

North Central Texas
Council of Governments



February/March 2023

Trash Free Waters: North Central Texas Newsletter

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NCTCOG is working to build a coalition of partners and organizations to work collaboratively together to build on the many North Central Texas and statewide initiatives focused on the challenge of reducing trash in waterways, and litter in general.

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North Central Texas Spotlight



NORTH TEXAS COMMUNITY CLEANUP CHALLENGE

North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge Kicks Off Next Month

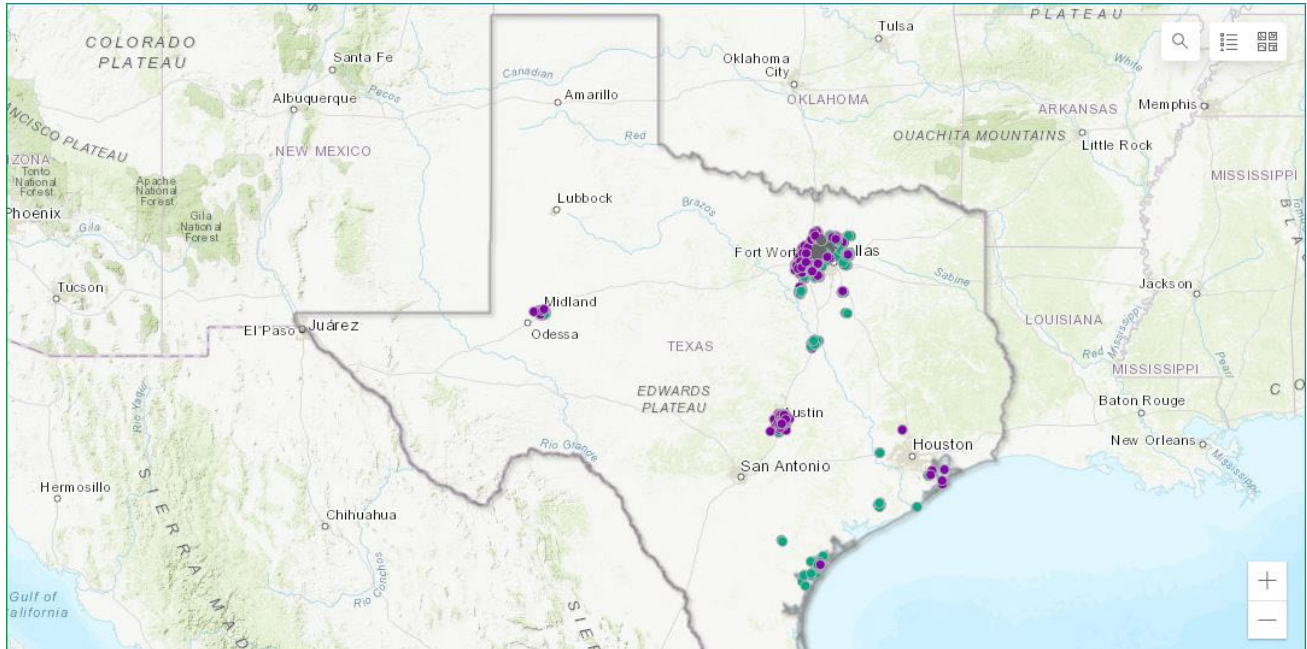
The North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge (NTCCC) is set to start next month on March 1st! This annual program of NCTCOG's Stormwater Public Education Task Force aims to engage residents across the North Central Texas region in a friendly competition to see whose community can clean up the most litter and trash during the challenge timeframe. A perk of the NTCCC is that **most** types of litter cleanup activities, not just organized events, count! See the [FAQ](#) page for details.

This year, the NTCCC will run from March 1st through May 31st with participating communities having until June 30th to log their cleanup data. Interested communities need to sign on by April 15th in order to participate in the challenge. To sign on your community to the NTCCC, please visit www.communitycleanupchallenge.com. First time participants will need to create a new user account by clicking on the "Join the Challenge" button at the bottom of the [Leaderboard](#) page. Past participants can go straight to the [Sign-In](#) page and update their information. Completing these steps lets us know you are committing to the challenge for 2023.

