



Litter Facts

www.donttrashaz.com

It costs our region about \$3,000,000 and nearly 150,000 labor hours each year to pick up trash along Valley freeways.

ADOT crews pick up an average 12,647 bags of litter from Valley freeways each month, or about 151,000 bags per year.

Each bag of trash weighs an average 10.635 lbs., representing 134,501 pounds (67.25 tons) a month, or about 1.6 million pounds of trash (798 tons) per year.

Litter found on freeways includes food cartons, Styrofoam cups, napkins, plastic utensils, snack-food wrappers, matches, soft drink bottles and cans, paper bags, tissues, plastic sheets, film, boxes, clothes, newspapers, magazines, metal foil, anti-freeze and motor oil containers, grease, paint thinner, tires and much, much more.

Keep America Beautiful cites seven primary sources of litter:

1. Trucks with uncovered or unsecured loads on local roads and highways.
2. Pedestrians or cyclists who do not use the receptacles.
3. Motorists who do not use car ashtrays or litterbags.
4. Business dumpsters that are improperly covered.
5. Loading docks and commercial or recreational marinas with inadequate waste receptacles.
6. Construction and demolition sites without tarps and receptacles to contain debris and waste.
7. Household trash scattered before or during collection.

Littering is not only unsightly, it can cause environmental and health problems. Cigarette butts, for example, contain toxic chemicals that can end up in storm drains and contaminate our water systems. Trash and other items falling from unsecured loads can cause serious traffic accidents.

Debris on roadways nationwide causes 25,000 accidents each year and more than 80 fatalities. Between 1999 and 2001, Arizona reported 5 fatal accidents due to road debris. Accidents and slow-downs due to road debris also cause delays and increase the time we spend stuck in traffic.

Littering can cost drivers and their passengers a misdemeanor fine of \$500 in the state of Arizona.

ADOT has more than 2,000 Adopt a Highway volunteers and sponsors helping litter cleanup efforts statewide.

If you witness someone littering, you can call the litter hotline at 1-877-3LITTER (354-8837)