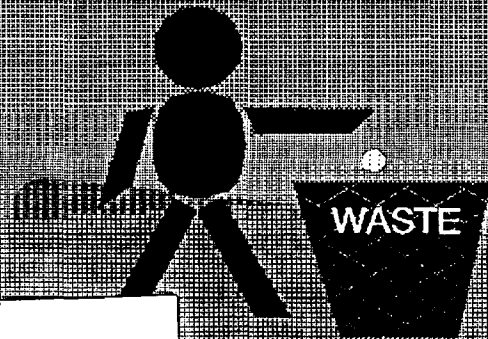


# MARINE DEBRIS

STATUS REPORT  
and  
BIBLIOGRAPHY



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## Foreword

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Marine debris gained national attention during the summers of 1987 and 1988 as a result of the medical waste washups and beach closures along the East coast. Although these washups and closures helped to earn ocean pollution a place on the cover of Time magazine, they represent a remarkably small section of the marine debris problem. Over a million marine animals are killed yearly by marine debris. Vessel damage attributed to debris has been costly to repair and poses a real threat to mariner safety. It has become clear that marine debris is more than just an aesthetic problem.

Marine debris has been recognized by the Administration and the Congress as a problem which significantly impacts our coastal and marine resources. The Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1990 encourage coastal states to reduce marine debris entering our coastal waters by managing uses and activities that contribute to this entrance. This report and bibliography have been prepared to aid the states in their efforts.

This document has been organized into three sections. The report (Part I) offers a brief introduction to the causes and impacts of marine debris followed by an outline of selected local, state, and federal efforts in debris reduction. The bibliography cites research reports, articles, books, and legislation which address marine debris. The bibliography lists citations both by subject (Part II) and by author (Part III).

For further information on activities described in this report, refer to the responsible agency cited in the bibliography or contact the Coastal Programs Division, 1825 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20235, Tel. (202) 573-5158.

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# PART

# I

## MARINE DEBRIS STATUS REPORT

## INTRODUCTION

In recognition of evidence suggesting marine debris has become a coastal problem which needs to be addressed at the national, state, and local levels, the newly reauthorized Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA) was amended to include language on marine debris. Section 6210 of the "Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1990" amends section 309 of the CZMA to include marine debris abatement as one of eight objectives for the newly created Coastal Zone Enhancement Grants program. Under this program, states have been encouraged to make grants available for "reducing marine debris entering the Nation's coastal and ocean environment by managing uses and activities that contribute to the entrance of such debris."

CZM programs can play a strong role in helping to reduce marine debris by educating both the general public and mariners, through management plans which stress recycling and convenient waste disposal, and through coordinated outreach programs to involve those who regulate and those who create the waste stream. This paper examines the problems caused by debris and some of the approaches which have been implemented to address these problems with a special emphasis on plastics as "floatable" or "persistent" marine debris.

## BACKGROUND

Plastics are problematic to the marine environment for the very reasons that they are attractive to the marine community. Because plastics are light, durable, strong, and inexpensive, they make the perfect medium for fishing equipment and product packaging. While not all marine debris is composed of plastics, it is plastics that have thrust the ancient practice of marine disposal into the public and regulatory spotlight. Even though the explosive growth of plastic usage in our society is primarily a post-World War II phenomenon, a significant amount of plastic waste may be found washed up on the remotest shores of Antarctica (Wong, et. al, 1976).

Considering the amount of plastics produced in this country and the amount of plastics discarded by ships worldwide, the fact that persistent debris spares no marine water body is not surprising. In 1958, the United States produced approximately three billion pounds of plastic. By 1988, fifty seven billion pounds of plastic were produced, representing an almost twentyfold increase in thirty years (Modern Plastics, 1989). Current projections suggest a continuation of this level of production into the twenty-first century. As plastics become more pervasive aboard ships, there is a greater likelihood they will end up as marine debris. In 1975, it was estimated by the National Academy of Sciences that nearly six and a half billion pounds of marine debris was being discarded by

vessels into the sea yearly. It was also estimated that seven percent (nearly forty five million pounds) of this debris was plastic (NAS, 1975).

