waste tire sites would deplete the UTPRRA. Most states fund their waste tire cleanups via fees on the sale of new tires. Pennsylvania does have a \$1.00 fee on the sale of new tires in Pennsylvania authorized by Act 26 of 1991. However, the revenue from this fee gets deposited into the Public Transportation Assistance Fund to help fund mass transit in Pennsylvania rather than the UTPRRA to aid with cleanup of Pennsylvania's waste tires. The General Assembly should consider creating an additional new fee on the purchase of new tires in Pennsylvania that would specifically be dedicated to providing infrastructure opportunities for proper tire disposal and tire cleanup efforts.



Photo Credit: PA DEP

New Litter Laws

1. **Identify a new legislated funding mechanism to support county and/or local litter prevention and abatement activities.** As noted above, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful commissioned a survey of nine Pennsylvania cities on the money they spend to manage litter and illegal dumping. Participating cities reportedly spend collectively over \$68 million each year on prevention, education, cleanup and enforcement initiatives to address litter and illegal dumping. Those costs are in addition to the millions of dollars DEP and PennDOT spend each year to help communities address litter and illegal dumping. To ensure local communities throughout Pennsylvania have the resources they need, the General Assembly should identify and implement a funding mechanism to aid local governments in their litter prevention and abatement activities.
2. **Incorporate extended producer responsibility.** As more communities across the United States are faced with increasing amounts of waste and related mismanagement, placing responsibility for the treatment and disposal of products on producers has become an increasingly popular regulatory model. Extended Producer Responsibility, also referred to as EPR, is a policy method in which producers are accountable for the treatment or disposal of post-consumer products. By placing the responsibility for managing waste on producers, this approach helps to provide incentives for producers to prevent waste up front and help to encourage more sustainable product design. This, in turn, reduces the amount of waste generated and how much waste ends up littered or illegally dumped. The General Assembly should consider how EPR policies could be implemented to help reduce littering and illegal dumping in Pennsylvania. Using the findings from the *Pennsylvania Litter Research Study* as a starting point, the General Assembly could target initial policies at addressing the most commonly littered items found in PA.

Litter Program Funding Ideas Across the United States

While there are many funding mechanisms states use for their litter programs, one example is how [Washington State](#) funds their litter program. Washington has a 0.015% tax on commonly littered items that can be used by state government to fund litter cleanups and anti-littering education to the public. Washington's litter tax is on manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers of certain products which contribute to their litter problem. This tax generates about \$11.4 million a year and gets deposited into their Waste Reduction, Recycling, and Litter Control Account. The funds can be used by their Department of Ecology for a litter control program employing youth to clean up public places, and for public education and awareness programs relating to litter control and recycling.

Environmental Courts

The [Shelby County Environmental Court](#) has become a model for successfully implementing an environmental court system. In 1983, the City of Memphis created the Shelby County Environmental Court, a new division of City Court to handle environmental violations. Then, in 1991, the Tennessee Legislature created the Shelby County Environmental Court and gave it the authority to issue conjunctive orders in aid of its jurisdiction, making it the first countywide environmental court in the country. The court has been very successful, hearing dozens of litter cases per month and over 100 illegal dumping/improper storage cases per month. For more information on how the Shelby County Environmental Court was established, see its enabling legislation here: [Enabling Legislation | Shelby County, TN - Official Website \(shelbycountyttn.gov\)](#).

3. **Create “environmental court” days.** Environmental courts are a type of court system that handle cases related to violation of environmental laws only. This allows for judges to become specialized in environmental laws and ensure that environmental violations, like littering and illegal dumping, are handled more promptly. Pennsylvania’s legislature and the court system should consider where an environmental court might make sense to establish in order to enhance litter and illegal dumping oversight.

What Local Governments Can Do

Many local governments carry the burden of litter pollution, including spending significant amounts of money and time cleaning up littered and illegally dumped sites. While each community is different, there are strategies that local governments throughout Pennsylvania have implemented that have helped to address litter and illegal dumping. Through consideration of their communities’ specific needs, development of local ordinances and zoning requirements and contracting waste and recycling services, local leaders can provide their residents with the resources needed to prevent mismanagement of waste.

Litter Enforcement Ideas

1. **Incorporate best practices into local ordinances.** Communities throughout Pennsylvania have had success with reducing littering and illegal dumping by incorporating litter prevention related best practices in their local ordinances. It is also important to consider enforcement of your ordinances. Possible topics to consider incorporating in your local ordinances include:

- Require trashcans and recycling cans be covered during collection.
- Require waste haulers and contractors to clean up any spills they create.
- Require waste management plans detailing where associated waste will be disposed of be submitted as part of local building/remodeling permits.
- Require proof of disposal to obtain a local occupancy permit.
- Require proof of disposal for local demolition permits.
- Require people to bag their trash so it does not get blown into the street by the wind or if their receptacle gets knocked over.
- Require businesses to provide waste receptacles and cigarette buckets in front of their buildings and in parking lots.
- Require businesses to keep their properties clean and litter-free.
- Specify responsible waste and recycling collection schedules and processes.

Illegal Dump Free PA

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, with support from DEP, provides a program called [Illegal Dump Free PA](#) to help local government and local law enforcement officials curb illegal dumping by exposing those who commit this crime. A grant recipient will receive, as a temporary loan, a surveillance kit to be placed at undisclosed locations as part of the IllegalDumpFreePA program. The kit includes three concealable, lockable cameras and accessories that capture conviction-worthy footage of license plates and illegal dumpers – even at night. One camera uses wireless technology to email pictures when triggered, providing almost instant results. A grant recipient receives a surveillance kit and camera to put up at an undisclosed location.

- Prohibit individuals or companies convicted of illegal dumping from bidding on future contracts in your community.
2. **Collaborate with police, store owners and local residents who have surveillance cameras to catch litterers and illegal dumpers.** It is expensive and time consuming for local governments to investigate illegal dumps and commonly littered sites. To streamline this process, local governments should consider developing collaborative surveillance programs with police, store owners and/or local residents that have existing security cameras where there is a lot of litter activity and illegal dumping. By working together, communities can help identify litterers and illegal dumpers.
 3. **Create specific tickets for littering and illegal dumping.** It can take local law enforcement some time to fill out an arrest sheet and all the necessary paperwork when catching someone littering or illegal dumping. Due to this, it's often easier to write a warning rather than proceed with a formal citation. To ensure litterers were being held accountable, the City of Allentown through a [local ordinance](#) created a SWEEP violation ticketing system, which is a form issued by a police officer or public officer to a person who violates their local ordinances related to littering or illegal dumping. Similar to a parking ticket, the violation ticket is an offer by the City of Allentown extended to a person to settle a violation by paying the fine in lieu of a citation being issued against the violator. The ticket rates are set at \$25 or \$100 for littering and \$1,000 or \$5,000 fine for illegal dumping. These tickets take law enforcement only a few minutes to fill out, and the City has become a model for effective enforcement of litter and illegal dumping laws. Please see Appendix V for Allentown's SWEEP ticket.
 4. **Partner with fellow municipal government departments, non-profits, or state government to encourage "litter-cleanup" community service programs for people convicted of low-level offenses.** Helping to clean up our communities is an important way to give back. Local governments should consider partnering with local law enforcement and non-profits to allow individuals convicted of low-level offenses to do litter clean ups as their community service sentence. Currently, PennDOT has a [Litter Brigade](#) program that is administered by County Magistrates through the County Probation Offices and allows offenders to receive community service sentencing through litter pick up as part of their adjudication. Local communities should encourage the use of the state's Litter Brigade program or create their own version of a community service program to help clean up their communities.

Public Waste Infrastructure Opportunities

1. **Provide ample waste receptacles and cigarette butt stations in heavily trafficked areas by pedestrians.** In order to make it more convenient for someone to properly dispose of their trash rather than litter, waste receptacles and cigarette butt stations should be placed in common transition points. According to research conducted by Keep America Beautiful, people were observed littering in public spaces when the nearest trash receptacles averaged about 29 feet away, but the rate of littering decreased when people are within 10 feet of a trash receptacle. Given this, the ideal placement would be to have a trash receptacle on every corner and in the



Photo Credit: PennDOT

middle of every block in public spaces. However, this might not be practical due to an area's population density or financial constraints. In that case, it's a best practice to place receptacles diagonally at intersections to still capture waste from all pedestrians walking.

