

2005 International Coastal Cleanup

*Summary Report
the United States*

The Ocean Conservancy
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THE INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEANUP

The International Coastal Cleanup engages people to remove trash and debris from the world's beaches and waterways, to identify the sources of debris, and to change the behaviors that cause pollution.

20 Years of Cleaner Coasts

In 1986, Linda Maraniss, who was a staff member of The Ocean Conservancy—then known as the Center for Environmental Education—witnessed the trash she found littering the shores of South Padre Island, Texas and was appalled. So, she did what any enterprising conservationist would do: she took matters into her own hands and organized a beach cleanup.

Enlisting the support of the Texas General Land Office, Linda recruited 2,800 fellow Texans to join her that first year. In just three hours, she and her determined army cleared 124 tons of trash from 122 miles of Texas coastline. If you're counting, that's almost 90 pounds per person.

Thus, the Ocean Conservancy's International Coastal Cleanup was born.

In 2005, The Ocean Conservancy celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the International Coastal Cleanup. The ICC just keeps getting better each year, reaching more states, more countries, more people and more coastal miles than ever. In 2006, over 450,000 citizens from almost 100 countries will participate in the annual Cleanup event on September 16th. They will pick up nearly 8 million pounds of debris from thousands of miles of shoreline and waterways.



Just what has 20 years of ICC meant to our coasts? Well, take a look ...

The 6 million volunteers who have participated:

- Could fill Madison Square Garden 300 times.
- Would be the world's 105th most populous nation – larger than 134 other countries.
- Are more than the populations of Alaska, Delaware, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Vermont, Wyoming and the District of Columbia ... combined.

The 100 million pounds of trash removed weigh more than ...

- 400 blues whales, the largest mammal in the world.
- 25,000 NASCAR stock cars – and their drivers.
- Two World War II aircraft carriers.

The 170,000 miles of cleaner shorelines are ...

- Enough to circle the earth ... 7 times.
- Three times the total mileage of the U.S. interstate highway system
- Over three quarters of the planet's coastline.

2005 ICC: The United States

During the 2005 ICC in the United States, 174,075 volunteers came out to clean-up shorelines and waterways. Volunteers covered 13,970 miles, picking up 3,215,768 debris items that weighed 3,888,679 pounds. Among ICC participants in the United States were 1,823 divers, who removed 28,120 pounds of debris from below the water's surface. In total 22,017 debris items were retrieved from 83 miles of underwater area.

Overall, 56% of the debris found in the United States originated from land-based activities such as picnics, festivals, sports, and days at the beach. Litter washed from streets, parking lots, and storm drains also contributed to this category of debris. Worldwide, these activities accounted for 58% of the debris collected.

In the United States, cigarettes, food wrappers, and caps and lids accounted for over half of all the debris items collected.

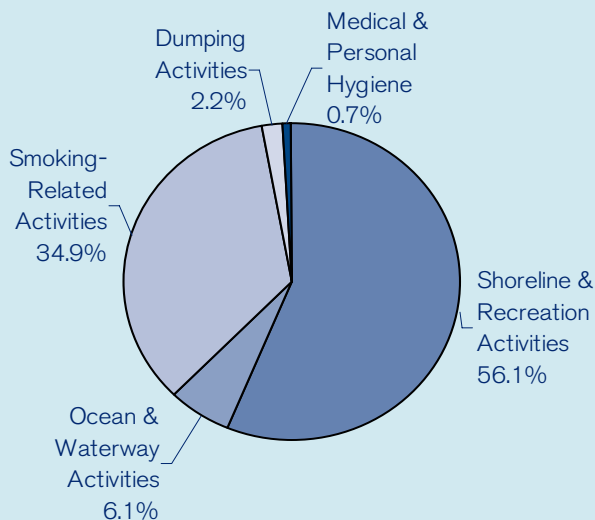
Smoking-related activities, in the form of cigarette filters, cigar tips, and tobacco packaging, accounted for 35% of the debris found in the United States. Globally, debris from smoking-related activities made up 30% of the debris collected.

Debris items from ocean and waterway activities - activities that originate offshore - accounted for 6% of the debris found in the United States. Worldwide ocean and waterway activities represented only 8% of the debris collected during the Cleanup.

The "Top Ten" debris items found provides a snapshot of the primary items found by ICC volunteers. This year the Top Ten accounted for 83% percent of all the debris found in the United States. The top three items alone – cigarettes, food wrappers, and caps and lids – account for over half of all debris in the United States. Cigarettes, the number one item in the United States, comprised over one quarter of the 3,200,000 debris items.