As the use of plastics in society has escalated, so too has the cost of improper plastics disposal. Marine debris has become responsible for economic losses and poses a threat to the safety and livelihood of the marine community in general. Plastic nets and line can become entangled in propellers and plastic sheeting can be drawn into and obstruct engine cooling intakes. In a survey taken in Newport Oregon, fifty eight percent of the fishermen surveyed indicated that they had incurred costs due to damage caused by plastic debris. On the average, the damage the debris inflicted upon these vessels cost two thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars (Recht, 1988). In a study which examined the insurance claims by Japanese fishing vessels, it was determined that plastics were the leading cause of engine damage at sea and that fifty million dollars had been awarded to vessels for repairs of damage caused by marine debris (Takehama).<sup>1</sup>

The costs of marine debris do not dissipate once that debris has washed ashore and is no longer a threat to mariners. The literature suggests, in fact, that this is where the costs actually skyrocket. The medical waste washups during the summers of 1987 and 1988 in New York and New Jersey, while bringing the problems of marine debris in general (and medical waste in particular) to the nation's attention, have done so at a great economic cost to these states. It has been estimated that the loss in direct expenditures in New York and New Jersey during 1988 as a result of marine debris fell somewhere between one and five billion dollars (Stewart et al., 1989).

In Santa Monica California, a city which is not nationally known for its marine debris problem, over one and a quarter million dollars was spent in 1988 alone to ensure that the beaches were free from debris (City of Santa Monica, 1988). Even though this was not the medical waste which had received so much attention on the east coast, it was the everyday garbage (six-pack rings, plastic bags, bottles, cans, etc.) that each coastal community must learn to confront. It is this unspectacular everyday marine debris which jeopardizes access to, and threatens the quality of, one of this nation's favorite recreational resources.

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<sup>1</sup> One can argue that the samples in these surveys are not representative of all vessels because they were conducted in the heavily fished waters of the Northern Pacific where one would expect to find a higher incidence of vessel-plastic interaction. These studies are specific to fishing vessels which by their nature operate in waters laden with plastics. These studies were not designed, however, to be representative of the whole marine community. They were designed to show that a large sector of this community is incurring substantial costs as a result of marine debris.

Plastics discarded in the marine environment are more than problematic to mariners and unsightly to beachgoers; they are deadly to marine animals. Even though they are not considered toxic, animals ingesting plastics often suffer adverse effects through the fouling of their digestive systems. Marine turtles are widely known to mistake plastic bags for jelly fish while seabirds often mistake plastic resin pellets for fish eggs. Balazs (1975) has documented 79 reports of plastic debris being found in the stomachs or digestive tracts of turtles which contributed to or caused their mortality.<sup>2</sup> Plastic pellets are not usually lethal to the adult birds that ingest them, however upon regurgitation for feeding their young, the plastics have often proven to be indigestible to the juveniles (Day et al, 1985).

Ingestion, however, is not the only threat plastics pose to marine life. Due to its longevity in the marine environment and its inherent strength, plastic debris is an effective trap for any animal unfortunate enough to become entangled. Ingestion and entanglement cause the death of an estimated one hundred thousand marine mammals and more than a million seabirds each year. Just as disturbing is the fact that of the two hundred and eighty worldwide species of seabirds, eighteen percent are known to ingest plastics. In certain geographic areas such as Hawaii and Alaska, that percentage climbs as high as eighty eight percent (Day, 1985). It has also been suggested that marine debris has been responsible for the decline of the Northern fur seal populations on the Pribilof Islands. Up to forty thousand of these seals may die due to entanglement each year (Fowler, 1985, 1987).

## LEGISLATION

While mortality rates as high as these are a new phenomenon caused in part by the overall increases of at sea disposal combined with the plastics composition of this debris, the laws that regulate marine disposal in this country are almost a century old.<sup>3</sup> The Refuse Act has regulated disposal of debris from ships since 1899 by making it illegal to dispose of debris over the sides in U.S. navigable waters. This law, however, only prohibits disposal in rivers and harbors and within a three mile boundary seaward of the United States' coasts. Not until recently has legislation been enacted to address the problems associated with persistent marine debris directly.

