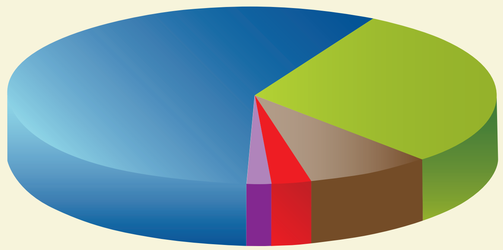
Marine debris is everyone's problem

Worldwide Sources of Marine Debris



64% Shoreline & Recreational Activities
25% Smoking-related Activities
8% Ocean/Waterway Activities
2% Dumping Activities
1% Medical/Personal Hygiene

Top 10 Marine Debris Items

Cigarettes & cigarette filters, plastic bags, food wrappers and containers, caps and lids, plastic beverage bottles, eating utensils, glass beverage bottles, beverage cans, straws and stirrers, paper bags

How long do items remain in the environment?

Paper Towel
2-4 WEEKS

Newspaper
6 WEEKS

Cotton Rope
1-5 MONTHS

Cotton Shirt
1-5 MONTHS

Cardboard Box
2 MONTHS

Waxed Milk Carton
3 MONTHS

Apple Core
2 MONTHS

Cigarette Butt
1.5 to 10 YEARS

Aluminum Cans
200 YEARS

Plastic Beverage Holder
400 YEARS

Styrofoam Cup
50 YEARS

Plastic Grocery Bag
1-20 YEARS

Disposable Diaper
450 YEARS

Plastic Bottle
450 YEARS

Monofilament Fishing Line
600 YEARS

Glass bottles
UNDETERMINED

Woods Hole Sea Grant

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) defines marine debris as any manmade object discarded, disposed of or abandoned that enters the coastal or marine environment. Each year, tons of plastic and other litter end up in our oceans, rivers, and beaches. The only way to truly manage the marine debris pollution issue is through prevention – help Woods Hole Sea Grant change behaviors that cause marine debris to enter the environment!
Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!

Find out more at www.whoi.edu/seagrant

www.facebook.com/woodsholeseagrant

www.twitter.com/woodsholeseagnt

www.youtube.com/woodsholeseagrant

Sources: NOAA Marine Debris Program, Ocean Conservancy, SC Sea Grant
Design: LianneDunn.com