

# Don't Be a Litter Butt!

## Why is Litter a Problem?

When trash (plastic bags, bottles, cigarette butts, plastic cigar tips, etc.) is discarded onto the ground, it washes into storm drains and directly into our waterways untreated. Trash negatively impacts wildlife and migratory birds, poses hazards for fisherman and boaters, and is an eyesore along streets, parks, and waterways in our community.

## Litter Facts / Did You Know?

- ◆ Plastic pieces, cigar tips and cigarette filters are continually at the top of the list of trash found at beach cleanups locally and worldwide (Ocean Conservancy).
- ◆ More plastic cigar tips are found on Cleveland beaches than in any of the other Great Lakes Beach Cleanups (Alliance for the Great Lakes).
- ◆ Cigarette filters/butts are NOT biodegradable. The acetate filters take years to decompose, and the toxic chemicals trapped in the filters can leak into aquatic ecosystems, threatening our water resources.
- ◆ Plastics break down into tiny pieces called microplastics in water, then release toxic chemicals swallowed by fish, birds, snakes, and other wildlife.
- ◆ It can take 600 years for plastic monofilament fishing line to decompose.

## What You Can Do:

- ◆ Do Not Litter! Lake Erie is our source of drinking water, so we need to do our part to clean up pollution and to educate others not to litter.
- ◆ Follow the 3R's—Reduce, Reuse and Recycle wherever possible (Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District is the local recycling resource).
- ◆ Use reusable shopping bags instead of single-use plastic bags at the store and recycle bags if the service is available at your grocery store.
- ◆ Don't overfill trash cans as litter can blow into the street on windy days.
- ◆ If you see illegal dumping, alert the City's Service or Police Department.
- ◆ Organize a storm drain stenciling activity in your neighborhood to educate people that *Only Rain goes Down the Storm Drain*.
- ◆ Volunteer at a local stream, beach or park cleanup event.



*Litter ends up in our waterways when rain washes trash down the storm drain*



*Cigarette butts end up on our beaches*



*Euclid Beach Adopt-a-Beach Cleanup Team, one of many local groups organizing cleanups*



*Let's Bring Back the Woody Owl Motto  
Give a Hoot, Don't Pollute!!*