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<sup>2</sup> All known species of turtles in domestic waters are listed as either "endangered" or "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act.

<sup>3</sup> The ability to accurately estimate mortality rates is in itself a new phenomenon and will discount somewhat the claims of large increases in mortality within a population attributable to anything other than improved data collection techniques and methodology.



In 1985, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) established the Marine Entanglement Research Program (MERP) in response to public concern over the impacts of marine debris on wildlife. One of the primary goals of this program has been to come to a better understanding of the origin, amount, distribution, fate, and effects of plastic and other synthetic debris in the marine environment (Coe and Bunn, 1987). With that understanding, MERP has been able to develop and implement efforts in education and mitigation. While MERP received its authority statutorily through the Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act, the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the Marine Mammals Protection Act, there still existed no law which attempted to prohibit vessel generated plastics disposal directly into the sea. In 1987, in recognition that persistent marine debris was threatening our marine wildlife, our coastal economies, and the safety of our mariners, the Congress adopted legislation to prohibit plastics disposal at sea. The Marine Plastic Pollution Research and Control Act and the Driftnet Impact Monitoring, Assessment and Control Act were passed as Titles II and IV respectively of P.L. 100-220.

Title II, the Marine Plastic Pollution Research and Control Act, was passed as a means to control domestic marine plastics pollution from vessels. This Act has placed a ban on plastics disposal from vessels using the criteria of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) MARPOL Annex V, of which the United States became a signatory in 1987.<sup>4</sup> Title II expands Annex V by making it unlawful for any vessel (other than military) to discard plastic debris in the United States' Exclusive Economic Zone (a two hundred mile seaward boundary). Title II also extends Annex V so that it applies to United States commercial and recreational flagships in all foreign bodies of water.

Congress passed Title IV of P.L. 100-220 (the Driftnet Impact Monitoring, Assessment and Control Act) primarily to address the problems surrounding the use of drift gillnets by both the foreign and domestic commercial fisheries of the North Pacific. The regulation of driftnets has been viewed as a distinct and separate problem from that of ship-generated plastics waste disposal, and therefore was introduced as a separate title. Title IV requires NOAA to evaluate the nature, extent, and effect these driftnets have had upon the marine environment. Title IV also charges NOAA with the responsibility of studying the feasibility of driftnet marking registry and identification systems, driftnet bounty programs, and the use of alternative materials in the construction of driftnets.

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<sup>4</sup> MARPOL stands for marine pollution. MARPOL 73/78 addresses the problem of operational pollution from ships and is constructed of five Annexes. Annex I and II address shipboard pollution from oil and noxious liquid substances. Annexes III, IV and V are optional to signatory nations and address ship-generated pollution by packaged hazardous materials, sewage, and garbage respectively.

Because Title II and Title IV address distinct problems, Congress has provided only Title II with enforcement provisions.

On November 2, 1987, the Senate approved optional Annex V to the MARPOL 73/78 Convention, entitled "Regulation for the Prevention of Pollution by Garbage from Ships." Annex V is divided into three mandates. First, it prohibits the discharge at sea of all plastics, including synthetic ropes, synthetic nets and fishing lines, and garbage bags. There is, however, a specific exclusion granted for "the accidental loss of synthetic fishing nets or synthetic material incidental to the repair of such nets, provided that all reasonable precautions have been taken to prevent such loss." Second, it limits the location at sea where other types of nonplastic garbage may be discharged. Finally, and perhaps most importantly due to considerations of enforceability, Annex V requires that party nations ensure that ports provide accessible reception facilities for ships' garbage. Title II of P.L. 100-220 addressed the enforcement provisions of Annex V by requiring the U.S. Coast Guard to be responsible for enforcement.

#### ENFORCEMENT

The Coast Guard has the primary responsibility for enforcing the regulations which implement Annex V of MARPOL. The Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships (33 USC 1901 *et seq.*), authorizes the Coast Guard to administer and enforce discharge provisions of Annex V. While the law does not specifically require an active response (cleanup), it does provide for a maximum civil penalty of twenty five thousand dollars per offense, and a maximum criminal penalty of fifty thousand dollars and/or five years imprisonment for a person who knowingly violates this Act. It also bestows upon the Captain of the Port (COTP) the authority to deny vessels entry into any port where there are insufficient waste reception facilities.

