



34 Years of Reducing Litter through Beach Sweeps

*Linking research, education, and citizen action to
protect the marine environment*

Alison McCarthy, Coastal Watershed Protection Coordinator



The New Jersey/ New York Bight







\$32B



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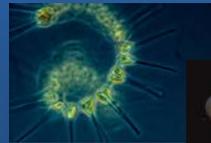
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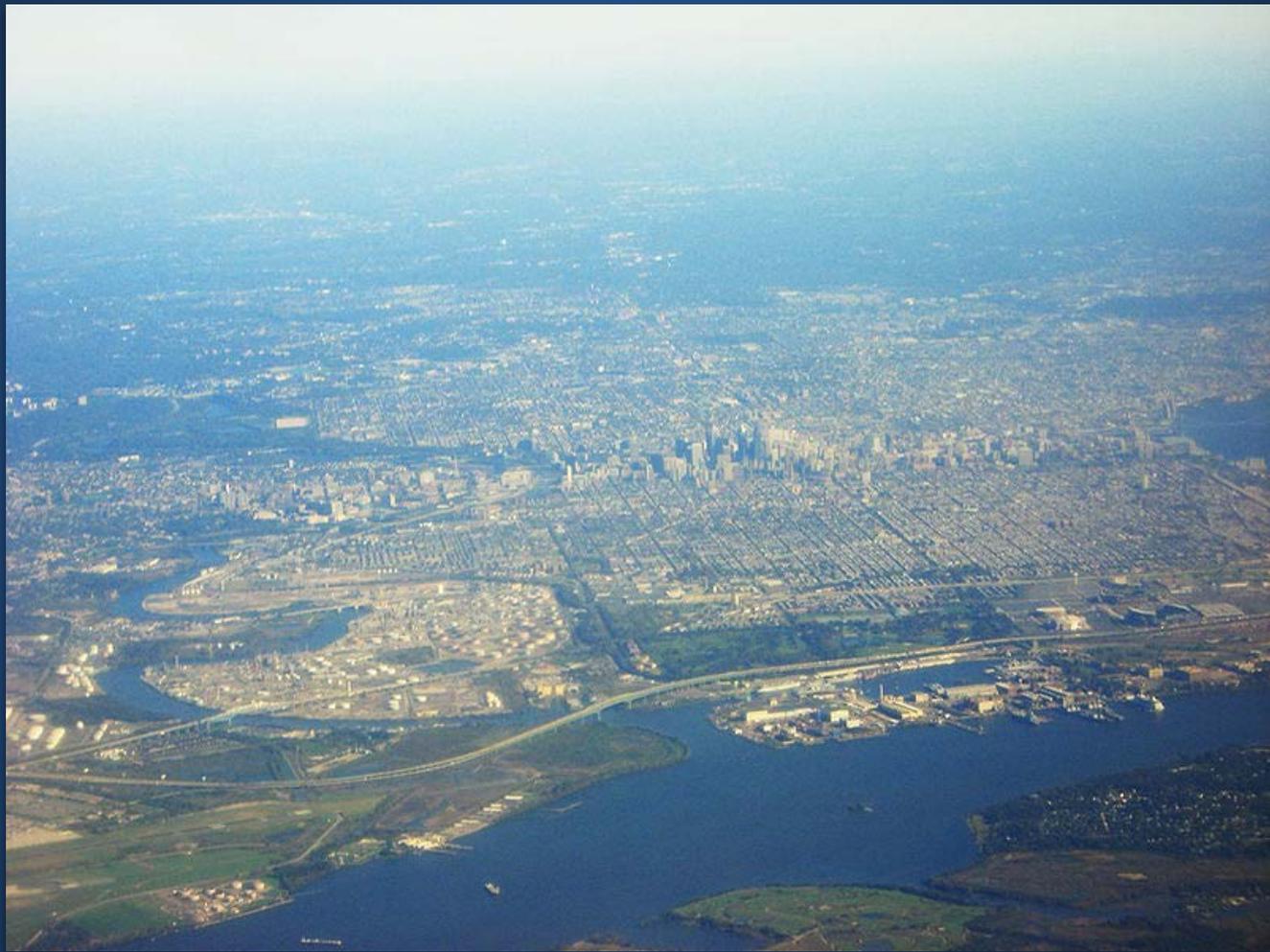


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And countless others...