The NTCCC is a great way to amplify and build energy around existing cleanup efforts happening in your community! Participation is as easy as 1) Sign on by April 15th, 2) Clean up litter in your community between March 1st and May 31st, and 3) Log all of your cleanup data by June 30th. When logging your data in the Texas Litter Database, participants must use the External ID **CCC23** so we can pull your data. Visit the NTCCC [program page](#) for

resources such as [FAQs](#) about the program, a [Quick Guide to Using the Texas Litter Database](#), as well as infographics and wrap-up reports from previous years. For questions about the program, please contact the program staff at stormwater@nctcoq.org.

Adopt-A-Spot Map Showing Success in North Central Texas



Welcome to the newest organizations that have partnered up with the Trash Free Texas website by adding their litter cleanup sites to the Trash Free Waters Adopt-A-Spot map since the last newsletter! The newest partner organization is **Keep Burleson Beautiful**.

Our partners who have added cleanup locations to the Adopt-A-Spot map are seeing the results of the program firsthand. Word of the map is spreading, and volunteers are getting more involved in community cleanup efforts. Julie Winchell, from the City of Cleburne, had this to say:

"Keep Cleburne Beautiful had a huge difficulty maintaining cleanup activities since 2020 due to Covid restrictions. Many of our organizers are "essential employees" both at the City of Cleburne and our industrial partners. The development of the Adopt-A-Spot (AAS) site on the Trash Free Texas website allowed us to keep working toward a litter free Texas even when we could not meet together. Working with the Parks and Recreation Department we have added several locations to the AAS map that are available for adoption. We chose city owned parks that are associated with the creeks and lake shores within Cleburne. We advertised the new Trash Free Texas and AAS map as part of our 2020 socially distanced cleanup event. We've introduced the site to others and in 2021 had a new location become our first adoption. Eden Green, a new corporate partner, adopted the entire stretch of Sparks Drive where their vertical commercial green houses are located. In 2022 the workers of Johns Manville adopted their own street from the highway intersection to West Buffalo Creek. After

hosting the Great American Cleanup, Camp Fire is discussing their options to adopt a site as well. We hope to have a network of litter rangers out keeping our roads and waterways clean."

Additionally, some Trash Free Texas partners already have a link on their own webpages to the Trash Free Texas Adopt-A-Spot Map. See how the cities of [Carrollton](#) and [Fort Worth](#) use the map to help coordinate with their volunteers. The [City of Mesquite](#) is adding the Adopt-A-Spot Map to their website to aid in their February Adopt-A-Spot Sponsor Search, a campaign where they hope to get 70 parks and greenspaces adopted!

The Adopt-A-Spot map is a great way to advertise the spaces your organization has available for cleanup while still maintaining control of your litter cleanup programs. If you would like to [add cleanup locations](#) to the Adopt-A-Spot map and need additional assistance, feel free to contact [NCTCOG directly](#), view our [step-by-step guide](#), or watch the [tutorial video](#).

Trash Free Waters Project Update

It's Time to Pilot for a Trash Free Texas!



On Left: Example of a sticker/window decal from the Trash Free Texas Restaurant Program's Toolkit for Restaurants.

On Right: Example of a display sign from the Trash Free Texas Recreational Litter Cleanup Toolkit.

The Trash Free Texas team is working to pilot materials from two Trash Free Texas resources: 1) The [Recreational Litter Cleanup Toolkit](#); and, 2) The Trash Free Texas

Restaurant Program, which includes a toolkit for [communities](#) and a toolkit for [restaurants](#).

For the Recreational Litter Cleanup Toolkit, piloting would mean hosting a recreational event that includes picking up litter, such as a plogging or pladdling event. Plogging means picking up litter while jogging or walking, and pladdling means picking up litter while paddling. The materials available for piloting this toolkit include adhesive decals, signs, and cleanup bags.