Due to the difficulty in ensuring oceangoing ships comply with this law, the Coast Guard has implemented rules which concentrate on education and port/vessel cooperation in solid waste disposal. The Coast Guard has placed the responsibility of adequate and convenient waste collection facilities upon the ports. The Coast Guard requires that ports provide vessels with well-marked and conveniently located waste disposal facilities. While the port is not required to haul the waste itself, it must provide the vessel with the names of contractors who will. The Coast Guard realizes the potential burden these requirements place on ports and has remarked that reception facilities for garbage are an "ancillary (though now mandated) service provided by port and terminal operators," and has recognized it is not the port's primary reason for being in business (Federal Register, 18400, 1989).

Ports which receive oceangoing ships subject to Annex I and II or which receive more than five hundred thousand pounds of commercial fishery products are required to have a Certificate Adequacy (COA) from the Coast Guard (Federal Register, 18393, 1989). The COA will ensure that the COTP has evaluated a port's ability to comply with the reception facility requirements. Fortunately, there have been a number of projects which examine ways in which ports may effectively and competitively manage the sudden increases in waste they must handle as a result of MARPOL 73/78.

It has been estimated that the recreational fleet is the largest producer of marine debris, accounting for nearly sixty percent of all marine generated waste, and it is in this sector that the Coast Guard admits that its enforcement capabilities have been stretched (Eastern Research Group, 1988). All marinas and recreational boating facilities which have slips for more than ten vessels are required to provide waste reception facilities for those vessels with which they are engaged in business. Obviously, the number of marinas and boating facilities meeting this standard are far too numerous to regulate actively. Instead, the Coast Guard requests that mariners report to them those marinas which do not provide adequate facilities. The Coast Guard, however, will only be able to pursue these reports on an "as resources permit basis" (USCG Commandant Instruction, 1989).

It is in this area of enforcement that state and local governments can effectively and efficiently aid the Coast Guard in helping to ensure compliance with the plastic pollution prevention regulations. The Coast Guard has requested help in the form of state laws mimicking MARPOL whereby the enforcement responsibility of MARPOL could be shared with state agencies. Mississippi passed just such a law when it passed the Marine Litter Act of 1989 (MLA). This law makes it illegal to dump any trash, garbage, or other debris into state coastal waters and, it has charged the Bureau of Marine Resources (BMR) with the responsibility of enforcement. The MLA carries the penalty of a misdemeanor with fines not to exceed five hundred dollars for the first infraction and ten thousand dollars for subsequent infractions.

The Marine Litter Act has received a great deal of attention as it has been perceived as the first law attempting to address marine debris at the state level. However, many states have laws which address the problems of marine debris through broad water pollution legislation. In a survey taken by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) in September of 1989, thirty seven states responded that they currently had laws prohibiting the discharge of boat waste as described in Annex V of MARPOL. The existence of this legislation suggests that while states may have adequate enforcement capabilities, they do not necessarily have resources to address marine debris directly.

While the MLA helps reduce the burden on the Coast Guard, it fails to address the underlying problems surrounding the difficulty of enforcing compliance. Enforcement techniques tend to be expensive, often their effectiveness is outweighed by their costs, given the tremendous volume of vessel traffic on our waterways. This reflects the fact that marine debris does not have a readily apparent origin. Because it is impractical to assume that increased enforcement and surveillance will catch and prosecute enough vessels to solve the marine debris problem (or fund the costs of abatement programs), most states and localities are concentrating their efforts on boater education and public awareness campaigns.