2. **Ensure public waste infrastructure is well-maintained and regularly collected.** Litter attracts more litter. It's critical that any public waste receptacles are regularly collected by municipalities and well maintained with appropriate signage. This includes ensuring that any signage clearly explains via pictures or instructions what can and can't be disposed of in public receptacles.
3. **Get creative with public waste infrastructure maintenance.** Throughout Pennsylvania, local governments have deployed different strategies to ensure the appropriate collection of public waste receptacles. Some innovative solutions you could consider incorporating in your community include:
 - In Centre County, township buildings have been included as part of their residential waste contract to ensure regular collection.
 - In Allentown, there is an ordinance that allows small businesses to join into a curbside contract at the same rate as residential properties depending on the quantity of waste typically generated.
 - In Lancaster, local government leaders are spearheading a new initiative called the Tiny Can Project aimed at having residents help to reduce litter. The Tiny Can Project will install "tiny cans" (trash receptacles) every few houses on both sides of the street for an entire city block in three target areas. Residents who have a "tiny can" in front of their house will be responsible for emptying the receptacles on trash day and will dispose of it with their regular trash collection.
 - In [Cheltenham](#) Township, any individual requesting a special events permit is required to have recycling containers.
4. **Consider use of smart waste infrastructure.** It can be difficult for local governments to know when public waste infrastructure needs to be collected. However, using smart bins or other solar-powered trash cans and compactors is one way to ensure municipalities are notified of a need to collect a near-full public receptacles. With a smart bin, users receive a text message alert that a bin is nearly full, so municipalities know when to send a crew to empty it. Although this smart infrastructure can be expensive, some areas have had success with having local businesses sponsor and/or place ads on the smart bins. By using smart infrastructure, communities can ensure public waste receptacles are well-maintained and don't contribute to litter.

Waste Management Best Practices

1. **Learn about waste management best practices and what makes the most sense for your community.** Local governments and county governments that are actively engaged with how their waste and recycling are managed tend to have programs that are run more effectively and in turn, have less littering in their communities. Depending on current statutory requirements, community needs and access to services, different waste and recycling collection methods will make more sense than others. On page 45, the DEP-sponsored Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful [Illegal Dumping in Pennsylvania: A Decade of Discovery. Recommended Policies and Programs for Future Prevention and Enforcement 2014](#) report provides a helpful graphic outlining factors to consider in providing waste collection services in your community. Additionally, DEP has created a [webpage](#) with links to ordinances currently used throughout Pennsylvania that include information on topics such as effective waste and recycling management education programs, program requirements, drop-off program ideas, and transportation and collection considerations. The many sample ordinances that

are provided on this webpage can help municipalities find ideas that could be beneficial for their community's unique situation.

2. **Use a municipal-wide contract with a single hauler for waste and recycling services.** Many municipalities in Pennsylvania do not have a default trash or recycling pickup service for their residents, leaving residents to find their own waste collectors – or none at all. For cities, boroughs, and more densely populated townships, a municipal-wide contract with a single waste hauler is considered a best practice as it provides certainty and clear management of waste and recycling for their communities. Areas using a single hauler have seen a reduction in littering and illegal dumping due to consistent collection and management of waste. It is also typically less expensive for the resident than trying to procure their own waste hauler. DEP has a [webpage](#) with links to sample recycling program development documents, including bid documents, that may be useful for any community interested in pursuing a waste and recycling program.
3. **Provide adequately sized waste and recycling containers for residents and encourage closed bins if possible.** One source of litter is household trash and recycling blowing out of waste and recycling containers prior to being collected. As a best practice, municipalities should include as a requirement in their contracts with waste haulers that appropriately sized containers to hold enough waste and recycling generated by households are provided by the haulers to residents and encourage closed bins to prevent loose materials from being blown out in turbulent weather conditions.
4. **Provide disposal options for hard to dispose of items.** To make sure that household hazardous waste items, waste tires, electronics, and other hard to dispose of items are properly managed instead of littered or illegally dumped, local governments should provide opportunities for residents to responsibly dispose of them. This includes hosting community collection events or requiring your waste hauler provide special collection events or bulky item pick ups as part of your contract for waste

Waste Tire Management

The [City of Reading](#) offers a special collection service for tires. Residents call the Reading Citizen Services Center with the number of tires they need picked up, and someone will come to pick up used tires at no additional cost to the resident. This program is only for residential properties and not businesses. From August 2020 to August 2021, the Reading Clean City Team collected 762 tires through this pickup program and 400 additional through illegal dump cleanups. The total collected was 29.48 tons of tires, which at a disposal rate of \$300/ton resulted in a total of \$8,844. Since implementation, Reading has seen a 50% drop in small illegal dumps within the City.

Partnering on Hard-to-Dispose Items

Since 2003, the [Pennsylvania Resources Council](#) (PRC), an environmental not-for-profit, has hosted hard to recycle collections in Southwestern Pennsylvania. The intent of this program is to provide convenient and proper disposal of items that are not eligible for curbside collection. At these events, individuals have been able to recycle items such as e-waste, cell phones, polystyrene, alkaline batteries, Freon-containing appliances, tires, and more. According to PRC's website, these collection events have allowed more than 31,000 participants to recycle 2,000,000 pounds of electronics, 12,000 plus tires, and 3,700 appliances. In 2020, PRC began a Traveling Glass Bin program, which is a week-long, rotating self-serve collection model that provides communities who lost access to curbside glass recycling collection services to still responsibly dispose and recycle their glass.

and recycling services. For example, some municipalities within Lawrence-Mercer Recycling/Solid Waste Department upgraded their waste management contracts to include curbside e-waste and household hazardous waste collection options. There are also many existing county resources online for communities to tap into to aid with providing disposal options and getting the word out about these events. These include DEP's [Electronics Collection Program](#) website, DEP's [Household Hazardous Waste Collection Programs](#) website, DEP's [Waste Tire Program](#) website, and Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's [County Resources](#) website. Additionally, local [County Recycling Coordinators](#), Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Affiliates, and County Conservation Districts offer special collection events routinely or in some cases, have permanent drop-off sites for hard to dispose of items, which local municipalities can also promote to residents.

5. Conduct your own community litter survey and create your own litter action plan. Just as the state did in 2018-19, consider conducting your own community litter survey to document the quantity, types, and locations of litter within your community and audit your local government structure that deals with littering and illegal dumping. By studying any common themes and possible causes unique to your community, you can develop your own litter action plan tailored for your community's specific needs. The City of Pittsburgh's Department of Public Works recently developed its own "[Goals on Litter and Dumping \(GOLD\) Plan](#)" to address its littering and illegal dumping problems. Their plan includes an assessment of factors that contribute to littering and illegal dumping within Pittsburgh and recommended actions the City can take to help address these issues.

Partnering on Litter Education

- 1. Amplify the state-wide anti-litter campaign once it is developed.** Pennsylvania state government is working to develop a state-wide anti-litter campaign to educate residents and visitors about the impact of litter. Once the state-wide anti-litter campaign is rolled out, local government partners can help to spread the anti-litter message. This could include making announcements at local events where residents gather; targeting populations, such as school children, smokers, anglers or other groups in your community, that would benefit from hearing the anti-litter message; and using various county-level avenues to get the word out, such as distributing information through housing authorities. By spreading the anti-litter campaign, more Pennsylvanians will learn why littering is not okay and why it is important to keep Pennsylvania litter-free.
- 2. Add your local sense of community to the materials from the statewide campaign.** The state-wide anti-litter campaign will be developed in such a way to allow flexibility to highlight your community pride. This will help to instill a sense of responsibility in all Commonwealth residents and visitors to keep Pennsylvania litter-free. Once the campaign is rolled out, consider how to use your local pride to connect the anti-litter message with your residents.
- 3. Educate your community on the costs of littering and illegal dumping.** In 2019, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful commissioned a survey of nine Pennsylvania cities on the money they spend to manage litter



Photo Credit: PA DEP

and illegal dumping. Participating cities included: Allentown, Altoona, Erie, Harrisburg, Lancaster, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Reading, and Scranton. The survey found that the cities collectively spend more than \$68 million each year on prevention, education, cleanup and enforcement initiatives to address litter and illegal dumping with approximately 80% of those costs going towards litter cleanup. Help spread the word about the large sums of money that your community spends on picking up litter instead of providing other programs and services that would benefit your community. This will hopefully spur residents to help with anti-littering and illegal dumping efforts.