United States: Marine Debris

SOURCES OF DEBRIS



"TOP TEN" DEBRIS ITEMS

Debris Items	Amount	Percent Of Total
1. Cigarettes	1,008,288	31.4%
2. Food Wrappers	356,447	11.1%
3. Caps And Lids	306,498	9.5%
4. Cups, Plates And Utensils	192,636	6.0%
5. Plastic Beverage Bottles	187,724	5.8%
6. Glass Beverage Bottles	159,941	5.0%
7. Beverage Cans	148,000	4.6%
8. Straws And Stirrers	134,538	4.2%
9. Bags	131,758	4.1%
10. Cigar Tips	54,433	1.7%
Totals:	2,680,263	83.4%

DANGERS OF MARINE DEBRIS

Each year, volunteers find animals caught in a variety of debris. The results can be deadly: debris entanglement can cause lethal cuts, hampered mobility, suffocation, drowning and debris ingestion—when animals mistake debris for food—can lead to strangulation and starvation.

In 2005, volunteers found 101 animals entangled in debris worldwide. Discarded fishing line was responsible for nearly half of all entanglements, with rope and fishing nets closely following. Even though these items represent less than 8 percent of the total number of recorded items, debris such as fishing line, plastic bags, rope, and balloons can be more hazardous to wildlife. For a list of entangled animals found during the ICC in the United States, refer to the appendix.

While marine mammal entanglements may be the most well known, they comprise only 10 percent of the total entanglements found during the 2005 ICC. Seabirds are also victims of debris: representing nearly half of the total entangled wildlife, thus illustrating that marine debris affects even those species that spend less time in and on the water.



Conclusion

Surveys from the last decade indicate that most people do not consider their own contributions to marine debris to be significant enough to warrant a change in personal behavior. However, data collected during the 2005 ICC in the United States highlights the local and global problem of marine debris. Pinpointing the types of debris and the activities that cause them aids in the creation of educational programs to help people develop a new mind set toward littering. Inspiring change, in ourselves, in those we know, and in those we meet is a major component of the ICC's mission, perhaps more than clearing of trash itself.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

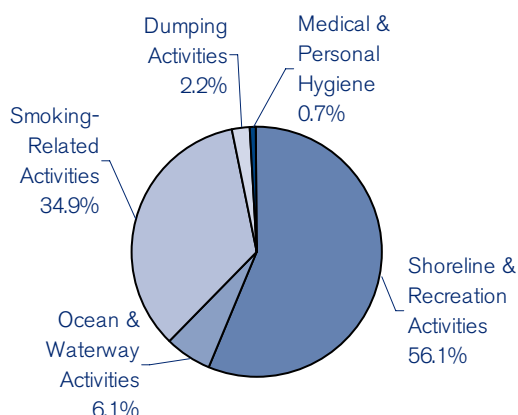
Marine debris is one of the most frustrating environmental threats because it is easily one of the most preventable: the solution is in our hands. Consequently, individual action to curb marine debris is just as important as legislative or political edicts, if not more so. Here are some steps you can take to do your part to reduce the amount of marine debris that enters our oceans and waterways:

- Dispose of trash properly. This helps to reduce the amount of trash that washes into waterways from storm drains.
- Reduce, reuse, and recycle.
- Look for alternative materials or avoid excessive packaging when deciding on purchases.
- Cut the rings of six-pack holders. This lowers the risk of entanglement to marine animals if the holders do make it out to sea.
- Participate in local beach, river, or stream cleanups.
- Educate others about marine debris.
- Get involved locally.

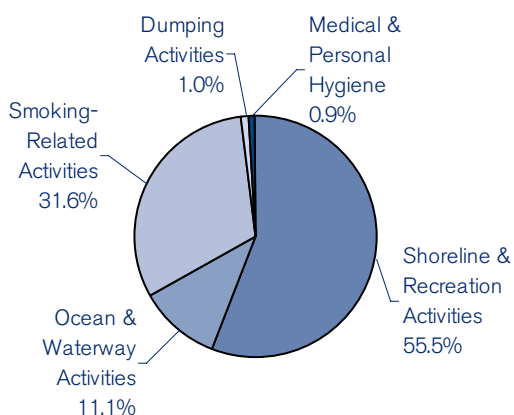
Debris items collected during the 2005 ICC in the United States