### **PORT RECYCLING AND BOATER AWARENESS PROJECTS**

Perhaps one of the most effective methods to educate the marine community to the dangers of plastic wastes has been undertaken in coordinated efforts by state and local governments through marina and port waste management programs. The ports which have attempted to come to grips with their increased waste stream (due to MARPOL), have communicated and cooperated well with mariners to ensure uncomplicated voluntary compliance. Projects undertaken by the ports in conjunction with local, state, and federal efforts provide an excellent opportunity for coastal zone programs to become involved with marine debris abatement. Marine debris abatement projects need not be expensive if a certain amount of creativity is utilized. In some instances, they even provide the port or marina with a more cost effective waste management program than it initially had by capitalizing on profits collected through recycling. Port-supported recycling programs may also benefit the community by ensuring that a steady stream of pre-sorted recyclable waste is available. This steady stream tends to make the community a more attractive customer for waste management contractors. Through recycling, the community may reduce the burden it is placing on its landfill. For many coastal communities which are facing landfill capacity in the next decade, these port and marina recycling projects are brimming with potential.

#### **The Port of Newport, Oregon**

The Port of Newport undertook a pilot project between January 1987 and March 1988 to improve port refuse facilities, educate port users, and to disseminate the results of these efforts to other ports. This project - the Marine Refuse Disposal Project - was funded through a ninety seven thousand dollar grant from NOAA's Marine Entanglement Research Program and a twenty nine thousand dollar in kind commitment from the Port of Newport. The initial focus of this program was the education of commercial and recreational fishermen to the problems caused by marine debris. As most of these fishermen could empathize with the costs of lost fishing times and vessel repairs debris

caused, their cooperation was enthusiastic (Recht, 1990). Part of this cooperation included separating waste for recycling purposes. Through an extensive public awareness campaign combined with planning in such areas as dumpster size and placement and the utilization of a garbage barge for refuse too heavy to carry from vessels, the port was able to elicit port-wide involvement and cooperation from its users. Through recycling, the port actually accrued a profit while disposing of considerably more waste than they had in the past. The recycling of materials such as cardboard and metal has reduced the amount of refuse needing landfill disposal by one third (Recht, 1990).

The Port of Newport was chosen for this project because it caters to diverse demands and is active, while at the same time being relatively small. The port supplies moorage and services for up to eight hundred commercial vessels as well as operating a six hundred berth recreational vessel marina and a two berth deep draft shipping terminal. This project has encouraged the participation of all sectors of the port in disposal and recycling. Fishermen have been used in radio and television commercials to educate the public about marine debris. During special occasions, some have even dressed in nets and marched in parades to bring the marine debris message to the public. This program has been a success because it has taken the time to garner public support while at the same time solidifying a concentrated effort within the port community to reduce marine debris.

#### Marina Project in New Jersey

New Jersey's marina project was initiated in November of 1989 and has been jointly funded through matching grants by the U.S. EPA and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. The techniques used in this program have concentrated on raising the marine community's awareness of recycling in general, and of the new responsibilities placed upon mariners by MARPOL in particular. This effort has included two direct mail campaigns to the owners of vessels. The first campaign targeted all registered vessel owners through the State's Motor Vehicle Services. An informational packet on plastic marine debris was mailed to all registered boat owners. The second direct mail campaign took place as part of a program which had targeted three marinas for an intense public awareness campaign. In their annual dockage bills, vessel owners were provided with plastic marine debris information and notification of their marina's participation in the program.

The primary goal of this program has been to persuade mariners in New Jersey to recycle their trash. New Jersey currently has recycling laws in place which make it mandatory for businesses to recycle at least three items. Most marinas, however, have yet to start recycling programs due to their short seasons, their lack of knowledge about

recycling programs, and the fact that most will not feel compelled to start a program unless their local authorities are aggressively pursuing recycling (Doherty, 1990). The goals of this project were not unlike the Port of Newport's. Emphasis has been placed on educating boaters and marina operators, encouraging visitors (transients) to participate, and informing the public of the government's involvement in marine pollution.

The three recreational marinas chosen for this project represented a diverse range in size, location, amount of transient traffic served, and the format of their solid waste operations. At all the marinas, well marked containers were placed in easily accessible locations for mariner's waste disposal needs. The mariners had been encouraged both with signs and through personal interaction with program staff to sort garbage on their vessel upon disposal to ensure only sorted waste entered the containers. Through trial and error, the program staff found that in order to ensure compliance, the program has to remain flexible enough to adjust to the unforeseen needs of boaters. When the program staff found that the recycling dumpsters were being largely ignored and filled with unsorted garbage, it took only a minor adjustment to improve compliance. The dumpsters were replaced with colored receptacles that were different enough to make people think twice before discarding unsorted wastes into them (Doherty, 1990). This project has stressed the importance of flexibility as the key to successful compliance.