4. **Celebrate local businesses who are helping to reduce waste and keep your community litter free.** Local governments can encourage businesses to reduce the amount of waste they generate and help to keep the community litter free through recognition programs. By recognizing businesses with a certification or an award, local governments can incentivize businesses to help in the fight against litter. Two successful programs that could serve as models for communities throughout Pennsylvania are the Penn Hills Anti-Litter Group's Certificate program and the City of Philadelphia's Zero Waste Partnership program. The Penn Hills Anti-Litter Group in Pittsburgh distributes "Clean Sweep" certificates to local businesses to recognize the businesses' efforts to keep their business litter free. The City of Philadelphia's [Zero Waste Partnership](#) program recognizes and rewards businesses for their actions to reduce the amount of waste they create. To participate in the Zero Waste Partnership, organizations report on their Zero Waste Actions and monthly waste diversion rates. Programs such as these celebrate those businesses in your community who are working hard to reduce litter and incentivize other businesses to consider doing the same.
5. **Engage your community in the fight against litter and illegal dumping.** Local governments don't have to carry the burden of how to prevent litter or illegal dumping in your communities alone. Consider forming a local board or commission of local government personnel, local non-profits, and engaged community members who are passionate about keeping your community clean. This group can help local governments to come up with innovative solutions and get community buy in for any new anti-litter and illegal dumping initiatives. For example, the City of Pittsburgh established the [Clean Pittsburgh Commission](#) in 2005 with a mission to "work to improve the environmental quality of life of Pittsburgh residents through litter, illegal dumping and recycling initiatives." The Clean Pittsburgh Commission brings together representatives from various City departments, local non-profits, individuals and community groups on a monthly basis to focus on waste-related issues throughout the City. Additionally, communities facing environmental justice issues often experience issues with illegal dumping, and it is vital to seek their involvement in addressing the issue.

Creative Funding Mechanisms for Litter Prevention

1. **Create a Downtown Investment District or Neighborhood Investment District.** Enabled by Act 130 of 2000, local governments can create an assessment-based district and levy a special assessment on properties in the specified areas. These funds can then be used to help with litter cleanup and covering the costs of additional litter infrastructure, like trash cans and cigarette butt stations, in commonly trafficked areas.
2. **Use room tax proceeds to aid with funding litter abatement.** Another funding mechanism at the local level that can be considered is to use special taxes, like room tax proceeds, to help fund litter abatement activities. In Monroe County, 1% of their room tax proceeds are allocated to litter cleanups. Through these funds, Monroe County has been able to hire residents to help clean up their communities.

3. **Offer low-income assistance programs at the municipal level to aid in paying for waste collection services.** For individuals who cannot afford waste collection services, some Pennsylvania local governments provide low income assistance programs to ensure everyone has access to responsibly manage their household waste. For example, the City of Hermitage offers a low-income assistance program funded by local taxes where residents, who have a total gross income of less than \$19,050 annually, can receive a discounted quarterly billing that includes a 40% discount on full garbage, recycling and yard waste service. Members of the community only need to complete an application and provide proof of their income level to the city. By offering assistance programs for those in need, communities have seen a reduction in littering and illegal dumping of household waste. This especially can have a strong impact on environmental justice communities.



Photo Credit: PA DEP

How Businesses Can Help

Pennsylvania businesses have a unique role to play in the fight against litter. By implementing litter reduction best practices, like ensuring responsible waste management at their establishments, encouraging customers to help reduce littering, and ensuring their properties are litter free, businesses can become a key partner in Pennsylvania's litter prevention initiative.

Litter Prevention Ideas

1. **Reflect on how many single-use items you distribute to customers.** As Pennsylvania's [Litter Research Study](#) showed, single-use items were some of the most commonly littered items throughout the state. Businesses should reflect on the amount of single-use items distributed to customers and consider if these are necessary. This could include the number of napkins, straws, bags, and plastic utensil sets handed out, as well as if paper receipts are necessary for customers.
2. **Encourage customers to help reduce littering.** To help cut back on the overall amount of litter generated in PA, businesses should encourage customers to use reusable items such as bags, straws, cutlery, cups and other containers. One way to do this is to simply ask your customers if they specifically need commonly littered items while completing a sale at a drive-through or convenience store. For example, staff could ask customers if they need plastic cutlery, straws or stacks of napkins prior

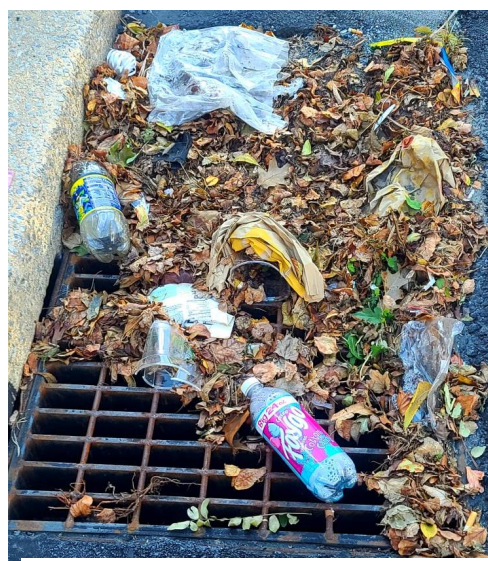


Photo Credit: Stephanie Coble Lower

to providing them. To further encourage a reduction in potentially littered items, businesses should find ways through advertising or other incentives to encourage customers to choose reusable items. For example, Wawa recently rolled out a “[Skip the Bag for Good](#)” initiative in their Philadelphia stores by providing 1,000 customers with free reusable bags and then providing customers an option to buy a \$0.25 reusable bag going forward while encouraging them to bring their own bags or consider skipping a bag all together when shopping at Wawa stores. Also related, businesses should reduce excess packaging as much as possible.

3. **Ensure receptacles are in place for employees and those delivering products to your facility.** Many packaging and food distribution facilities require employees to wear hairnets and protective covering. Having trash cans at employee exits where employees can properly dispose of these items prevents them being discarded in parking lots. When freight is being delivered to your facility, ensure there are proper places for packaging to be recycled or disposed of correctly.

Use Waste Infrastructure Best Practices

1. **Provide ample public waste and recycling receptacles in strategic locations.** Each business should ensure there are ample waste and recycling receptacles on its property including in the parking lots and parking garages. Businesses should first identify high-traffic areas and places where litter tends to accumulate on their property. Then, they can make sure there are enough receptacles in these areas; that they’re the right size; that they’re clearly labeled for what can be disposed or recycled; and they’re located where they are most convenient for the public to use.
2. **Use the best kind of receptacle for your customers.** Findings from a study completed by Walt Disney Co. demonstrated that “open front/side (no flap)” or “front/side (push flap)” receptacles are the best styles for waste or recycling receptacles to prevent litter. These structures help to keep trash and recyclables contained in inclement weather and prevent items from being blown out and becoming litter. If your receptacles frequently have litter around them, Keep America Beautiful shares that is a sign that the receptacle is inconvenient for customers, not big enough or not being serviced adequately.
3. **Ensure public waste and recycling receptacles are well-maintained and clean.** As noted above, litter attracts more litter. It’s critical that any public waste and recycling receptacles are regularly collected by businesses and well maintained with appropriate signage.



Photo Credit: PennDOT

It’s a recommended best practice that businesses include litter cleanup on their property and maintenance of receptacles as part of their regular maintenance schedules.

4. **Provide cigarette butt stations for customers.** According to Keep America Beautiful, one of the strongest predictors of cigarette butt littering is the lack of ash receptacles. For every additional ash receptacle, the littering rate for cigarette butts decreases by 9%. As such, businesses should strategically locate cigarette butt stations on their properties to reduce cigarette butt littering. Although some ordinances may require these cigarette butt stations to be a certain number of feet

from a business's entrance, it is important to put them at transition points, especially the point where smoking is allowed outside a building.

5. **Make sure waste haulers do not inadvertently contribute to litter during collection.** Businesses should make sure that trash doesn't fall out of their dumpsters or other containers while being collected and unintentionally become litter. Businesses can work with waste haulers to specify terms to make sure this doesn't happen. An additional best practice is to have staff inspect your waste collection/storage area after pick up to make sure there's no leftover items. If there is, staff should work to clean it up immediately before it is blown away.
6. **Keep border areas around business properties litter-free.** Research shows that areas that are litter-free are more likely to stay that way. If a business consistently has litter around its property, it's important to first identify the source(s) of the litter, and then work to prevent the litter from accumulating. This could mean having staff conduct litter cleanup as part of regularly scheduled maintenance or partnering with a Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful affiliate. One creative way to keep your businesses litter free is to adopt a model similar to the "Two Minute Tuesdays" program in the Allison Hill neighborhood of Harrisburg. Businesses in this area have committed to taking a few minutes each Tuesday to ensure the area around their business is clean and litter free. In addition to addressing the issue of litter, this program creates a sense of community pride with local businesses owners doing their part to keep their neighborhood clean.
7. **Consider use of waste and recycling infrastructure specifically for the trucking industry.** To make it easier for the trucking industry to properly dispose of their waste and conveniently recycle items while on the road, property owners should consider providing easily accessible waste and recycling infrastructure for truck drivers at rest stops, weigh stations and other locations where trucks typically park. This could include dumpsters or other appropriately sized receptacles so that truck drivers can dispose of their trash and recyclables easily from their cab.

