

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Stephanie Larson, Program Coordinator  
Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful  
Tel: (724) 836-4121 x113  
Email: [slarson@keeppabeautiful.org](mailto:slarson@keeppabeautiful.org)  
Web site: [www.keeppabeautiful.org](http://www.keeppabeautiful.org)



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## Is there Litter in Your Neighborhood?

(October 20, 2020) Litter affects the health and safety of humans and wildlife, is visually unappealing and sends a message that no one cares. Once it reaches our waterways, it transports chemical pollutants, threatens aquatic life, and interferes with river, marine and coastal environments. Litter also carries an economic impact.

According to Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's 2019 study, [The Cost of Littering and Illegal Dumping in Pennsylvania](#), just nine cities in Pennsylvania spend \$68 million annually on cleanup, education, enforcement and prevention efforts to address litter and illegal dumping. In addition, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation spent over \$65 million removing litter from within highway rights-of-way between 2014 and 2018.

Much of the costs associated with cleaning up litter falls to the local municipality. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's Adoption Program helps mitigate those costs by providing residents the tools and resources needed to be stewards of their communities. The program is available statewide for municipal roads, parks, neighborhood blocks, greenways, waterways and trails. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful provides a sign recognizing the volunteers' efforts and seeks the support of the local municipalities to provide the sign post, install the sign and provide trash disposal options as needed.

A pre-pandemic [statewide study on litter](#), conducted by the PA Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Transportation and Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful estimates 502 million pieces of litter on Pennsylvania roadways, most of it cigarette butts and plastic items. To that, we can now add littered masks and gloves. Among other things, this litter pollutes our environment and affects our quality of life. Individuals, civic groups, families, scouts and students can be part of the solution by adopting and caring for a local road or area.

"We are all tired of seeing litter. When we take the initiative to pick up litter in our neighborhoods we see an immediate improvement. It not only helps prevent litter from reaching our waterways, but sends a strong message that littering will not be tolerated. The benefits of removing roadside litter are broad. It removes dangers to people, animals and maintenance equipment, makes our communities more attractive for residents, tourists and potential newcomers and increases property values and community pride. It really benefits everyone," said Shannon Reiter, President of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful.

Until the threat of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID 19) passes, the group suggests doing a cleanup either solo or with household family members and encourages adhering to the

recommendations for social distancing. All that is needed is a trash bag, gloves and bright colored clothing, if you are cleaning up near a roadway.

For more information about adopting a municipal road, park, neighborhood block, greenway, waterway or trail, visit [Keppabeautiful.org](http://Keppabeautiful.org) and choose Keep It or contact Stephanie Larson at [slarson@keppabeautiful.org](mailto:slarson@keppabeautiful.org) or 877.772.3673 x104. For information about adopting a state maintained road, visit the PA Department of Transportation at [www.penndot.gov](http://www.penndot.gov) and search Adopt-a-Highway.

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### **About Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful**

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's vision is a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Since 1990, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has worked with hundreds of thousands of volunteers across the state to pick up nearly 147 million pounds of trash from Pennsylvania's roadways, waterways, greenways, vacant lots, forestlands and other community spaces. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's core programming focuses on litter and illegal dump prevention, cleanup, community greening, and proper waste handling and sustainable practices. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful works with many partnering organizations on the state and grassroots level to accomplish our goal of a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is the state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, Inc., the nation's largest volunteer-based community action and education organization. To learn more about Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, visit [www.keppabeautiful.org](http://www.keppabeautiful.org).