#### New Hampshire's "Trashmaster" Program

Another tactic which has been used to help reduce marine debris is the offering of an incentive (beyond clean water) for mariners to bring ashore as much trash as they can. Typically, some sort of competition is established whereby the mariner who consistently disposes of the most trash ashore relative to their vessel size is eligible for special recognition and a prize. Incentive-based boater awareness campaigns have become common at fishing derbies and other events which bring a large number of vessels together.

The Wentworth-by-the-Sea Marina in New Castle, New Hampshire in coordination with the University of New Hampshire Sea Grant Extension Program and corporate sponsorship, hosted an incentive-based waste return program for their customers during the summer of 1989. This program offered an incentive for mariners to participate by issuing a receipt for each full garbage bag turned in by the boater and then entering that receipt in a monthly drawing for marine supplies. The mariners were required to pay a five dollar entry fee for which they were issued a summer's supply of trash bags and the right to qualify for the drawings. Two corporations provided a total of seventeen thousand dollars to cover the expenses of the program. In exchange, the sponsors

received their names printed on the garbage bags and promotional pieces.

This program collected five thousand garbage bags during the summer (Doyle and Barnaby, 1990). As there was no control group, there is no indication whether this is more than would have been collected normally by the marina in the absence of the program. The Trashmaster program did not require the boaters to separate their trash, although there was a receptacle provided for the disposal of aluminum cans, so it is difficult to judge whether the marina could have profited through recycling. Regardless of collection rates and recycling successes, the program did foster public awareness and support for marine debris abatement efforts. The fact that over thirty six percent of the marina's boats registered and participated in the program indicates a certain level of public awareness was achieved.

### The Gulf of Mexico Program

The Gulf of Mexico Program was established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 1988 as a joint effort between regional offices in Atlanta, GA and Dallas, TX to "take a comprehensive regional approach to solving pollution problems which threaten the natural, social, and economic viability of the Gulf of Mexico" (Lipka, 1989). One of the goals of this program is to reduce marine debris by increasing the public's awareness of debris reduction strategies. Under the Take Pride Gulf Wide campaign, the Boater's Pledge for a Clean Gulf program has been proposed to reduce marine debris by having boaters sign a pledge stating they understand the environmental consequences of marine debris and that they will refrain from discarding debris over the side. Once this pledge is signed and returned to the Gulf program office, the boater will be sent a sticker to be displayed on their vessel and a certificate (suitable for framing) stating the pledge. This proposed boater awareness campaign would be implemented in all five of the Gulf states.

### EDUCATING THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Most efforts made thus far in marine debris abatement have centered around education. Because we are only just realizing that the ocean is finite in its powers of dilution, especially when compounded by the nondegradability of plastics, there are many who continue to treat wastes at sea in a traditional manner out of ignorance rather than malice. It is for this reason that before enforcement is pursued aggressively, an honest attempt at education should be made. If responsible waste management can be learned at an early age, less effort will have to be spent on adult education. Many states incorporate marine debris education in state environmental education curriculum in the primary, elementary, or secondary schools. As not all education can take place at school,

however, many successful educational activities targeting the general public have been instituted. As a certain amount of flexibility is needed to ensure an effective educational program within any state, there is no one model of what that program should look like.

### Beach Cleanups and Surveys

Voluntary beach cleanups demand the most public participation and, as they involve more than just the marine community, do more to increase the general public's awareness of marine debris, both plastic and otherwise, than any other activity. NOAA, the Coast Guard, and EPA help to support most of these state organized cleanups. The Center for Marine Conservation (CMC), with funding from the Marine Entanglement Research Program, has established two marine debris information offices and a marine debris database. These offices act as clearinghouses for marine debris educational and informational materials. It is with the aid of these materials that state cleanup activities are undertaken.