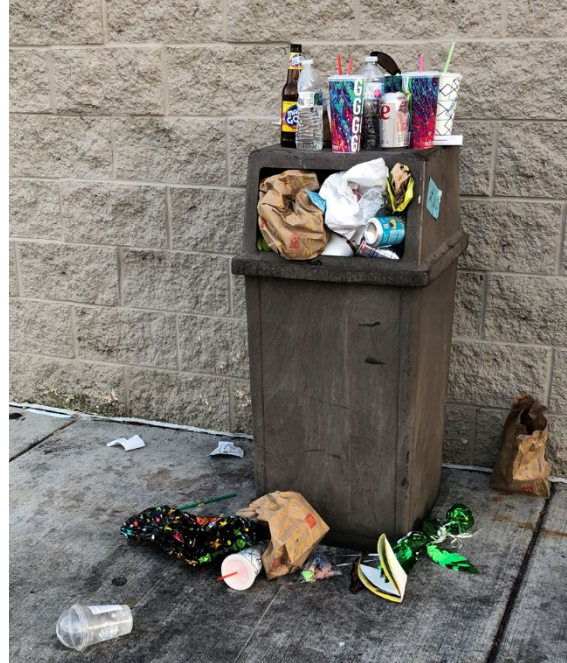


Photo Credit: PennDOT

Litter Education & Outreach to Customers

1. **Become a partner in the fight against litter.** Businesses can help be anti-litter by partnering with state government to share the anti-litter educational campaign it is developing. Some ways businesses can help include sharing materials from the anti-litter campaign by hanging posters, sharing newsletter content, participating in PennDOT's [Adopt-A-Highway program or Sponsor A Highway program, participating in](#) the DEP-sponsored [Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Adoption Program](#), and educating staff on the statewide anti-litter campaign.
2. **Ask clients and customers to not litter when doing business.** No business wants their products littered, so sharing anti-littering messaging while doing business can be an effective way to get buy-in from clients and customers. For example, food-related businesses can put anti-littering messages

on their trash cans or take out materials, and can specifically ask people not to litter while completing check out. Similarly, auto part and repair stores can provide education for customers on where they can dispose of their old parts responsibly.

3. **For commercial haulers and building contractors, provide targeted “cover your load” education.** Under Act 90, if a hauler or contractor’s load isn’t properly covered, they aren’t allowed to dump at disposal or transfer facilities. When this happens, there is an opportunity for targeted education on “cover your load” requirements.

How We All Can Fight Litter

Pennsylvania’s litter problem harms all Pennsylvanians. Litter negatively impacts the health and environment of our communities, brings down our property values, and drains government resources. The message that needs to be delivered is that all Pennsylvanians can be a part of the solution to litter. This can be as simple as making a conscious effort to reduce your use of commonly littered items or safely picking up littered items as you walk past it on the street.

Litter Prevention Best Practices

1. **Remember reduce-reuse-recycle.** The most effective way to reduce waste is to not create it in the first place. Reducing and reusing prevents pollution, saves energy, and saves money. Recycle when you can by following your local recycling rules.
2. **Reduce your consumption of single-use products.** Single-use plastic products, like beverage containers and plastic film, accounted for 30.4 percent of the litter found on Pennsylvania’s roadways. To help reduce this source of litter, consider implementing the following strategies for reducing consumption of single-use products. Using any of these strategies just once a week can make a huge difference in consumption of single-use products and help to reduce the amount of single-use items that could become litter:
 - Instead of reaching for a one-time use bag at a store, have reusable bags handy.
 - Bring reusable or biodegradable travel mugs, water bottles and utensils with you to eliminate the need for single use materials.
 - Don’t take more than necessary from fast food establishments and convenience stores.
3. **Dispose of your trash properly.** By making an effort to practice responsible waste management, communities can be clean and litter and illegal dump free. Here are some ways to ensure trash and recycling are properly managed:
 - Learn and follow local trash and recycling guidelines.
 - On trash day in your neighborhood, take a walk around later in the day and pick up any residual trash that may be left behind accidentally.



Photo Credit: PA DEP

- Learn about special collection events for unused household chemicals, electronics like TVs, waste tires, and other items that cannot be accepted with regular trash pickup.
 - Ensure that contractors are properly disposing of construction and demolition waste at a permitted facility. Residents can report concerns of improper disposal to DEP at <https://www.dep.pa.gov/About/Contact/Pages/default.aspx>.
4. **Manage your cigarette-related trash appropriately.** There are an estimated 186.2 million cigarette butts littered on Pennsylvania roadways. To many people's surprise, cigarette butts aren't natural fiber. They contain plastic, leach nicotine and heavy metals into the environment, and take about 5 years to break down. While many vehicle models do not have built in ashtrays, portable options are available at nominal costs, and many businesses have cigarette receptacles outside their entranceways. Make sure to use these methods to dispose of cigarette butts and reduce cigarette butt litter. Quitting smoking is another alternative that is better for health and the environment.
 5. **Promote litter prevention and help share the message.** Litter creates environmental and economic problems in our communities. It is important to share with your community that litter is unacceptable, gross and a problem for everyone. Take to social media and share how you are being a part of the solution, remind your friends and family of the negative impacts of littering and pledge to not litter. Consider contacting your local law enforcement and emphasize the importance of holding litterers and illegal dumpers in your area accountable. A sample letter from KPB explaining the negative impacts of littering and illegal dumping that can be sent to your local Magisterial District Judge is provided in Appendix IV. A statewide litter action campaign is also forthcoming along with a toolkit for anti-litter messaging. Once released, you can be a partner in spreading the word.
 6. **Learn Pennsylvania's litter laws and follow them.** Understanding your responsibilities under the law will allow you to be a better steward of our environment. See Appendix III of this report for a current list of Pennsylvania's litter laws. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has also compiled helpful information on who to contact regarding litter laws on their [Pennsylvania Littering and Illegal Dumping Enforcement Agencies](#) webpage.
 7. **Make sure any temporary signs, banners, and lawn signs do not contribute to litter.** Numerous federal and state laws and guidance manuals describe the lawful and unlawful uses of PennDOT rights-of-way with encroachments (for example, outdoor advertising devices). Temporary signs within the right-of-way not only can obstruct visibility or interfere with effectiveness of traffic control devices, but they also can pose safety hazards and are often left behind, causing them to be littered in and along Pennsylvania's roadways. Since many signs are installed illegally or without consent of PennDOT, it is everyone's responsibility to understand the laws that govern what can and cannot be placed within state ROWs to make sure that these signs do not contribute to littered items.



Photo Credit: PennDOT

8. **[Leave No Trace.](#)** Taking the time to practice responsible outdoor ethics can ensure that Pennsylvania outdoor recreation and natural areas remain premier outdoor recreation destinations for generations to come. This includes planning ahead and being prepared by knowing the rules of where you are visiting. To help prevent litter in our state parks and forests, consider repackaging any food ahead of your visit to minimize the amount of waste you create while visiting. If camping, inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods, and make sure to pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter. Check out DCNR's [Leave No Trace Ethics](#) webpage for more ideas about how to be a good steward.
9. **Secure loaded vehicles.** With the goal of preventing crashes and injuries caused by debris falling from vehicles, Pennsylvania law mandates that any vehicle driven on a highway must be packed in a way that prevents its load from dropping, shifting, leaking, or otherwise escaping. Before setting out with a fully packed truck bed or trailer, make sure your load is properly secured. This will help to reduce the amount of items that might escape from your vehicle and become litter, as well as help to reduce the amount of car crashes associated with debris on roads.
10. **Educate youth in your community on how to be an anti-litter advocate.** Today's youth will be tomorrow's leaders, so it's important that our young people understand the impacts of littering and how to be an anti-litter advocate. Demonstrate sustainable habits for the children in your life. Teach them the importance of not littering and keeping their environment litter free. Provide them with anti-littering activity books developed by Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful as part of the [Open Your Eyes to Litter](#) series so they can learn about the impacts of littering. By educating Pennsylvania's youth, our future generations can help in the fight against litter.

