



Photo: NOAA

# Marine Debris

## Marine debris is a global problem.

Marine debris is not only a pervasive threat to our ocean, Great Lakes, and waterways, but can affect navigation safety, the economy, and even human health. The NOAA Marine Debris Program (MDP) is the federal government's lead for addressing marine debris, with a mission to investigate and prevent its adverse impacts.

## Where does marine debris come from?

All marine debris comes from people. It can enter the ocean and waterways from land through littering, poor waste management practices, storm water discharge, and extreme natural events such as tsunamis and hurricanes. Debris can also come from ocean-based sources, such as fishing vessels, stationary platforms used for offshore oil and gas, cargo ships, and other large vessels.

## What is marine debris?

Any persistent solid material that is manufactured or processed and directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally, disposed of or abandoned into the marine environment or Great Lakes.

Photo: NOAA





## What are common types of marine debris?

- **Plastics** such as single-use water bottles, grocery bags, food wrappers, and cigarette butts
- **Microplastics** (pieces <5mm) that are manufactured or come from the breakdown of larger pieces of plastic
- **Derelict Fishing Gear (DFG)**
- **Abandoned and Derelict Vessels (ADVs)**



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## How YOU can help!

The best way to prevent large accumulations of debris from getting larger is to stop debris from entering the ocean in the first place.

### GET INVOLVED

and participate in local cleanups in your area.

### REMEMBER

that our land and sea are connected.

### DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

no matter where you are.

### REDUCE

the amount of waste you produce.

### REUSE

items when you can. Choose reusable items over disposable ones.

### RECYCLE

as much as possible! Bottles, cans, cell phones, ink cartridges, and many other items can be recycled.



Photo: Coral Bay Community Council

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