

What can you do to prevent litter?

- Make a concerted effort to throw all litter in trash cans.
- Put all recyclables in the recycling bin.
- Make sure outdoor trash cans have lids that are securely fastened.
- If you have curbside trash collection, don't overfill the can.
- Leave no trace when on hiking trails.
- Keep your litter out of pickup truck beds or places where litter could easily blow away.
- Participate in community cleanups.
- Do your part when you can, pick up the trash around you as it helps the environment and keeps Albany beautiful.



Check out the following figures on the length of time it takes for litter to disappear naturally:

- Paper: 6 months
- Styrofoam Container: 1 Million Years
- Cigarette Butts: 10 Years
- Banana Peel: 3 Months
- Plastic Bags: 10-30 Years
- Gum: 20-25 Years
- Aluminum Can: 200-400 Years
- Glass Bottle: 1 million Years
- Plastic 6 Pack Collar: 450 Years
- Painted Wooden Stake: 13 years



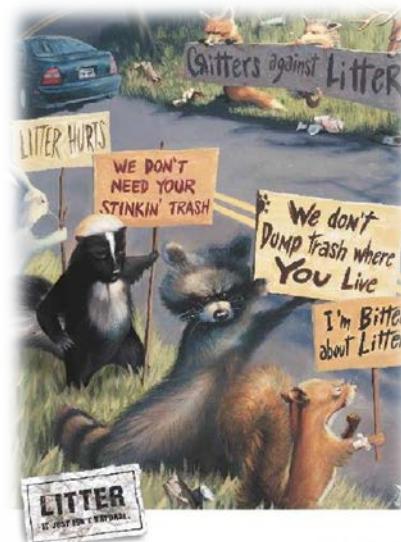
Where Can I Get More Information?

City of Albany Department of Water & Water Supply
www.albanyny.org/stormwater.aspx

Stormwater Coalition of Albany County
<http://www.stormwateralbanycounty.org/>

Albany County Soil and Water Conservation District
<http://www.albanycounty.com/Government/Departments/SoilandWaterConservationDistrict/stormwatermanagement.aspx>

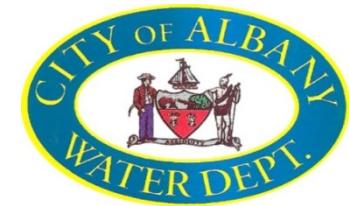
US Environmental Protection – Water Sense
https://www3.epa.gov/watersense/outdoor/rainwater_reuse.html



Litter Is Pollution!



Does the City of Albany have a litter problem?



Peter W. Beck
Stormwater Program Manager
Department of Water & Water Supply
10 North Enterprise Drive
Albany, NY 12204
518-434-5300
stormwater@albanyny.gov

What is litter?

Litter is waste in the wrong place. Rather than being placed in a bin or other waste container, waste is left on the pavement, school field or in the park.

What's the problem with litter?

When thrown on the ground, it can end up in our storm drains, ditches, and streams. Stormwater runoff carries and collects this litter and delivers it directly to our rivers and lakes. Most litter takes hundreds of years to biodegrade and can be harmful to birds and animals as they become entangled or mistake the trash for food.



How does litter affect the environment?

- Litter washes onto beaches, is caught in fishing nets, damages boat motors, is an eyesore and smells bad. Animals get sick or die from swallowing trash such as cigarettes and silicon packets.
- Litter is not hard to spot and comes in all types –cigarette butts, plastic bags, old tires, fast food wrappers and plastic and glass bottles. The seven major sources that contribute to litter are home trash cans, business trash collection areas, loading docks, construction and demolitions sites, uncovered trucks, motorists and pedestrians.

- Litter isn't just unsightly. It can cause vehicle accident and injuries, smother plants, start fires and harm or kill animals. It attracts rats and harmful bacteria.
- Contaminated groundwater is caused by litter, chemical runoff, illegal dumping and tobacco products seeping into ground water and affecting water quality. Humans, animals and plants need unpolluted water to survive. Litter can also clog stormwater drains and cause flooding. Food scraps and other organic items that are disposed of improperly can increase algal blooms in water, which reduces the amount of available oxygen for other aquatic life, such as fish.



Facts of littering:

1. Litter does cause accidents on the roadway by a car driving over a wooden crate or somebody swerving their RV to avoid the trash.
2. Cigarette butts make up over half of our littered objects, and they take a grand total of ten years to decompose.
3. The most common littered objects include fast food, paper, aluminum, glass and plastic.
4. Litter spoils water quality. The hazardous waste seeps into soil and can cause ground water pollution.
5. Litter can be controlled. People need to be educated regarding the ill effects of littering.



What is the impact?

1. Affects the quality of water we drink and the water we play in at the beach
2. Diseases can spread to people directly and indirectly as contaminated water enters the food chain.
3. There is a cost to local governments and to us, the taxpayers, when systems must be cleaned and repaired and health issues must be treated.

