

**North Central Texas  
Council of Governments**



**May 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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this newsletter.**

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## North Central Texas Spotlight



*On left: A sample napkin holder insert.*

*On right: A sample window decal, both from the Trash Free Texas Restaurant Program Toolkit.*

### Available Now: Restaurant Program Toolkit

A draft of the Trash Free Texas [Restaurant Program Toolkit](#) is now posted on the Trash Free Texas website! The purpose of the toolkit is to encourage restaurant patrons to use less single-use plastic items, such as straws and utensils. The toolkit takes a holistic approach in this purpose in that it includes resources and strategies for both restaurants and communities. Efforts to reduce these items are a "win" for both groups because they save money and reduce litter in our communities. Specific resources included in the toolkit are promotional items, such as window decals, flyers, napkin inserts, and customer leave behind cards. There are also case studies and program implementation strategies. And, best of all, the toolkit is customizable to support a variety of plastic reduction goals and users may choose the tools that are most applicable to their needs. It does not matter if users are starting a new plastic reduction program or incorporating these tools into existing sustainability practices. There is something to support every community's objective. The above photos feature just some of the promotional materials available in the toolkits to help spread the word!

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## Trash Free Waters Project Updates

### Recap of the Trash Free Texas Webinar, “Empower Your Volunteers and Reach New Audiences”



The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) hosted a webinar on its Trash Free Waters grant project on Wednesday, March 1, 2023. This webinar included:

1. A brief overview of the resources developed for the Trash Free Texas website for both volunteers and communities. These resources include:

- [The Community Cleanup Challenge Toolkit](#),
- [The Local Government Trash Reduction and Education Toolkit](#), and
- [The Recreational Litter Cleanup Toolkit](#).

2. An overview of the efforts to encourage customers to use less single-use plastics at restaurants.

A video recording of the [webinar](#) is available on the [NCTCOG YouTube channel](#) and presentation slides are available for review [here](#).

Be sure to also check out the Houston-Galveston Area Council's [webinar](#) from February 23, 2023. Participants learned how the Trash Free Texas Adopt-a Spot Map and Texas Litter Database are supporting litter reduction efforts.

## North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge Going on Now!



The North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge (NTCCC) is once again underway! The 2023 Community Cleanup Challenge runs this spring from March 1, 2023, through May 31, 2023. Participating communities then have until June 30th to log their cleanup data. You can view the leaderboard to root for your hometown or learn more about the NTCCC at: [www.communitycleanupchallenge.com](http://www.communitycleanupchallenge.com).

Many thanks to the communities who have joined our cleanup challenge! An additional thank you goes to the cities of Burleson, Grand Prairie, and Mansfield who are participating in the Mayor's Challenge. These cities have issued official proclamations in support of the North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge.

### 2023 NTCCC Participating Communities

Burleson  
Carrollton  
Dallas  
Ennis  
Frisco  
Garland  
Grand Prairie

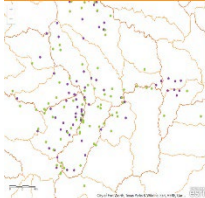
Mansfield  
Mesquite  
Plano  
Princeton  
Richardson  
Rosser Village

## Trash Free Texas Welcomes New Partners Who Added Litter Cleanup Sites to the Trash Free Texas Adopt-A-Spot Map

Welcome to the newest organizations that have added their litter cleanup sites to the Trash Free Texas Adopt-A-Spot Map since the last newsletter! They are listed below.



- Litter Accountability Group
- City of Duncanville
- NextCare Urgent Care
- Town of Shady Shores
- Neighbors of Randol Mill Park
- Universe Cleanup
- Pines and Prairies Land Trust



The [Trash Free Texas Adopt-A-Spot Map](#) is a great tool for showing volunteers the locations where cleanup is needed. If you would like to add your organization's sites, simply fill out the [Adopt-A-Spot Data Submittal Form](#), which can be found in the middle of the webpage. There is

also a brief [How-To video](#) that takes you through the process step-by step.