Help to Clean Up Pennsylvania

1. **Pick up litter when you see it.** As Johann Wolfgang von Goethe said, "Let everyone sweep in front of his own door, and the whole world will be clean." Take the time to safely pick up litter. Every piece of litter picked up leads to a more beautiful Pennsylvania.
2. **Join a state-sponsored litter clean up or beautification program.** There are multiple ways that you can get involved in regularly cleaning up and beautifying your community:

- PennDOT's [Adopt-A-Highway program](#) volunteers beautify roadsides two miles at a time. As a participant, you and your civic or volunteer group sign a two-year agreement to pick up litter at least two times a year. In return, PennDOT posts recognition signs along the adopted roadway giving you or your group full credit for your efforts.

If you see litter, pick it up!

Keep America Beautiful encourages everyone to take part in their 152 challenge and pick up 152 pieces of litter. Why 152? According to Keep America Beautiful's [2020 National Litter Study](#), if everyone made the individual action of picking up 152 pieces of litter, our nation would be litter free!

- PennDOT's [Sponsor A Highway program](#) involves businesses and interested parties securing agreements with Adopt A Highway Maintenance Corp. or Adopt A Highway Litter Removal Service of America. These vendors use their skilled maintenance forces to perform roadside litter removal. The sponsored roadway will have signs placed that recognize the sponsors. PennDOT's [Adopt & Beautify and Keystone Pollinator Habitat programs](#) provide opportunities for local citizens and community organizations to beautify sites you select and

design for the purposes of enhancing the beauty of the roadside, providing a positive first impression, providing habitat for native pollinators, and exhibiting community pride, which all help to reduce the likelihood of an area being littered.

- The DEP-sponsored [Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Adoption Program](#) makes it possible for individuals and groups to ‘adopt’ local areas they care about and help keep them clean and beautiful. This program compliments PennDOT’s Adopt-A-Highway program and is available for most municipal roads, trails, waterways and city blocks as long as the consent and support of the owner/maintainer of the property (usually the municipality) is obtained.
- The [Litter Free School Zone program](#) is designed to encourage students to keep their school grounds litter-free and to raise public awareness regarding litter via a Litter Free School Zone sign to be displayed outside participating schools.

3. **Join or support a local volunteer group.** Additionally, many local communities and organizations have their own volunteer clean up programs. There are many other examples than what is listed here, so be sure to check with your local government or local environmental organizations for other opportunities that may already exist in your community.

- [Pick Up the Poconos](#) sponsored by the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau is an active cleanup and anti-litter program in the northeast and has resulted in nearly 15,864 bags of litter being pick up and properly disposed of.
- Tilden Township in Berks County has its own [“Adopt a Roadway” program](#), where members of the public can adopt an area of local roads and commit to cleaning up twice per year.
- The City of Lancaster has an [“Adopt A Block” program](#) where volunteers commit to cleaning up a block four times between March and October each year.
- [Tri-County Cleanways](#), a local affiliate of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful serving Butler, Lawrence and Mercer counties, is supported by the Lawrence- Mercer Recycling/Solid Waste Department and provides beautification and cleanup programs that volunteers can participate in each year.
- Allegheny Cleanways has a [“Gatekeepers” program](#), where volunteers adopt storm drains and keep them litter and debris free.
- [Friends Groups](#), which are state park and forest specific chapters of the Pennsylvania Parks and Forest Foundation, provide volunteers with the opportunity to improve and enhance Pennsylvania’s state parks and forests through litter clean ups and other beautification and maintenance projects.

4. **Organize a community clean up.** Each year between March 1-May 31 and September 1-November 30 during [Pick Up Pennsylvania](#), registered events can get free cleanup supplies, such as bags, gloves and vests donated by PennDOT, DEP, and Keep America Beautiful. Consider joining thousands of other Pennsylvanians in helping to pick up PA and reduce the amount of litter plaguing our communities. If you decide to participate in a cleanup event, check out the following DEP and PennDOT-sponsored resources from Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful to ensure a successful and safe experience:
- [Steps for a Successful Cleanup](#)
 - [Guidelines for Illegal Dump Cleanups](#)
 - [Guidelines for Waterway Cleanups](#)



Photo Credit: Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful

Conclusion

A diverse state, Pennsylvanians have a hard time agreeing on which convenience store is their favorite or which city has the best sports, but 90 percent of Pennsylvanians agree that litter is a problem. With over 500 million pieces of litter on our roadways to impact waterways and wildlife and lower property values, addressing Pennsylvania's litter problem is the responsibility of everyone, from motorists to municipalities to state government to businesses.

Now is the time to shift our focus away from picking up litter and instead towards changing Pennsylvanians' behavior to prevent litter from falling on our roadsides, waterways, and sidewalks in the first place. Preserving Pennsylvania's beautiful landscapes fosters pride in our communities.

The recommendations and best practices included in this report provide practical solutions for the general public, local governments, state government, the General Assembly and Pennsylvania businesses on how to help in the fight against litter. While each community's needs and challenges are different, the report highlights successful programs and strategies that can be used and duplicated to fit the needs of any community. It is important to note these recommendations are not mandated actions. However, the success of the Pennsylvania Litter Action Plan will depend on everyone taking steps to implement these recommended behavior change strategies.

This plan envisions a cleaner Pennsylvania with the general public, state and local government, the General Assembly, community and environmental organizations, and businesses all doing their part to prevent littering. **All Pennsylvanians should aspire that through implementation of the recommended actions in this report and individual behavior change to reduce the amount of litter in Pennsylvania by 30 percent within the next 5 years.** To gauge if Pennsylvania is successful in meeting this litter reduction goal, the state will sponsor smaller-scale visible litter surveys at multiple locations throughout the state every year for five years. Starting with data from these select locations in 2022 as the baseline data, the state will revisit the same spots each year through 2027 to conduct visible litter surveys to see if litter is being reduced. Then, in 2027, the Commonwealth will embark on a follow up assessment of the Litter Action Plan to reflect on the successes, failures, and areas to improve upon in changing Pennsylvanians' behavior and preventing litter.

While it will be no small feat to change Pennsylvanians' behavior, by working together state government, local government, the General Assembly, businesses, and individuals can ensure that Pennsylvanians have access to convenient waste and recycling, understand that littering and illegal dumping are not acceptable ways to dispose of trash, and hold litterers and illegal dumpers accountable for their actions. The result will be a cleaner, more vibrant Pennsylvania.

Appendix I: List of Participants

Name	Organization
Senator Mario Scavello	Pennsylvania Senate District 40
Christine Zubeck	Office of Senator Mario Scavello (PA-40)
Senator Lindsey Williams	Pennsylvania Senate District 38
Megan Winters	Office of Senator Lindsey Williams (PA-38)
Representative Joe Ciresi	Pennsylvania House of Representatives District 146
Alex Teplyakov	Office of Representative Joe Ciresi (PA-146)
Representative Tim Briggs	Pennsylvania House of Representatives District 149
Aaron Bailey	Office of Representative Donna Bullock (PA-195)
Joanne Shafer	Centre County Recycling & Refuse Authority
Jerry Zona	Lawrence-Mercer County Recycling/Solid Waste Department
Holly Vogt	Beaver County Department of Sustainability and Waste Management
John Frederick	Antis Township
Christopher Mitchell	City of Pittsburgh
Melissa Rosenfeld	City of Pittsburgh
Maria Horowitz	Philadelphia Water Department
Sarah Peelman	City of Erie
Michael Devaney	City of Lancaster
Steve Harrity	City of Reading
Bethany Ayers-Fisher	City of Reading
Ann Saurman	City of Allentown
Bryan Bilheimer	City of Allentown
John Raring	City of Harrisburg
Christopher Nafe	City of Harrisburg
Kristie Smith	Perry County Conservation District / Keep Perry County Beautiful
Melissa Muroff	Office of the Delaware County District Attorney
Shannon Reiter	Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful
Rob Dubas	Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful
Melissa Morgan	Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors
Ashley Lenker White	County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania
Kaitlin Errickson	Pennsylvania Municipal League
Jack Howell	Spanish American Civic Association
Veronica Kelly	Tri County Community Action
Winnie Branton	Branton Strategies LLC
Kelly Offner	Keep Philadelphia Beautiful
Abigal Garriss	Sierra Club

