

**North Central Texas
Council of Governments**



September 2023

Trash Free Waters: North Central Texas Newsletter Final Edition

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This is the final edition of this newsletter.

NCTCOG's grant that funds the creation of this newsletter ends on September 30, 2023. However, the Trash Free Texas website, <http://www.trashfreetexas.org>, and all its resources will remain live after September 30th.

Follow Trash Free Texas on social media at @TrashFreeTexas!



North Central Texas Spotlight



All Good Things Must Come to an End

For this month's North Central Texas Spotlight, NCTCOG staff are taking time to reflect on the many different resources and outreach completed for NCTCOG's Trash Free Waters grant, which was funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Work on the grant deliverables began in the fall of 2020 and will come to an end on September 30, 2023. With the close of the project, these newsletters will also come to an end, however, the resources developed through the project will still be available on the Trash Free Texas website at www.trashfreetexas.org.

NCTCOG partnered on this grant project with the Houston-Galveston Area Council and the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at Texas State University. For the past three years, NCTCOG and its partners have focused on two main efforts. First, the project team worked to populate the [Trash Free Texas Adopt-a-Spot Map](#) with litter cleanup locations. This map provides one central location for volunteers to find and connect with those organizing litter cleanup events. Since the start of the project, 42 new communities, Keep Texas Beautiful affiliates, and other organizations have added their litter cleanup locations to the map. Further, a grand total of over 1,100 cleanup locations in Texas have been added to the map during the project. The second focus of efforts has been on the development of four toolkits to help communities engage and empower their residents and other stakeholder groups in innovative litter cleanups and litter prevention. These toolkits are listed below.

- [Community Cleanup Challenge Toolkit](#) - Contains customizable forms and templates for hosting a competition-style cleanup event.
- [Local Government Trash Reduction and Education Toolkit](#) - Summarizes information from Texas and national sources on litter campaigns, tools, funding, etc.
- [Recreational Litter Cleanup Toolkit](#) - Includes printable images and "How-to" guides for promoting and hosting "pladdling" and "plogging" events.
- [Restaurant Program Toolkit](#) - Contains printable images, fillable templates, and strategies to encourage patrons and restaurants to think about reducing their use of plastic straws and utensils.

Currently, about ten entities across the state are piloting materials and strategies from the Recreational Litter Cleanup Toolkit and the Restaurant Program Toolkit. The project team is excited to hear their results, which are expected soon.

For outreach throughout the project, the project team used various channels. Trash Free Texas social media was created on Instagram, Facebook, and X (formerly known as Twitter) at @TrashFreeTexas. Six project webinars taught over 500 participants in the Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston-Galveston regions and beyond how to use the Trash Free Texas Adopt-A-Spot Map and the toolkits. Past webinars can be found on the [NCTCOG project webpage](#) and the [H-GAC project webpage](#). Staff also had the opportunity to present information about the project at various conferences in Texas.

So, what's next for Trash Free Texas? In short, the impact of the project will still live on, just in a different capacity. The Trash Free Texas Adopt-A-Spot Map will still display cleanup sites on the Trash Free Texas website, and entities will still be able to add new cleanup spots. The toolkits will still be available for download and our social media will still be live, just updated on a less frequent basis. Interested parties will still be able to get their questions answered via email at contact@trashfreetexas.org.

Most importantly, the Trash Free Texas project team thanks you for your participation, feedback, encouragement, and interest you have provided for the last three years. YOU and the work you do in your communities are what helps keep Texas a beautiful and trash-free place to live!

Trash Free Waters Project Updates



Results from the North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge

The North Central Texas Council of Governments would like to extend a congratulations to the **City of Mansfield** as the winner of the third annual North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge and Mayors' Challenge!

Through a combination of 24 efforts like Adopt-a-Street cleanups and organized community events, the City of Mansfield logged 4,063 hours by 904 volunteers. All told, Mansfield residents cleaned up and reported 822 bags of trash and litter for an estimated 7,398 pounds during the 2023 North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge (NTCCC) contest period.

NCTCOG would like to thank the following fourteen communities for their participation in the North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge this year:

- Burleson •Carrollton •Dallas •Ennis •Frisco •Garland •Grand Prairie •Grapevine
- Mansfield •Mesquite •Plano •Princeton •Richardson •Rosser Village

The following three communities also participated in the Mayors' Challenge by having their mayors issue proclamations of support for the NTCCC:

- Burleson •Grand Prairie •Mansfield

Together, these fourteen communities cleaned up 204 individual locations across North Texas, collecting 9,924 bags of litter and trash, which is equivalent to approximately 135,079 pounds!