Need additional help? Visit the [Trash Free Texas Frequently Asked Questions page](#) or feel free to contact the Trash Free Texas team at [contact@trashfreetexas.org](mailto:contact@trashfreetexas.org) or Elena Berg at [eberg@nctcog.org](mailto:eberg@nctcog.org). We would love to see you on the website facilitating communication with your volunteers! If you have not had the opportunity to add your logo to our website, “partner up” by clicking [here](#). All Trash Free Texas partners are free to use the [Partner Resources](#) to promote the Trash Free Texas website.

### Show Your Success!

Has Trash Free Texas helped with litter prevention or reduction in your community? Have you used the Trash Free Texas Adopt-A-Spot Map to recruit volunteers or tried one of our toolkits? Did you have a great turnout at your latest cleanup event? Share your success stories with us to be featured in future newsletters! Submissions can be sent to [eberg@nctcog.org](mailto:eberg@nctcog.org) and should display the subject heading “Trash Free Texas Success”. Include any relevant photos and stories about how the project has impacted your community. We hope to hear from you soon!


## Trash Free Texas Partner Updates

**EPA’s Trash Free Waters program announces the publication of “*Where the Rubber Meets the Road: Opportunities to Address Tire Wear Particles in Waterways.*”**



EPA's Trash Free Waters Program has released “[Where the Rubber Meets the Road: Opportunities to Address Tire Wear Particles in Waterways.](#)” This report highlights the new study of tire wear particles as a pollutant. Due to the recent emergence of this type of pollution, researchers are having to establish new assessments and methodologies as they work towards solutions. To address this issue, two roundtable discussions were held with key stakeholders in Spring 2022. The report details their unique perspectives on the emergence of tire wear particles as a significant category of microplastics, including obstacles to managing the problem.

## Check Out New Trash Free Waters Webinars from EPA

 Trash Free Waters has added three webinars to its Trash Free Waters Webinar Series since last spring. [“Using Clean Water Act Programs to Reduce Trash in Waterways”](#) includes speakers from EPA’s Standards and Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Section and its Permits Section.

[“Illegal Dumping - Best Practices to Address a Complex and Persistent Problem”](#), features municipal leaders and experts in the field. Together, they answer questions about what illegal dumping is, its causes, and the challenges faced when working to eliminate and prevent this practice.

[Bioplastics - The Good, The Bad, & The Band-Aids](#) invites users to explore what bioplastics are and how they can be used.

A full list of past webinars is available on the EPA’S [Trash Free Waters Webinar page](#).

## EPA Seeks Public Feedback on Draft National Strategy to Prevent Plastic Pollution

EPA has released a [Draft National Strategy to Prevent Plastic Pollution](#), which focuses on voluntary actions that can be implemented to “eliminate the release of plastic waste from land-based sources into the environment by 2040”, according to an announcement made last month. This document is part of the EPA’s Series on Building a Circular Economy for All and builds upon the National Recycling Strategy.

EPA is seeking feedback on the report and will host a webinar providing an overview of the draft strategy and feedback instructions on **Thursday, May 11 at 12pm (CST)**. Register [here](#).

## Trinity Coalition Volunteer Day- May 13

[Trinity Coalition](#) will be hosting their monthly [Volunteer Day](#) on Saturday, May 13 from 10 am- 12:30 pm. Help restore the Ned and Genie Fritz Texas Buckeye Trail at Blair Park (6915 Bexar St., Dallas, Texas 75215). Volunteers will be removing the invasive Chinese Privet plant from the trail and assisting in litter clean-up. Interested parties can register [online](#) or email [Kristi@TrinityCoalition.org](mailto:Kristi@TrinityCoalition.org) for additional information. Volunteer Day takes place the second Saturday of each month but will take a break during the summer months to avoid the heat.