Branden Diehl	Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds
R. John Dawes	Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds
Janet Sweeney	Pennsylvania Environmental Council / Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers
Jennifer Fetter	Penn State Extension
Carla Eissing	Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Theodore Wampole, Jr.	Luzerne County Convention & Visitors Bureau
Chris Barrett	Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau
Cameron Murray	Shamokin Fifth Ward Cleanup
Julie Fitzpatrick	Pennsylvania Downtown Center
Sarah Alessio Shea	Pennsylvania Resources Council
Stephanie Wein	PennEnvironment
Michele Nestor	Nestor Resources, Inc.
Marci Mowery	Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation
Brian Koehler	Park Maintenance Institute
Tim Herd	Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society
Katie Hetherington Cunfer	Greater Reading Chamber Alliance
Mary Keenan	Webber Associates LLC on behalf of Pennsylvania Waste Industries Association
Michael Howells	Pennsylvania Food Merchants Association
Tony Crisci	Pennsylvania Soft Drink Association
Joe Holston	MillerCoors
John Primus	The GIANT Company
Whitley McWilliams	Wawa, Inc.
Jeanne Eichinger	Wawa, Inc.
Nick Ruffner	Sheetz, Inc.
Michael Duff	Penske
John Rigney	Pennsylvania Motor Truck Association
Andrew Tubbs	Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania
Jon Burns	AAA Central Penn
Erin Wachter	Pennsylvania Office of the Governor
Jessica Shirley	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
Kate Cole	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
Larry Holley	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
Laura Henry	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
Rick Miklos	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
Justin Dula	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
Deb Klenotic	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
Bert Myers	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
Kathleen Banski	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
Natasha Fackler	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Emily Watts	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Jan Huzvar	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Joel Morris	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

Nicole Haney	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Karen Burkett	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Nick Balzer	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Jonathan Fleming	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Dean Schmitt	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Donald Smith	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Gretchen Leslie	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Christina Novak	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Nicole Faraguna	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Shea Zwerver	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Paula Devore	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Ryan Dysinger	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Michael Chapaloney	Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development
Brandyn Smith	Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development
Tamara Peffer	Pennsylvania Department of Education
Michael Parker	Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission
Sean Gimbel	Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission
Captain Clyde Warner	Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission
Robert Caccese	Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission
Krisinda Corbin	Pennsylvania Game Commission
Travis Pugh	Pennsylvania Game Commission
Jake Derrick	Pennsylvania Department of General Services
Michael Roth	Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
Mark Milliron	Pennsylvania Department of Health
Susan Rickens	Commonwealth Media Services
Major Sean Jennings	Pennsylvania State Police
Josh Wilson	Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts
Damian Wachter	Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts
Susan Davis	Minor Judiciary Education Board of the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts

Appendix II: Additional Resources

DEP Resources

- Pennsylvania Litter Research Study -
<https://files.dep.state.pa.us/Waste/Bureau%20of%20Waste%20Management/WasteMgtPortalFiles/Littering/Pennsylvania%20Litter%20Research%20Study%20Final%20Report%201.30.2020.pdf>
- Municipal Waste and Recycling Management Resource Page -
<https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Land/Waste/Recycling/Municipal-Resources/TechnicalAssistance/Pages/default.aspx>
- Electronics Recycling Collection Programs -
<https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Land/Waste/Recycling/Electronics/Pages/Electronics-Collection-Programs.aspx>
- Household Hazardous Waste Collection Programs -
<https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Land/Waste/SolidWaste/HazardousWaste/Household/Pages/HHW-Collection-Programs.aspx>
- Waste Tire Program -
<https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Land/Waste/SolidWaste/Tires/Pages/default.aspx>
- County Recycling Coordinators -
<https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Land/Waste/Recycling/PublicResources/Pages/County-Recycling-Coordinators.aspx>

PennDOT Resources

- Adopt-A-Highway Program –
<https://www.penndot.gov/about-us/RoadsideBeautification/pages/adopt-a-highway.aspx>
- Sponsor A Highway Program –
<https://www.penndot.gov/about-us/RoadsideBeautification/Pages/Sponsor-A-Highway.aspx>
- Adopt & Beautify and Keystone Pollinator Habitat Programs –
<https://www.penndot.gov/about-us/RoadsideBeautification/Pages/Adopt-and-Beautify.aspx>
- Litter Brigades –
<https://www.penndot.gov/about-us/RoadsideBeautification/Pages/Litter-Brigades.aspx>

Keep PA Beautiful Resources

- Pennsylvania Littering and Illegal Dumping Enforcement Agencies -
<https://www.keppabeautiful.org/programs/illegal-dump-free-pa/pennsylvania-littering-and-illegal-dumping-enforcement-agencies/>
- Open Your Eyes to Litter –
<https://www.keppabeautiful.org/programs/educational-resources/open-your-eyes-to-litter/>
- Adoption Program –
<https://www.keppabeautiful.org/programs/adoptions/>
- Litter Free School Zone –
<https://www.keppabeautiful.org/programs/educational-resources/litter-free-school-zone/>
- Pick Up PA –
<https://www.keppabeautiful.org/programs/pick-up-pa/>

- Steps for a Successful Cleanup – <https://www.keppabeautiful.org/wp-content/uploads/attachments/KPB-Steps-for-Successful-Cleanup.pdf>
- Guidelines for Illegal Dump Cleanups – <https://www.keppabeautiful.org/wp-content/uploads/attachments/guidelinesforillegaldumpcleanups.pdf>
- Guidelines for Waterway Cleanups – https://www.keppabeautiful.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/10-Steps-to-Waterway-Cleanup_Final-1.pdf
- Illegal Dump Free PA Program – <https://www.keppabeautiful.org/programs/illegal-dump-free-pa/>
- Illegal Dumping in Pennsylvania: A Decade of Discovery – <https://www.keppabeautiful.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/KPB-Recommendations-August-2014-USE-THIS-ONE.pdf>
- Tri-County Cleanways (Butler, Lawrence, Mercer) – <https://www.keppabeautiful.org/affiliate-network/butler-lawrence-and-mercercounties-affiliate/>
- Waste Reduction and Recycling, County Resources Page - <https://www.keppabeautiful.org/programs/waste-reduction-and-recycling/>

Keep America Beautiful Resources

- Keep America Beautiful Model Ordinance – https://kab.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/2018_Model_Ordinance-.pdf

Municipal Resources

- City of Allentown, Local Ordinance: Part Seven of General Offenses Code - <https://www.allentownpa.gov/Portals/0/files/PublicWorks/NEIGHBORHOOD%20IMPROVEMENT%20ORDINANCE.pdf>
- Cheltenham Township: Special Events Application - <https://www.cheltenhamtownship.org/files/documents/SpecialEventApplication1706094432040521AM.pdf>
- Tilden Township, Berks County: Adopt a Roadway Program - <http://www.tildentownship.com/administration/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/AdoptARoadway-FLYER-1.pdf>
- City of Lancaster: Adopt a Block Program – <https://www.cityoflanasterpa.com/adopt-a-block/>
- Allegheny Cleanways: Gatekeepers Program - <https://www.alleghenycleanways.org/gratekeepers.html>
- City of Reading: Special Collections Program - <https://www.readingpa.gov/specialcollections>
- City of Pittsburgh: Goals on Litter and Dumping (GOLD) Plan - https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/redtail/images/15402_Updated_GOLD_Plan_Report.pdf
- City of Philadelphia: Zero Waste Partnership Program – <https://www.phila.gov/programs/zero-waste-initiatives/zero-waste-partnership/>

- City of Pittsburgh: Clean Pittsburgh Commission –
<https://pittsburghpa.gov/clean-pgh/cpc>

Other Resources

- Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources: Leave No Trace -
<https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Recreation/LeaveNoTrace/Pages/default.aspx>
- Pennsylvania Parks & Forests Foundation: Friends Group -
<https://paparksandforests.org/friends-groups>
- Pocono Mountains: Pick Up the Poconos Program –
<https://www.poconomountains.com/pick-up-the-poconos/>
- Pennsylvania Resources Council –
<https://prc.org/>
- Pennsylvania Department of Education: Pathways to Green Schools Program -
<https://www.education.pa.gov/Teachers%20-%20Administrators/GreenSchools/Pages/default.aspx>
- Keep Texas Beautiful: Young Texan Ambassadors Program –
<https://www.ktb.org/ambassador>
- Penn Live: Harrisburg teens spend the summer cleaning up neighborhoods -
<https://www.pennlive.com/news/2021/07/harrisburg-teens-spend-the-summer-cleaning-up-neighborhoods-it-does-actually-change-my-view.html>
- Washington State –
<https://ecology.wa.gov/Waste-Toxics/Solid-waste-litter/Litter/Paying-for-litter>
- Shelby County Environmental Court –
<https://shelbycountyttn.gov/2124/About-the-Court>