Each state organizes and implements its own beach cleanup as part of the national Coastweeks celebrations. While volunteers clean the beaches, they also record the debris they have found onto data information cards. These cards are then sent to the CMC for entry into their database and analysis. The results detailing the types of debris collected from state to state are published yearly by the CMC. One of the goals of the cleanups has been to target specific sources of pollution and record who is not complying with the Marine Plastic Pollution Research and Control Act. Often, debris will have the violator's name printed on it, thereby revealing its probable source. Space has been provided on the collection card for this information. Although this information could be used as evidence if legal action were to be pursued, typically it used to embarrass image conscious firms when the results are published.

Beach cleanups, while being reactive rather than proactive activities, are important for a number of reasons. Beach cleanups allow for a quantification of exactly what has been washing up on our beaches. Improved data makes it possible to evaluate whether marine debris abatement policies have been effective and whether we are making any progress in marine debris reduction. Perhaps the most obvious benefit of beach cleanups is that they remove debris from the beaches. Much of this debris has the potential to be refloated, so its removal not only affects the beach where it is collected, but also benefits the coast that it would have washed ashore upon next. In 1989, approximately eight hundred and sixty tons of debris were collected from this nation's beaches by more than forty seven thousand volunteers (CMC, 1990). It is a gesture of state pride to clean up one's beach as well as being educational for those who participate. Successful marine debris abatement will only take place through increasing citizens' public awareness, and



the beach cleanups create this opportunity perfectly.

#### Texas' Adopt-A-Beach Program

Texas is widely credited as being the first state to develop beach cleanups and marine debris awareness campaigns. Through both state and national media, Texas was able to bring marine debris and beach cleanups to the nation's attention well before medical waste washed ashore in New York and New Jersey. The Texas Commissioner of Lands Office issued press releases about the successes of the beach cleanups and the Adopt-A-Beach program as well as developing public service announcements promoting the program and the cleanups. The Adopt-A-Beach program was developed in 1987 by that office in a response to the successes of the 1986 beach cleanup. Through this program, volunteers clean their adopted beach three times a year and document their finds on CMC data cards. Much of this data has been used in Congressional testimony and acted as documentation for supporters of the United States' ratification of MARPOL Annex V.

#### Maine's Education Program

The State of Maine's Planning Office in conjunction with the Maine Coastal Program has published a booklet called "Charting Our Course: An Activity Guide for Grades 6-12 on Water Quality in the Gulf of Maine." The publication is specific to Maine's coastal waters and provides an activities-based curriculum for Maine teachers. There is a chapter in this booklet dedicated to marine debris which includes educational activities the teachers should stress in order to make the problems of marine debris "real" to their students. The funds for this project were provided by NOAA's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management.

#### California's Adopt-A-Beach Program

The California Coastal Commission's Adopt-A-Beach School Education Program is not unlike Maine's educational program in that it suggests activities for the educator to use to spark the interest of the student in coastal issues. California's program incorporates the beach cleanup as an ongoing project in which the class participates. Classes adopt a local beach and register that adoption with the Coastal Commission. After classroom sessions that educate the students about beach ecosystems, marine debris, and recycling, a field trip is taken to the adopted beach. The students collect all the debris they can find on their beach and take any that can be recycled to local recycling centers.

## Washington's Action Plan for Marine Debris

The State of Washington's Marine Plastic Debris Action Plan recognizes the importance of educating both the marine and the general communities about marine debris. In 1988, the Commissioner of Public Lands appointed a task force of agency and organization representatives to develop a state action plan for addressing marine debris. The purpose of the task force has been to increase public awareness of and interest in marine debris and to coordinate public and private efforts in debris education and abatement programs. The action recommendations of this task force range from establishing a school curriculum program to developing a public outreach program with public service announcements, publications, and marine debris awareness events (ie. beach cleanups, boat shows, and fairs). Perhaps the most effective part of Washington's plan has been not through its attempts to educate school children and the general public, but has come through its efforts to educate those state agencies which had been ignorant of marine debris and the role they could play in reducing it.