Regarding the Trash Free Texas Restaurant Program, the project team has received input from the Single-Use Plastic Reduction Workgroup on the Trash Free Texas Restaurant Program's draft toolkit for communities and draft toolkit for restaurants at its last meeting on November 7, 2022. The recording of that meeting is available [here](#). Thank you to all our partners who have provided feedback and support in their development! These toolkits are still in draft stage because we intend to incorporate any needed changes that may arise during piloting. The toolkits in the Trash Free Texas Restaurant Program provide resources for restaurants and communities looking to implement win-win strategies that reduce single-use plastic consumption among local eateries while helping them save money. The strategies and templates from these toolkits are now ready for piloting by restaurants and communities and are intended as the first steps in implementing behavior change at restaurants and with takeout orders. The rewards of committing to the measures in the long-term will show in cost-savings to restaurants, appreciation and support by customers, and a reduction in trash and litter.

Entities interested in piloting can sign up [here](#). Please indicate if you would like to pilot the Restaurant Program's resources, the Recreational Litter Cleanup Toolkit or both. We will be in touch to discuss which materials you would like to receive. Thank you to those who have already responded. We appreciate your patience as we work through the details.

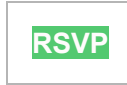
When it comes to piloting these toolkit materials, the Trash Free Texas project team is not aiming for perfection as the goal, but rather, a willingness to try and learn lessons along the way. We appreciate your willingness to try something new!

Save The Date: Upcoming Project Webinar

Join NCTCOG on March 1, 2023 at 11 a.m. for the Trash Free Texas Project Webinar via [Microsoft Teams](#). [Prior registration](#) is required. Topics to cover include:

- An overview of litter cleanup resources available to volunteers and communities
- An overview of plastic reductions efforts available for restaurants and the communities they serve
- An update on efforts to pilot Trash Free Texas materials in the region
- Information on how to participate (and hopefully, be victorious!) in the next [North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge](#) to be held in the spring of 2023. Good luck!

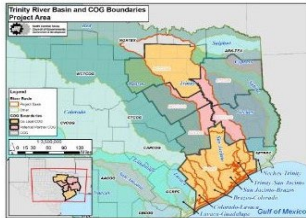
Can't make it? Join the Houston-Galveston Area's Adopt-A-Spot Webinar on February 23 at 9 a.m. Prior [registration](#) is required.



Stay Up to Date on Our Project Webpage

Trash Free Waters Project

NCTCOG has partnered with the Houston-Galveston Area Council and The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment to establish a unified, coordinated approach to litter abatement and community engagement in the six river basins in the Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston-Galveston regions.



The Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston areas represent over 50% of the state's total population and are connected through these basins, and ultimately impact Galveston Bay and adjacent areas in the Gulf of Mexico. Trash removal from these watersheds requires an ongoing, significant effort that comes with great expense to local governments and many nonprofit partners. Texas does spend millions of dollars each year to remove litter, and 80% of escaped trash ends up in our waterways. This trash debris can affect aesthetics, tourism, business, and wildlife.

[Sign-up Here for Email Updates on Trash Free Waters Project](#)

- Committees
- Events
- Materials Management
- Natural Resources
- Public Works
- Regional Building Codes
- Watershed Management
- Development Excellence
- Staff Directory
- Publications
- Mail
- Resources

Did you miss a webinar? Are you looking for more information on the project? Visit our [Trash Free Waters Project Webpage](#). The page contains information on upcoming events, training on adding spots to the Adopt-A-Spot map, and answers to frequently asked questions. The webpage also gives further details on the project's three-year goals and how the team plans to accomplish them. While you're there, catch up on past newsletters and invite friends to [subscribe](#) as well!

Got a question? We've got you covered!

Are you looking for more clarification on the Trash Free Texas project? Be sure to view our recently updated [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page! There you will find detailed information regarding adding locations to our Adopt-a-Spot map, how to best recruit volunteers, and what it means to be a Trash Free Texas Partner. Still not finding an answer to your question? Contact us directly at contact@trashfreetexas.org.

Trash Free Texas Partner Updates



Take Care of Texas Kids Art Contest

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's Take Care of Texas invites students K-5 to enter the [Kids Art Contest](#), open now until February 24. This year's theme is "water" and art should illustrate ways in which Texans can conserve water and/or preserve water quality. Texas Chemical Council will award the top six contestants with prizes - a laptop for the grand prize winner, and iPads for the runners up. The teacher whose class sends in the most entries will win an iPad or a gift card of equal value. Winners will be announced April 5. Further updates can be found via the [Take Care of Texas Email List](#). [Sign up](#) to get drawing!