Appendix III: Litter Laws

LAW SUMMARY	PENALTY	ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES (Within Jurisdictions)
PA Code, Title 17, Chapter 11, Section 11.214 & Chapter 21, Section 21.122 Conservation and Natural Resources, State Parks & State Forests Rules and Regulations Covers littering and dumping in state parks and forests.	A summary offense and, upon conviction, may be sentenced to either or both: 1. To pay a fine of not more than \$300. 2. Imprisonment not exceeding 90 days.	PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Bureau of State Parks and Bureau of Forestry PA Fish and Boat Commission PA Game Commission
PA Crimes Code, Title 18, Chapter 65, Section 6501 Covers litter and waste that lands on public and private property or into the waters of this Commonwealth. This can include someone illegally disposing their own trash or someone who is paid to dispose of trash. (Amended 2018)	A summary offense for the first offense and upon conviction shall be sentenced to pay a fine of not less than \$50 nor more than \$300 and required to pick up litter from 5-30 hours, or imprisonment for not more than 90 days, or both. Second and subsequent convictions, fines \$300-\$1000 and may be sentenced to imprisonment or be required to pick up litter 30-100 hours. For first offense owner/operators of trash trucks, fines \$500-\$5000 and may be sentenced to imprisonment or to community service up to 2 years. For second and subsequent owner/operator of trash trucks, \$1000-10000 fine and may be sentenced to imprisonment and community service up to 5 years. Within Litter Enforcement Corridor fines doubled and tripled if commercial business.	Local Police PA State Police PA Fish and Boat Commission PA Game Commission PA DCNR Bureau of State Parks and Bureau of Forestry (in state parks & forests only)

The Municipal Waste Planning, Recycling and Waste Reduction Act, Act 101 of 1988, Sections 706(c)(3) and 904(d)(4)(vi) Established Pennsylvania's municipal waste planning and recycling programs. The Act sets the framework for municipal waste planning; and mandates the implementation of curbside recycling collection programs for municipalities with populations of 10,000 or those with population of 5,000 and a population density of 300 people per square mile. Act 140 of 2006 amended Act 101 to include the requirement for mandated municipalities to provide curbside collection for municipal waste in addition to recycling.		PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Bureau of Waste Management
Solid Waste Management Act (SWMA), Act 97 of 1980 Provides the framework for how solid waste should be managed and regulated in the Commonwealth and is the main statute governing Pennsylvania's waste management program. Regulations promulgated under the Act (Title 25) make it unlawful for anyone to dispose of waste within the Commonwealth, at anywhere other than to a facility that has a DEP permit to operate. They also require vehicles used to haul waste to be appropriately marked and meet other restrictions. The vehicle regulations do not apply to individuals hauling their own municipal waste to a permitted facility.	Depending on the violation: As a summary offense, penalty is between \$100 and \$10,000 per incident. As a misdemeanor of the third degree, penalty is between \$1,000 and \$25,000 per incident. As a civil penalty, fine can be as high as \$25,000 per offense. Vehicles can be seized if used to violate any regulation pertaining to the transportation of waste.	PA DEP Bureau of Waste Management

Cities of First Class - Enforcement of ordinances, rules, and regulations prohibiting dumping or disposal of waste, trash or debris, Act of Dec. 1, 2004, P.L. 1766, No. 227 Authorizing cities of the first class that have adopted a home rule charter to enforce ordinances, rules and regulations prohibiting dumping or disposal of waste, trash or debris.	Provides for the imposition of a fine or penalty of not more than \$5,000 and forfeiture of any property, including a vehicle used to violate the act. Authorizes the Department of Transportation to impose a six-month suspension of operating privilege.	
Waste Tire Recycling Act, Act 190 of 1996 Provides for the Waste Tire Hauler Authorization Program (WTHP), requires owners of waste transportation vehicles that transport tires to a processing or disposal facility to obtain a written authorization from DEP. Bans the disposal of whole used or waste tires in a landfill, which makes their disposal challenging for citizens, thereby contributing to their mismanagement and illegal dumping.	As a summary offense, penalty is between \$100 and \$1,000 per violation, imprisonment for not more than 30 days, or both for the first violation. Subsequent violations are considered a misdemeanor in the third degree and upon conviction, fines of between \$1,000 and \$5,000 per violation will be assessed, imprisonment for up to 90 days must be served, or both. Civil penalties of up to \$25,000 per violation can also be assessed.	PA DEP Bureau of Waste Management
Covered Device Recycling Act (CDRA), Act 108 of 2010 Extends the responsibility for a product past the point of when a producer ships it to market. Bans the disposal of cathode ray tubes (CRTs) in a landfill, making proper disposal challenging for citizens and thereby contributing to their mismanagement/dumping.	Up to \$1,000 for the first violation and up to \$2,000 for the second and each subsequent violation	PA DEP Bureau of Waste Management

PA Fish and Boat Code, Title 30, Chapter 25, Section 2503 Covers litter and illegal dumping in or along any waters or on any lands near waters.	When these actions harm fish: 1st degree summary offense with a fine of \$250 or imprisonment not more than 90 days. If household garbage is transported and left: 2nd degree summary offense with a fine of \$150 or not more than 20 days imprisonment. For other litter offenses: 3rd degree summary offense and \$75 fine. Optionally, an additional fine of between \$20 to \$50 per piece of trash may be added. Additionally, the cost of disposal may also be added to the penalty. If an additional summary offense under title 30 is committed within 12 months, then a \$200 fine may be added	PA Fish and Boat Commission PA Game Commission
PA Game and Wildlife Code, Title 34, Chapter 25, Section 2510 Covers litter and illegal dumping on lands or in/along waters open to public hunting or fur taking.	Penalty of a summary offense of the third degree if litter was transported prior to dumping. • Sliding fine of not less than \$250 nor more than \$500 • An additional \$10 added for each individual item dumped. If the litter was not transported, the fine is a summary offense of the seventh degree, which is a \$50 fine.	PA Game Commission PA Fish and Boat Commission DCNR Rangers
Waste Transportation Safety Act of 2002, Act 90, Section 2 (Title 27, Chapter 62) Requires waste transportation vehicles that regularly transport municipal or residual waste to a processing or disposal facility to obtain a written authorization from DEP.		PA DEP Bureau of Waste Management Waste Transportation Safety Program

PA Vehicle Code, Title 75, Chapter 13, Section 1317 Requires the Department of Transportation to add specific language to the registration card acknowledging the litter provisions in Title 75, Section 3709 and requires a statement below the signature line of the registration card. (Amended 1986)		
PA Vehicle Code, Title 75, Chapter 33, Section 3329 The driver of a vehicle shall yield the right-of-way to any authorized vehicle or pedestrian actually engaged in work upon a highway within a litter enforcement corridor indicated by official traffic-control devices placed in accordance with department regulations. (Amended 2018)	Doubled fines The act adds section 3329 to Title 75 (vehicle code) which doubles fines for depositing waste in a litter enforcement corridor. These offenses are defined under the following 3 sections: - Section 3709 of the vehicle code for scattering rubbish from a vehicle or not removing all debris following an accident, - Section 4903 of the vehicle code for allowing a load that is not properly secured to escape from a vehicle, - Section 6501 of the crimes code for scattering rubbish onto any road, land of another, or body of water. Tripled fines when waste or litter (as defined in the crimes code section 6501) originated from a commercial business is deposited in a litter enforcement corridor.	