## Registration Open Now for the Keep Texas Beautiful Conference

[Keep Texas Beautiful](#) will host its 56th annual [Keep Texas Beautiful Conference](#) at the Galleria Westin, from June 26-28 in Houston, TX. The three-day event will showcase 21 educational sessions, exhibitors, and various other activities. Participants are invited to get out of the conference hall by joining a field trip to engage further in topics related to environmental stewardship through hands-on observation and experience. The Annual Governor's Community Achievement Awards Reception and Dinner will take place on the final night of the conference and celebrates excellence in communities across the state.

Standard [registration](#) is open from now until June 21 and is priced at \$500 for the whole event. Single-day registration is also available. Keep Texas Beautiful has reserved a block of rooms at the [Galleria Westin](#) for conference attendees.

## Great American Cleanup Happening Now

The 25th annual Great American Cleanup, hosted by Keep America Beautiful, is going on now until June 22. In 2022, this annual event saw volunteers from an estimated 20,000 communities clean millions of pounds litter on over 160,000 acres of public land across the country. Find a [Keep Texas Beautiful affiliate](#) to get involved in this cleanup effort. [Free cleanup kits](#) are available for volunteers while supplies last and include a litter picker, work gloves, trash can liners, a scale, and reflective vest.



## Stay Involved This Summer



[Plastic Free July](#), by Plastic Free Foundation, will take place this year from July 1-31. [Join the challenge](#) and eliminate plastic waste all month long. Unsure where to start? The [Plastic Free July Quiz](#) can show you where your plastic waste is the highest and offer helpful solutions. If you are a community or restaurant looking to participate in Plastic Free July, the Trash Free Texas [Restaurant Program Toolkit](#) offers a wealth of resources to get started. Looking for additional ideas to implement Plastic Free July in your community? Visit the [What Others Do](#) page to see how local governments have handled the challenge in the past.

## Sustainable Summer Reading Opportunities

Looking to keep kids engaged in reading this summer? This reading list by HuffPost features [25 books that teach kids about the environment](#). The books cover topics on water conservation, upcycling, wildlife, composting, and more through engaging storytelling and colorful pictures. The books support a variety of age groups and reading

levels. Interested readers can purchase the books online or check them out at their local library!

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## Recent Legislation

### Protecting Communities from Plastics Act

The US Senate Bill 5163, [Protecting Communities from Plastics Act](#), is sponsored by US Senators Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Jeffrey Merkley (D-OR), along with US Representatives Jared Huffman (D-CA-2nd) and Alan Lowenthal (D-CA-47th). This piece of legislation was filed in December 2022 and hopes to address pollution caused specifically by plastic production. A [press release](#) from Booker's office states that plastic production and consumption is projected to double by 2033 and cites petrochemical, plastic production, and waste incineration facilities as causes of water and air pollution. This, in turn, creates dire health impacts for nearby residents, which Booker states are typically low-income or racial minority communities. The bill aims to create national targets for plastic source reduction and reuse in food service sectors, while enacting stricter rules for petrochemical production plants. It would prevent the inclusion of chemical recycling as a national recycling strategy and would focus instead on reducing plastic production. This bill builds on previous provisions from the [Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act](#).

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## What's Caught Our Eye

- [Reuse Gains Momentum in the States](#)- Frontiers on Sustainability
  - [Bringing Reusable Foodware to Four U.S. Cities](#)- Page 1 of "The Flow" Newsletter
  - [Reduction and Prevention of Trash in Texas](#)- Page 7 of "The Flow" Newsletter
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Past editions of the Trash Free Water: North Central Texas Newsletter can be found under the green newsletter bar here:

[www.NCTCOG.org/TrashFreeWaters](http://www.NCTCOG.org/TrashFreeWaters)

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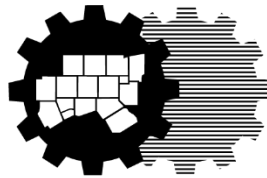
For questions or additional information on any of these items, please contact:

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