While Mansfield is taking home the trophies and bragging rights for 2023, the entire region has benefitted from the collective efforts of all those involved. Our local communities and environment are cleaner, healthier, and more beautiful thanks to the efforts of all those who donated their time and efforts picking up litter. Stay tuned over the coming weeks for a full wrap-up report of the 2023 North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge.

Please visit www.communitycleanupchallenge.com to learn more about the NTCCC and find out how to participate next year.

Trash Free Texas Adopt-a-Spot Map Welcomes New Partners

Trash Free Texas

Welcome to the three newest organizations that have added their litter cleanup sites to the [Trash Free Texas Adopt-A-Spot Map](#) since the last newsletter!

Adoption Spots

- Adopted
- Available
- Contact for Status

- Town of Little Elm
- Indio Management Culture Committee
- Keep Lewisville Beautiful

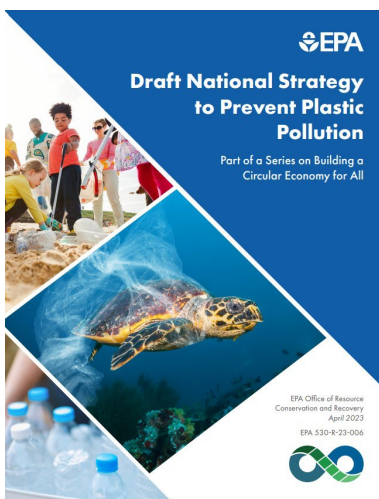
Unburying the Trash Free Texas Toolkits

TOOLKIT RESOURCES

The four toolkits created under this grant can now be found right on the [Trash Free Texas main page](#). A link to the toolkits, called "Toolkit Resources" can be found by scrolling down to about the middle of the main page.

Trash Free Texas Partner Updates

Learn About the Draft National Strategy to Prevent Plastic Pollution



The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's "Draft National Strategy to Prevent Plastic Pollution" builds upon EPA's National Recycling Strategy and focuses on actions to reduce, reuse, collect and capture plastic waste.

EPA hosted a webinar on May 11, 2023, to provide an overview of the draft strategy and answer key questions. [Access the presentation slides from this webinar \(pdf\)](#). You can find the recording of the webinar [on EPA's YouTube Channel](#).

Grant Opportunities from Keep Texas Beautiful



Keep Texas Beautiful has two grant opportunities available.

1. Our Texas Our Future Grants - Apply by September 28

Funds are available for projects that fall into various categories, including beautification, litter prevention, and waste reduction, among others.

2. Texas Recycles Day Grants - Apply by October 26

The intent of these funds is to strengthen existing recycling programs.

For more information on these grants, visit [Keep Texas Beautiful's "Grants" Webpage](#).

Stay Involved This Fall!



Keep Texas Beautiful will be hosting its Fall Sweep cleanup from September 11 - November 19, 2023. Volunteer groups will receive free cleaning supplies upon registration while supplies last. Registrants may choose any public area to clean, such as parks, watersheds, roadways, etc. Registration and supply requests are open from August 21- October 31, 2023.

Register on the [Fall Sweep website](#).

Recent Legislation

Washington State Passes Plastic Reduction Bill

The Washington State legislature passed [House Bill 1085](#) (HB 1085) during its legislative session this past spring. This bill supports plastic reduction efforts by targeting three sources: single-use plastic water bottles, plastic containers used for toiletries in hotels and other lodging establishments, and foam in dock floats and other floating water structures. HB 1085 states that any newly constructed building whose code would have previously required a drinking fountain must now also contain a water bottle filling station. Additionally, lodging establishments can no longer provide patrons with single-use health and beauty products, such as miniature shampoo and conditioner bottles in hotels. Alternatively, hotels may provide these products through bulk refillable dispensers. Lastly, the bill prohibits the sale, distribution, installation, or arrangement of structures, blocks, or floats that contain plastic foam without the proper exterior casing, as these items leak plastic into waterways when they are damaged, harming wildlife in the process. This bill was signed into law by Governor Jay Inslee on April 20, 2023.

What's Caught Our Eye

- [Stopping Plastic and Litter Along Shorelines](#) from Texan by Nature
- [How Reusables Flip the Script on Plastics](#) from Plastic Pollution Coalition
- [If You Give a Beach a Bottle](#) from PBS

Past editions of the Trash Free Waters: 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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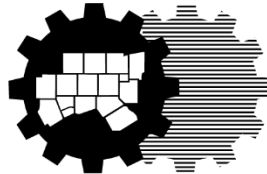
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