DEBRIS ITEMS	LAND	UNDERWATER	TOTAL
Shoreline and Recreational Activities			
Bags	131,134	624	131,758
Balloons	40,173	262	40,435
Beverage Bottles (Glass)	157,995	1,946	159,941
Beverage Bottles (Plastic) 2 liters or less	186,513	1,211	187,724
Beverage Cans	146,885	1,115	148,000
Caps/Lids	304,408	2,090	306,498
Clothing/Shoes	42,922	389	43,311
Cups/Plates/Forks/ Knives/Spoons	191,725	911	192,636
Food Wrappers and Containers	354,340	2,107	356,447
Pull Tabs	39,248	273	39,521
Shotgun Shells/Wadding	14,421	76	14,497
Six-Pack Holders	16,289	76	16,365
Straws/Stirrers	133,695	843	134,538
Toys	33,037	295	33,332
Ocean and Waterway Activities			
Bait Containers/Packaging	14,960	194	15,154
Bleach/Cleaner Bottles	8,182	38	8,220
Buoys/Floats	11,128	84	11,212
Crab/Lobster/Fish Traps	4,686	27	4,713
Crates	2,247	17	2,264
Fishing Line	27,121	620	27,741
Fishing Lures/Light Sticks	10,130	563	10,693
Fishing Nets	5,305	72	5,377
Light Bulbs/Tubes	3,369	20	3,389
Oil/Lube Bottles	8,570	35	8,605
Pallets	1,870	25	1,895
Plastic Sheeting/Tarps	40,249	318	40,567
Rope	41,679	291	41,970
Strapping Bands	13,699	134	13,833
Smoking-Related Activities			
Cigar Tips	54,178	255	54,433
Cigarette Lighters	22,784	119	22,903
Cigarettes/Cigarette Filters	1,002,039	6,249	1,008,288
Tobacco Packaging/Wrappers	35,529	330	35,859
Dumping Activities			
55-Gallon Drums	548	11	559
Appliances (refrigerators, washers, etc.)	1,504	6	1,510
Batteries	5,085	22	5,107
Building Materials	49,120	104	49,224
Cars/Car Parts	8,182	34	8,216
Tires	5,695	44	5,739
Medical and Personal Hygiene			
Condoms	6,746	72	6,818
Diapers	4,981	41	5,022
Syringes	2,826	11	2,837
Tampons/Tampon Applicators	8,554	63	8,617
Totals	3,193,751	22,017	3,215,768

The United States 2005 ICC - Sources of Marine Debris - Land and Underwater Cleanups



Land Cleanups



Underwater Cleanups

the United States 2005 ICC "Top Ten" Debris Items – Land and Underwater Cleanups

Land Cleanups Only

Debris Items	Amount	Percent Of Total
1. Cigarettes	1,002,039	31.4%
2. Food Wrappers	354,340	11.1%
3. Caps And Lids	304,408	9.5%
4. Cups, Plates And Utensils	191,725	6.0%
5. Plastic Beverage Bottles	186,513	5.8%
6. Glass Beverage Bottles	157,995	5.0%
7. Beverage Cans	146,885	4.6%
8. Straws And Stirrers	133,695	4.2%
9. Bags	131,134	4.1%
10. Cigar Tips	54,178	1.7%
Totals:	2,662,912	83.4%

Underwater Cleanups Only

Debris Items	Amount	Percent Of Total
1. Cigarettes	6,249	28.4%
2. Food Wrappers	2,107	9.6%
3. Caps And Lids	2,090	9.5%
4. Glass Beverage Bottles	1,946	8.8%
5. Plastic Beverage Bottles	1,211	5.5%
6. Beverage Cans	1,115	5.1%
7. Cups, Plates And Utensils	911	4.1%
8. Straws And Stirrers	843	3.8%
9. Bags	624	2.8%
10. Fishing Line	620	2.8%
Totals:	17,716	80.4%

the United States 2005 ICC - Entangled Animals

Entangling Debris	Birds	Fishes	Invertebrates	Mammals	Reptiles	Total
balloon ribbon/string	4	0	0	0	0	4
fishing line	21	10	6	3	1	41
fishing nets	8	3	1	0	1	13
miscellaneous	1	2	1	0	2	6
plastic bags	1	6	0	0	1	8
plastic sheeting	1	1	0	0	0	2
rope	5	2	1	6	0	14
Totals	41	24	9	9	5	88

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