## Alaska's Marine Debris Education Kit

The Alaska Sea Grant College Program has developed a marine debris information kit for educators which contains posters, buttons, brochures, and teaching activities designed to educate the public about marine debris. This kit contains a booklet produced by Sea Grant in conjunction with the Alaska Coastal Management Program and Alaskans for Litter Prevention and Recycling which outlines the problems associated with marine debris and suggests organizational techniques which can be used in beach cleanups. While much of the information in this kit is applicable to any coastal state, the focus of the document is on Alaska's coastal environments.

## COASTAL PROGRAM INVOLVEMENT

The coastal zone management programs can play an important role in ensuring that the public, the marine community, and the state's regulatory agencies are aware of and actively involved with marine debris abatement. There is a definite need not only for education in this area, but also for the coordination of, and in some cases the inspiration for, effort. The state coastal programs are advantageously positioned to take the lead in this area as they are familiar with the range of needs within coastal communities and the likelihood of those needs being addressed given the existing regulatory and bureaucratic structures.

Without a coordination of both knowledge and effort, debris reduction programs will find effectiveness elusive. Although ports and marinas are monitored by the Coast

Guard, it is unrealistic to think that given their other responsibilities the Coast Guard has the will or the wherewithal to ensure that there is a dumpster conveniently located at the head of every dock in the United States. It is possible that a Coast Guard station, while being aware that it is illegal for vessels to throw plastics overboard, knows nothing about the reception facility requirements for smaller ports and marinas. Without a coordination of effort and knowledge, it is also possible for a town to have an efficient curbside recycling program, but to neglect the inclusion of ports and marinas in that program.

The need for coordination can be met through active outreach programs. The state coastal zone management programs can provide an effective vehicle for this coordination. Land use management planning, although not designed specifically to combat marine debris, could provide an excellent opportunity for coastal managers to address marine debris, especially in the areas of marina, port, and harbor development. Marina permitting activities, for instance, could address marine debris by imposing operational constraints such as dumpster or recycling requirements.

Whether or not marine debris programs include industry and other state agencies for both financial and operational support will most likely dictate the success of any such program. In order for the state CZM programs to address the problems surrounding marine debris efficiently and effectively, a knowledge of, and a relationship with, those state agencies currently responsible for enforcement or involved in educational activities is essential. While most states have enforcement capabilities, many find it fiscally unattractive to exercise them. It would be beneficial for the CZM programs to be familiar with any demonstration projects or educational campaigns which have taken place in their states and to understand the relative effectiveness of each of those projects. Demonstration projects in enforcement, education, and coastal development planning which recognize and combat marine debris could all be considered feasible by the CZM programs. By addressing marine debris from a management perspective, efforts to control debris will be better coordinated, less reactive, and more effective.



# PART II

MARINE DEBRIS BIBLIOGRAPHY  
BY SUBJECT

## MARINE DEBRIS BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Explanation of Subjects

#### BEACH CLEANUP

This section contains material that has been written on both beach cleanups and beach surveys. Beach cleanups and surveys are usually well organized attempts to document all that has washed ashore. They result in both raw data (for statistical analysis) and cleaner beaches. This documentation tends to be helpful in determining the extent and origin of marine debris in a given area.

#### ENTANGLE

This section includes articles and publications concerning the impacts plastic marine debris has had upon marine wildlife. Thousands of animals are killed each year due to entanglement within and ingestion of plastic debris.

#### Gen/Art.

This section includes articles from newspapers and magazines which encompass the issues of solid waste management and marine debris in general.

#### GENERAL

This category contains publications about marine debris and solid waste which are not solely applicable to any other section.

#### PLAS/ART.

This section contains articles which pertain directly to plastic marine debris or plastics waste management. A fairly large category with many articles for those just becoming familiar with the issues.

#### PLASTIC

Publications directly related to plastic marine debris, plastics waste management, or the plastics industry.

#### PORT/SHIP

A category for those interested in the affects of marine debris legislation upon the marine community. This section has many articles and publications which examine MARPOL Annex V and how it will affect ports/marinas and the shipping industry.

#### REG/LEG.

This category documents regulatory and legislative actions directed at curbing marine debris in general and plastic marine debris in particular.

\* This office has a copy of those selections marked with an asterisk.

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