About Clean Ocean Action’s Statewide Beach Sweeps

**Clean Ocean Action** (COA) is a coalition of 115 participating organizations working to improve and protect the waters off the New York and New Jersey coasts. Since its inception, COA has been at the forefront of the fight to protect the NY/NJ waters by gathering thousands of concerned citizens and empowering them to make a difference. Clean Ocean Action has had many successes over the years, but perhaps most visible is the establishment of the largest statewide environmental event in New Jersey, the bi-annual Beach Sweeps.

Twice each year, Beach Sweeps volunteers gather to remove debris from beaches and waterways while recording valuable data about the debris. This program is vital as litter is harmful to animals who mistake it for food or become entangled in it. Litter also has adverse effects on the state’s tourism economy. By removing this debris, volunteers are making NJ’s beaches and waterways safer for marine life and more enjoyable for beachgoers. What began as a group of 75 volunteers at one location in 1985 has grown to involve thousands of volunteers at over 70 locations along the Jersey shore, bays, rivers, and inland waterways. The continued growth of the program is a tangible illustration of the public’s support for a clean ocean. By collecting data to document the type and amount of debris that is found, Beach Sweeps volunteers’ hard work and dedication becomes a legacy of information and evidence that is used to raise public awareness, improve anti-littering programs, and drive public policy to ultimately reduce litter.

Modeled after COA’s successful Beach Sweeps Program, COA launched the Corporate Beach Sweeps in 2005 to offer a unique opportunity for corporations to volunteer and give back to their communities. From May through September, partners from the tristate area flock to beaches on Sandy Hook at Gateway National Recreation Area in Middletown, NJ to participate in beach cleanups.

Not only do Corporate Beach Sweeps offer an opportunity for team-building and service, but they provide unique perspective that ultimately helps raise awareness. Volunteers become citizen scientists for the day collecting important data about the type and quantity of debris removed. This information serves as evidence which supports COA’s work to help implement policy, track consumer behaviors, improve waste management, and find solutions to reduce marine debris at the source.

In 2019, 869 volunteers from 29 corporations removed a remarkable 60,871 pieces of debris. These volunteers came from corporations of all sizes and locations around NJ and NY. From corporate executives to incoming interns, all levels of staff got their hands in the sand and feet on the beach. COA is grateful for all of the participating corporations and their efforts to clean up beaches and waterways.
The Top Ten

The most commonly collected pieces of debris at the 2019 Corporate Beach Sweeps

1. Plastic Pieces
   12,008

2. Plastic Caps/Lids
   11,702

3. Plastic Wrappers
   7,653

4. Straws/Stirrers
   6,427

5. Foam Pieces
   3,136

6. Plastic Bags
   2,331

7. Cigarette Filters
   2,031

8. Glass Pieces
   1,949

9. Other Plastics
   1,406

10. Plastic Bottles
    1,366

Some of the most unusual items found during the 2019 Corporate Beach Sweeps included phone parts, Easter eggs, Barbie doll, snorkel mask, hockey puck, Juul pods, car air fresheners, Delta luggage tag, flower barrette, and half of a bowling ball.

Percentage of Debris by Material

- Plastic: 83%
- Foam: 4%
- Glass: 8%
- Rubber: 2%
- Metal: 1%
- Paper: 1%
- Wood: 1%
- Cloth: 0.5%
### 2019 Corporate Beach Sweeps Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PLASTIC</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Food, Candy Wrappers/Bags</td>
<td>7,653</td>
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<td>Store/Shopping Bags</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buckets/Crates/Bins</td>
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<td>Cap/Lids</td>
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<td>Cap Rings</td>
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<td>Cigarette Filters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cigarette Lighters</td>
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<td>Packaging</td>
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<td>Cigar Tips</td>
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<td>Bait Bags/Containers</td>
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<td>Lures/Floats</td>
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<td>Nets - Small</td>
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<td>Cups</td>
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<td>Diapers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fork, Knives, Spoons</td>
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<td>Pens</td>
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<td>Tampon Applicators</td>
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<td>Toys</td>
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<td>Vegetable Sacks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Plastics</td>
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<td>Building/Dock Materials</td>
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<td>Buoys/Floats</td>
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<td>Foam Cups</td>
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<td>Pieces</td>
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<td><strong>RUBBER</strong></td>
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<td>Balloons - Mylar</td>
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<tr>
<td>With String/Ribbon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Balloons - Rubber</td>
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<td>With String/Ribbon</td>
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<tr>
<td>55 Gallon Drums: New</td>
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<td>Fishing Hooks</td>
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<td>Fishing Sinkers</td>
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<td>Nails</td>
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<td>Pieces</td>
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<td>Crab/Lobster Traps</td>
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<td>Shoes/Sandals</td>
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<tr>
<td>String</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Cloth</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>METAL</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Debris</td>
<td>60,871</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Corporations</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Participants</td>
<td>869</td>
</tr>
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</table>
2019 Corporate Beach Sweeps Partners

AEGIS

AmWINS Group Benefits, Inc.

Bloomberg

Bristol-Myers Squibb

GROUPE CLARINS

CRC Group Wholesale & Specialty

EDRINGTON

FERRING PHARMACEUTICALS
2019 Corporate Beach Sweeps Partners

Goldman Sachs

Grant Thornton

hikma.

KPMG

Graybar

Johnson & Johnson

L’ORÉAL
Thank You 2019 Volunteers!
Corporate Social & Environmental Responsibility

Through participating in COA’s Corporate Beach Sweeps program, your corporation is already taking steps to be a leader for the environment! This hands-on educational experience not only helps to make an impact on the beaches, but will contribute to stopping the debris at its source. Here are three easy steps to make a difference at your workplace that benefit the environment:

1. **Reduce Single-Use Items:** Swap out plastic stirrers for bamboo or wood substitutes, use metal cutlery instead of single-use plastic ware in your cafeteria, and provide employees with branded reusable tote bags, mugs, or cups.

2. **Recycle & Don’t Litter:** Make sure that every desk, common area, and outdoor area has a recycling bin for paper and plastic items.

3. **Spread Awareness:** You can “be the solution to ocean pollution” through educating others on the importance of reducing debris, litter, and consumption. Go the extra step and volunteer with COA during other beach cleanups or programs.

These are just three ways that you can make waves. Learn more at CleanOceanAction.org!

2019 Corporate Beach Sweeps Partners

A special thanks to our partners at the Gateway National Recreation Area, Sandy Hook Unit!

Keep in Touch & Current On Ocean Issues!

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