PA Vehicle Code, Title 75, Chapter 37, Section 3709 Covers litter and waste dropped, thrown or deposited from a vehicle that lands upon any highway, or upon any other public or private property without the consent of the property owner, or into or on the waters of this Commonwealth. Vehicle owners are responsible for anything thrown from their vehicles, even if the owner wasn't driving, or wasn't in the vehicle. substances. (Amended 2001)	A summary offense and, upon conviction, may be sentenced to either or both: 1. To pay a fine of not more than: - \$900 for a violation which occurs in an easement. - \$600 for a violation which occurs in an agricultural security area. - \$300 for a violation which occurs elsewhere. 2. May be sentenced to pick up litter for not less than 8 hours nor more than 16 hours for the first conviction; for second violation not less than 16 hours or more than 32 hours; and for third and subsequent, not less than 40 hours or more than 80. Within Litter Enforcement Corridor fines doubled.	Local Police PA State Police PA DCNR Bureau of State Parks and Bureau of Forestry (in state parks & forests only)
PA Vehicle Code, Title 75, Chapter 49, Section 4903 No vehicle shall be driven or moved on any highway unless the vehicle is so constructed or loaded as to prevent any of its load from dropping, sifting, leaking or otherwise escaping. All garbage being transported, must be in a vehicle with four solid sides and a cover to prevent the load from escaping on the way to the disposal site. All garbage is to be removed from the vehicle at the disposal site to prevent any scattering of litter on the return trip. (Amended 2008)	If the load is unsecure and part of the load escapes and causes injury to a person or damage to another vehicle or other property, upon conviction, be sentenced to pay a fine of not less than \$300 nor more than \$1,000. A violation of subsection (a), (b) or (c) which does not result in injury to a person or damage to another vehicle or other property constitutes a summary offense, punishable by a fine of not less than \$100 nor more than \$300. If a vehicle transporting garbage is convicted in violation of this section, upon conviction, pay a fine of \$300-1,000. Within Litter Enforcement Corridor fines doubled	

PA Vehicle Code, Title 75, Chapter 61, Section 6105.2 Grants the authority to the Department of Transportation to designate any state highway and local authorities to designate any local road as a litter enforcement corridor, if demonstrates the need for it. Also designates all scenic highways as litter enforcement corridors. (Amended 2018)	Designating any local road as a litter enforcement corridor, as described in section 6105.2 (relating to designation of litter enforcement corridors) and enforcing penalties for violations of section 3329 (relating to duty of driver in litter enforcement corridors), provided that the local authority has received written complaints about littering or the scattering of rubbish and demonstrates the need to designate the local road.	
PA Vehicle Code, Title 75, Chapter 61, Section 6109 The provisions of this title shall not be deemed to prevent the Department of Transportation on State-designated highways and local authorities on streets or highways within their physical boundaries from the reasonable exercise of their police powers.	Designating any local road as a litter enforcement corridor, as described in section 6105.2 (relating to designation of litter enforcement corridors) and enforcing penalties for violations of section 3329 (relating to duty of driver in litter enforcement corridors), provided that the local authority has received written complaints about littering or the scattering of rubbish and demonstrates the need to designate the local road.	
Local Ordinances Cover improper disposal, transportation, and storage of waste. Ordinances vary.		Local Police Local Code Enforcement Offices Local Solid Waste Authorities County Health Departments

Appendix IV: Sample MDJ Litter Letter

Sample Letter to Magisterial District Judges

provided by Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful - October 2021

[Sender address]

[Date]

Honorable [First Name Last Name], Magistrate Judge

[Court name]

[Court address]

Re: Illegal dumping and littering in [name of municipality, county, district, etc.]

Dear Judge [Last Name]:

I am writing to not only share with you the high costs of illegal dumping and littering in our community but also to ask for your support in appropriately holding accountable those who commit these acts in [community name]. On behalf of the residents, businesses, and government staff who are working tirelessly (many who volunteer) to reduce the amount of trash in our communities, we need to focus on preventing these behaviors.

While enforcement is only part of the solution, it is a necessary component, along with public education and convenient and affordable disposal. Convicting those responsible and holding them accountable for the cost of cleanups can be a strong deterrent. The problem in our state is all too visible:

- Dumpsites can be found in all 67 counties in the state - 6,500 at last count, a conservative number. (1)
- There are also approximately 502.5 million pieces of litter on Pennsylvania roadways. (2)
- It is a growing problem. Just in 2020 the number of reports of illegal dumping, litter, and graffiti jumped 213% over the previous year. (3)

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful (KPB) has documented the economic costs of illegal dumping and litter in our communities:

- Cleanups are costly, averaging \$600 per ton, or roughly \$3,000 per site. (1) This diverts tax dollars and staff resources that could be better spent on community infrastructure, parks or social programs.
- Pennsylvania cities spend over \$68.5 million annually on litter and illegal dumping; the bulk on clean-ups, almost 69% or \$54.5 million each year. (4)
- Removing this trash is necessary for residents' quality of life. However, these cleanups are reactive and alone do not deter future dumping.

In addition to the economic burden that litter and illegal dumping pose to our communities, there are additional negative impacts:

- Harming wildlife and contaminating our soil, waterways and groundwater,
- Depreciating property values,
- Attracting disease-spreading rodents and mosquitos,
- Sending a message that no one cares about the community, further eroding the quality of life. (1)

Often the communities most injured by illegal dumping, litter and graffiti are those already dealing with a myriad of challenges, both socio-economic and environmental. It is simply not fair when a small number of individuals avoid paying proper disposal fees and show a blatant disregard for how their illegally dumped trash impacts us all.

A 2020 public opinion study on litter, commissioned by KPB, which mirrored results from a previous poll on illegal dumping, found that many residents don't take enforcement of litter and illegal dumping laws seriously:

- 84% felt there was little likelihood people would be caught. (2)
- 37.5% also responded they wouldn't be likely to report littering to authorities because they felt the perpetrator would not be convicted or penalized. (2)

Historically, a hurdle in penalizing illegal dumpers and litterers has been the difficulty in obtaining concrete evidence. Additionally, high-tech surveillance equipment is often simply beyond many municipal budgets.

Since 2013 KPB has been tackling these issues through the Illegal Dump Free PA program, funded by the PA Department of Environmental Protection. The program provides loans to municipalities of easily-installed, yet highly-effective, surveillance cameras. These efforts are paying off. As of September 2021, the program has installed cameras in 54 communities that netted 87 convictions and returned over \$25,000 to municipalities and state agencies in fines, restitution, and court fees.

Another powerful enforcement tool comes from 2018's PA Act 62, which strengthened existing litter and dumping statutes. This law:

- *Mandated* community service of 5 - 30 hours for first time offenders cited under the crimes code.
- Increased optional hours for subsequent offences to 30 – 100 hours.
- Created Litter Enforcement Corridors where fines are *doubled* or *tripled*.

In closing, enforcement is an essential part of reducing littering and illegal dumping, along with ensuring affordable, accessible disposal and public education. Through strong enforcement programs and broad public education, KPB with the support of District Magistrates, believes that we can ultimately change the habits and behavior of others and significantly reduce trash in our communities.

Respectfully,

[Name, contact info]

References

1. **Nestor Resources, Inc; Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful.** *Illegal Dumping in Pennsylvania, a Decade of Discovery.* 2014.
 2. **Burns & McDonnell; Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful.** *Pennsylvania Litter Research Study.* 2020.
 3. **Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful.** *Illegal Dumping Across PA in 2020.* 2020.
 4. **Burns & McDonnell; Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful.** *The Cost of Litter & Illegal Dumping in Pennsylvania, a Study of Nine Cities Across the Commonwealth.* 2020.
- All of the above resources are available at <https://www.keeppabeautiful.org/research/>

Appendix V: SWEEP Ticket Violation Example



City of Allentown
Bureau of Recycling and Solid Waste
641 S 10th St.
Allentown, PA 18103
610-437-7770 - Fax 610-437-8732
www.allentownpa.gov/sweep

SWEEP VIOLATION TICKET



Ticket #	Total Fine
S2014770	\$100.00
Date of Violation	Due Date
04/16/2021	05/05/2021

Location of Violation:



An investigation by the SWEEP Program has determined you are in violation of the following City of Allentown Ordinance(s), as amended.

Violation(s):

720.09 (A)(2) Accumulation or storage of trash/debris or items on the property \$100.00

Total Due..... \$100.00

Tickets must be paid within 10 days to avoid a late penalty fee. This ticket may be appealed by 5/5/2021. Appeal forms are available for download at www.allentownpa.gov/sweep or you may pick one up in person at the Bureau of Recycling and Solid Waste. Failure to resolve the ticket may result in a citation filed against you in District Court.

Payment options:

1. By mail, make check or money order payable to the City of Allentown and mail in the enclosed envelope.
2. In person, payment can be made at the Bureau of Recycling & Solid Waste or CityHall
3. Credit Cards Not Accepted.

IMPORTANT: You have 72 hours to correct this violation. Each day the violation continues may constitute as a separate offense and is subject to additional fines. Property may be checked for compliance and failure to correct this violation may result in further legal action to be taken. The 72 hour allowance to correct this violation does not apply to acts of illegal dumping when the City has taken action and incurred costs to clean, remove and replace of the items illegally dumped

If you have any questions, please call 610-437-7770.

RETURN THIS PORTION

SWEEP - Bureau of Recycling and Solid Waste
641 S 10th St.
Allentown, PA 18103

Issuing Officer: 1604

Ticket #
S2014770
Location of Violation:

Total due by 05/05/2021..... \$100.00
Payment made between 5/6/2021 and 5/19/2021 penalty added..... \$25.00



Indicate Amount Paid

Please write the ticket # on your check or money order.