BEACH SWEEPS



34 years
67 Beach Sweeps
133,390 volunteers
800,340 volunteer hours

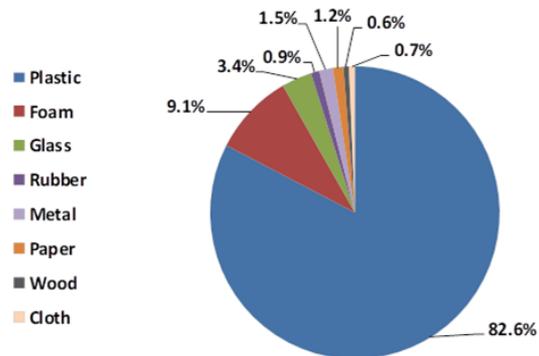


**CORPORATE
BEACH
SWEEPS**

Over 100 Corporate Beach Sweeps since 2005

In 2018, 635 volunteers from 19 corporations removed a remarkable 52,822 pieces of debris!

Percentage of Debris by Material



Delaware River Sweeps

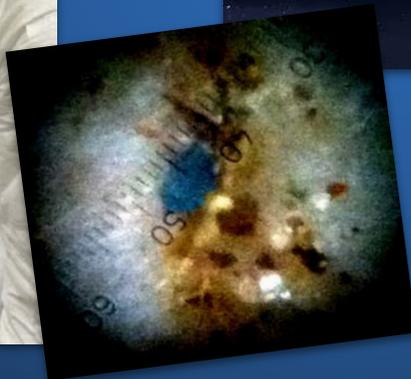
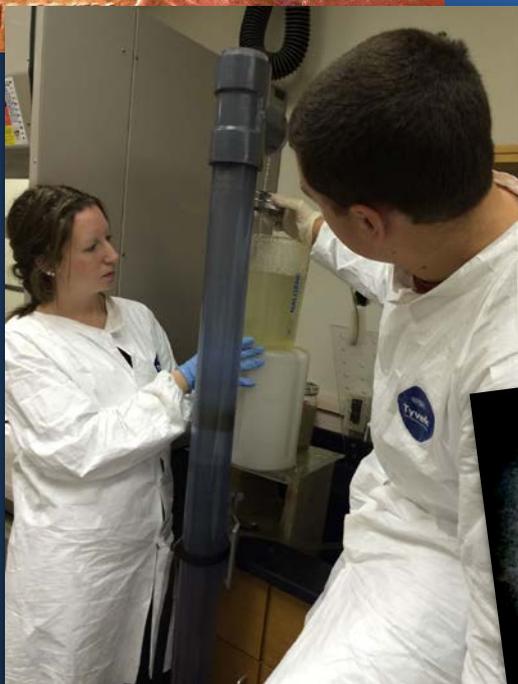


20 cleanups at
5 locations



>90% plastic

Microplastics





6,742,941

Reduce Litter in Waterways

Prevent new sources

- Laws/ordinances
- Behavior changes

Eliminate existing sources

- Enforcement
- Infrastructure fixes
- Behavior changes
- Removal of debris

DATA

Corporate Sweeps

Beach Sweeps

Delaware Sweeps

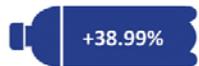
Citizen and municipal engagement

EDUCATION

EDUCATION

Monitoring Trends

Comparative numbers: 2018 data results to 2017



Substantial increases:

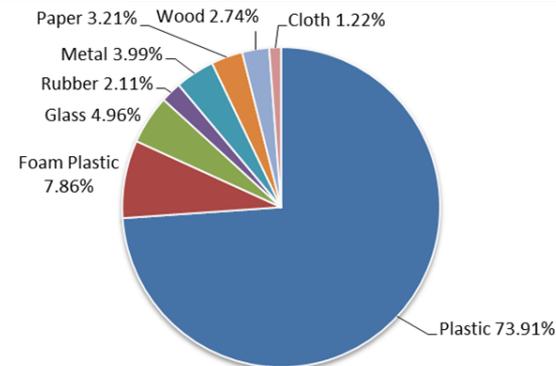
Item:	Increased by:	2018	2017
*Plastic Pieces	+35.05%	75,899	up from 56,201
*Plastic Bottles	+38.99%	20,366	up from 14,653
Condoms	+56.51%	565	up from 361
Foam Building Materials	+71.25%	1,394	up from 814
Diapers	+78.00%	267	up from 150
Glass Pieces	+143.82%	14,078	up from 5,774

Item:	Decreased by:	2018	2017
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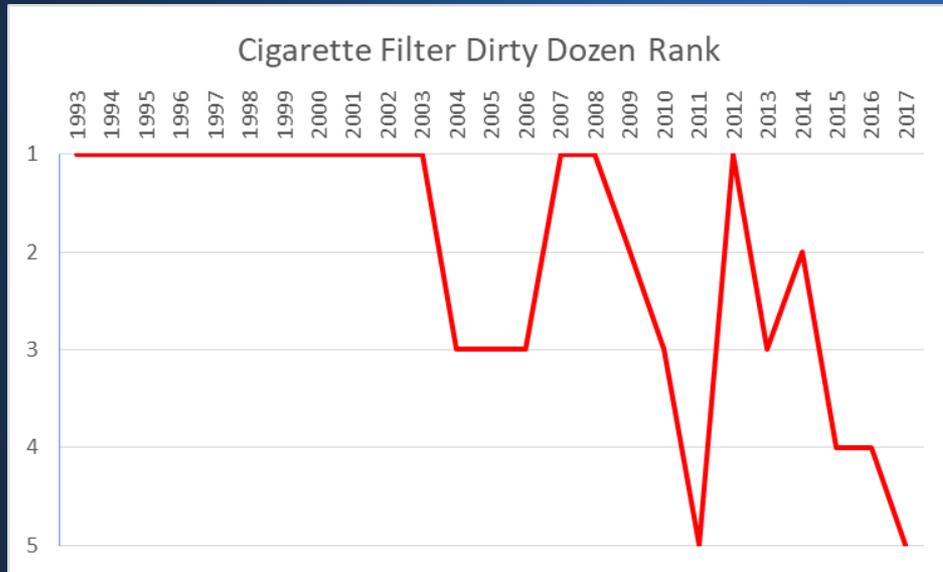
Substantial decreases:

*Cigarette Filters	-24.17%	21,998	down from 29,008
Tires: Whole	-21.82%	43	down from 55
Metal Fishing Sinkers	-39.51%	49	down from 81
55 Gallon Drums (old and new)	-67.44%	14	down from 43

*In the Dirty Dozen



Cigarette Filters





Data drives action and policy

- **Federal legislation**
 - Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015
 - Plastic Pollution Control Act of 1988
 - Medical Waste Tracking Act of 1988
- **Statewide legislation**
 - Smoking ban law on public beaches and parks
 - Single-use plastic ban bills
 - Adopt-a-Beach law
- **Local ordinances**
 - Single-use plastic “bans”
 - Intentional balloon release “bans”





Data drives action and policy

- Promotes litter enforcement and recycling
- Motivating youth to be better stewards
- Inspires plastic reduction programs in businesses and beyond





Obstacles to a Debris-Free Sea

- Lack of littering enforcement
- Lack of recycling options
- Convenience of plastics/social behavior
- Antiquated infrastructure
- Lack of markets and incentives for source reduction and recycling
- Industrial and production sources
- Debris in the sea

What can WE do?

Multi-state collaboration to:

- Collect and share data
- Pass similar statewide legislation and work toward national legislation
 - Address packaging, recycling, closed loop system, market creation for recycled materials
 - Increase manufacturing responsibility
- Strengthen enforcement of existing laws
- Shift the social norm against single-use plastics
- Support research
 - Document the harm of marine debris
 - Identify sources and solutions

Linking Plastics to Climate Change





Thank you!

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