Texas Plastic Pollution Symposium

**TEXAS
PLASTIC
POLLUTION
SYMPOSIUM**

Texas Plastic Pollution Symposium will be held in-person in Houston on April 5th. The purpose of this meeting is to bring scientists together to discuss plastic research being conducted in the state of Texas, and to bring awareness to plastics in the environment. This meeting consists of oral research presentations and posters, time for collaboration about new projects, and meeting new partners to fill the gap on what we do and don't know about impacts of plastics. Additional information and registration can be found

here: <https://texasplasticpollutionsymposium.com/>

Great American Cleanup Coming Soon

The [Great American Cleanup](#), hosted by [Keep America Beautiful](#), will be March 1- May 31 this year. [Supply orders](#) are open now and should be placed at least three weeks prior to the cleanup event. This annual event saw over 41,000 volunteers participate in 2022 with 200 miles of waterways cleaned. Cleanup data gathered from this event should be logged to [the North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge!](#)



KEEP AMERICA
BEAUTIFUL

EPA's "Building a Circular Economy for All: Progress Towards Transformative Change"



Under guidance from the Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery (ORCR), the EPA has focused recent efforts on building a sustainable economy, which primarily involves "reducing material use, redesigning materials to be less resource intensive, and recapturing 'waste' as a resource to manufacture new materials and products", according to their report released this fall, "[Building a Circular Economy for All: Progress Towards Transformative Change](#)". "Building a Circular Economy" highlights the progress the EPA is making towards this goal and outlines next steps towards improving recycling and reducing plastic waste.

Stay Involved This Spring

[UN's World Wildlife Day](#) is on Friday, March 3, 2023. This year's theme is "Partnerships for Wildlife Conservation". World Wildlife Day is a day set aside every year to support the cause of wildlife conservation and to protect habitat biodiversity. Visit their website or follow World Wildlife Day on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) to learn about events happening around the globe and to learn how you can protect local wildlife.

[Earth Day](#) is on Saturday, April 22, 2023. There are multiple ways to show your support and investment in the planet during the whole weekend. Earth Day's [End Plastic Pollution](#) campaign provides a wealth of resources in the fight against single-use plastic consumption. Visit the campaign page to calculate your own plastic footprint and sign petitions against plastic pollution.



Additionally, check the [Trash Free Texas Calendar](#) to find local Earth Day cleanups and other events.

Recent Legislation

Texas Bill Seeks to Prohibit Single-Use Plastic on Golf Courses

The Texas House of Representatives has introduced [House Bill 1174](#) into the 88th Legislative Session. The bill, titled "Relating to the authority of municipalities to prohibit the sale of single-use plastic water bottles at municipal golf courses", is sponsored by Rep. Donna Howard and would allow cities to prevent the sale of single-use plastic water bottles on golf courses, including within clubhouses and gift shops, if the golf course is owned by the city.

WRAP Act Aims to Reduce Wasteful Manufacturing

Washington State Representatives Liz Berry and Senator Christine Rolfes have introduced a new bill, the [Washington Recycle and Packaging Act](#). This act seeks to target manufacturers and producers of waste and would require them to fund residential recycling services for paper and packaging products across the state. The act aims to motivate companies to use more environmentally friendly methods and products in the manufacturing process.

What's Caught Our Eye

EPA Releases [Model Recycling Program Toolkit](#)

Upstream's [Indisposable Podcast Series](#)

CNBC's [How Three Companies are Cleaning Up the World's Plastic-Choked Rivers](#)

Minderoo Foundation's [The Price of Plastic Pollution: Social Costs and Corporate Liabilities](#)

Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives' (GAIA) [Zero Waste to Zero Emissions](#)

Past editions of the Trash Free Water: North Central Texas Newsletter can be found under the green newsletter bar here: www.NCTCOG.org/TrashFreeWaters

For questions or additional information on any of these items, please contact:

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