

Beautify your Community *and* Host a Community Clean-Up

Urban Ecosystems and Resilience



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SUMMARY

Litter and trash can flow into our storm drains — which lead to the ocean—, contribute harmful bacteria to neighborhoods, and create public health risks. An average of 8 million tons of plastic ends up in our oceans every year. Globally, around 100,000 marine mammals die every year because of plastic pollution. Little behaviors such as placing trash in the proper containers rather than on the ground and picking up after your dog can help protect the environment and wildlife.

BENEFITS

- Litter is an eyesore; picking up litter will help you show pride for your community.
- Prevent wildlife from ingesting harmful plastics which could then be consumed by humans.
- Prevent trash from entering storm drains and entering the ocean.
- Build community with neighbors while also doing something good for the environment.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION:

Participate in a clean-up event

- Many organizations host their own clean-up events throughout the City or offer free rental of supplies and equipment for your own clean-up event. See the Partners section on page 6 for a list of some of these organizations.

Organize a clean-up event

Help clean up your community and get to know your neighbors by holding a community clean-up event. Here is a helpful [How To Guide](#) to help you organize. And consider getting others involved in roles such as:

- Project lead
- Outreach/promotions lead
- City liaison
- Equipment coordinator
- Site coordinator
- Landfill diversion lead



Event Logistics

After you select your date, time, and location, there are a number of logistics to consider, including:

- Permission to be on private property
- Restroom availability
- Accessibility of the location
- Refreshments
- Event paperwork (find forms at clerk.lacity.org/clerk-services/nc-funding/documents-forms)



Disposal of collected trash

- Prepare separate storage for landfill items, recyclable items (get a list at: recyclebycity.com/losangeles/guide), and compostable items (get a list at: lacompost.org/compost-guide). Be sure to research the items each disposal location listed below will accept.
- Request a roll-off bin from LA Department of Sanitation for landfill items (page 6).
- Take your recyclable items to a Recycling Center. Find your closest recycling center at www2.calrecycle.ca.gov/WhereToRecycle/.
- Take your compostable items to a LA Compost Hub. Find a list of locations at lacompost.org/start-composting.
- Or, consider taking your items to Bioplastics Recycling (bioplasticrecycling.com), a company that takes bioplastics and organic waste and recycles and remanufactures the items.

Helpful clean-up materials:

- Waivers (sample [here](#))
- Trash bags
- Gloves and hand sanitizer
- Shovels and grabbers
- First aid kit
- Data card (sample [here](#)) or download data app such as litterati.org or trashblitz.org

REMEMBER! You can always add an extra incentive for your Neighborhood Council events by including a tree, mulch, or compost giveaway at your event. Learn more about how to give away free mulch and trees at www.cityplants.org.

ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

Community clean-ups can be an effective tool in advocating for change. Here's how:

- Make your clean-up a recurring event
- Record the types and brands of fast food and retail litter your team picks up. After a few events' worth of data, you can visit local establishments to speak with their management about strategies to reduce litter
- Reduce the waste produced by your event with the help of the Green New Deal Zero Waste Event Toolkit

DID YOU KNOW?

On average, 80 percent of the debris collected during beach clean-ups is improperly disposed waste from further inland. Litter on the street can make its way into river systems and out into the ocean. This means that reducing litter on our streets will make our oceans and beaches cleaner for everyone.

LA Sanitation collects annual data on street trash and assigns each street in the City of Los Angeles a qualitative score: 1-Clean, 2-Somewhat Clean, or 3-Not Clean. Check out how clean your street is on LA Sanitation's CleanStat map [here](#).



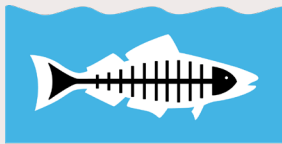
PARTNERS

Below are some L.A.-based organizations that plan clean-up and restoration events. If you know of other organizations that should be included, please email sustainability@lacity.org.

- **LA Waterkeeper** (lawaterkeeper.org/volunteer) organizes beach and creek clean-ups as well as a water testing program.



- **Heal the Bay** (healthebay.org/take-part) holds monthly beach clean-ups and runs an Adopt-a-Beach program.



Heal the Bay

- **Surfrider Foundation** (la.surfrider.org/programs/beach-cleanups) runs a beach clean-up and data collection program.



- **TreePeople** (<https://www.treepeople.org/get-involved>) holds a number of natural restoration events each week.

TreePeople

CITY CONTACTS

- **Local City Councilmember Office** - can support by placing temporary no parking signs around your event, assist with outreach, and connect you with other City partners.
- **LA Department of Sanitation and Environment** - can place a roll-off bin at your event so that you can safely dispose of all trash. They may also be able to take away recyclable materials from your event.



- **LA Office of Community Beautification** - can provide free clean-up tools for your event and offer other educational resources.



- Many Neighborhood Councils may have hosted their own community clean-up events. **Tarzana Neighborhood Council** and **Palms Neighborhood Council** have offered to be a source for advice and strategy. You can find their contact information at empowerla.org/councils/.