

**2024**  
**North Carolina Interagency Report**

**Litter Cleanup, Education-Prevention and  
Enforcement**

**2024 Calendar Year**

**February 28, 2025**

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## **Litter Report 2024**

This report is prepared pursuant to Session Law 2006-79, Section 15 G.S. 147-12 (b) and provides information describing North Carolina's 2024 litter prevention initiatives.

The state's 2024 litter prevention campaign had three components:

- Litter cleanup
- Education - prevention
- Enforcement

Information contained in this report is for the calendar year 2024 unless otherwise noted. This interagency report was prepared by NCDOT with multiple agencies providing reporting year information. A list of these agencies and litter report contacts is provided in Appendix A of this report.

## Executive Summary

The North Carolina Department of Transportation's (NCDOT) total state highway system is comprised of approximately 80,000 road miles.

In 2024 NCDOT enhanced its public education program related to Anti-Litter messages with new social media posts and press releases. NCDOT developed seventy-five PSAs to help educate and encourage NC residents to not litter, secure their loads and work together to keep NC clean.

In 2024, NCDOT spent \$25,801,343 removing litter from state routes. Costs for DOT Contract Forces and Adopt-A-Highway Program increased from 2023.

NCDOT Contract Forces picked up 8,846,415 pounds of litter in 2024. The Adopt-A-Highway (AAH) program continued to make a difference as the volunteers reported picking up 1,053,495 pounds of litter during 2024. The Sponsor-A-Highway (SAH) program recovered 937,515 pounds of litter. NCDOT Forces picked up 1,663,845 pounds of litter. Other volunteers who picked up litter on NC roadways reported picking up 154,890 pounds in 2024. Efforts from all programs totaled 12,656,160 pounds of litter being collected.

Statewide litter prevention continued to be collectively supported by NCDOT, its Litter Management Programs, North Carolina Department of Public Safety (NCDPS), North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NCDEQ) and the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission. NCDOT promoted litter prevention by supplying information through North Carolina Welcome Centers and social media sites, as well as providing litter prevention promotional items to numerous local organizations and schools.

The North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts provides a 2024 recap of statewide littering charges by offense code and by law enforcement agency. There were 2,734 charges and 787 convictions in 2024. As in previous years, the Conference of Chief District Court Judges continued to provide an alternative to first-time offenders charged with littering of less than 15 pounds. On execution of written waiver of appearance and trial, and plea of guilty/responsible, an offender may have the court appearance waived. The fine for intentional littering is \$250 plus costs and \$50 plus costs for unintentional littering. This was adopted by the Conference of Chief District Court Judges on October 9, 2024, pursuant to N.C.G.S. 7A-148, and applies to any new offenses on or after December 1, 2024.

## **1.0 Statewide Roadside Litter Cleanup**

### **1.1 North Carolina Department of Transportation**

North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), hereinafter also referred to as the department, maintains a Litter Management program to address litter along State roadways. In 2024, NCDOT coordinated and implemented its various litter cleanup programs including: Adopt-A-Highway (AAH), Sponsor-A-Highway (SAH), Contract Litter Removal (CLR) contracts, NCDOT Forces litter and bag removal. Additionally, the bi-annual Litter Sweeps were held in April and September 2024.

NCDOT Roadside Environmental has designated Litter Managers in each of the fourteen (14) NCDOT divisions to coordinate efforts for litter abatement programs.

NCDOT's Litter Management database has continued to make reporting litter pickups easier and accessible for all groups.

NCDOT's Litter Sweeps are typically held in the last two weeks of April and September. The department provides volunteers with gloves, safety vests and bags for use in roadside litter removal. The department also provides additional manpower during Litter Sweeps for litter cleanup, removal and immediate disposal of bags filled with trash from NCDOT roadsides.

NCDOT continues to build its relationships with statewide nonprofit organizations to promote litter prevention for safe, environmentally sound, and aesthetic roadways. The nonprofit organizations involved include Keep North Carolina Beautiful, Inc. (KNCB) and the North Carolina Solid Waste Enforcement Officers Association. The department also worked with the volunteers in the AAH program and other citizen volunteers and industries as well as Community Service Work Program (CSWP); State Highway Patrol; and local governments. In addition, the department's private, public, partnership initiative, the SAH Program continued to expand. This program provides a means for businesses, individuals and other organizations to sponsor roadside litter removal.

### **1.2 NCDOT Adopt-A-Highway Program**

NCDOT's Litter Management office administers the department's AAH program. This statewide program is a mutually beneficial partnership between the department and community volunteers. The volunteers participating in the AAH program include businesses, individuals, schools, civic organizations and professional, religious and social groups. Participants agree to support local roadside litter removal by adopting a two-mile stretch of roadway and volunteering their time to pick up the litter at least four times a year. The AAH agreement is for a four-year period. In return, the department provides gloves, safety vests and bags for cleanups and recognizes each group by installing a sign with the group's name at each end of its adopted roadway. Upon reaching 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 and 35 year milestones, recognition awards along with anniversary stars to be placed on their signs, are given to the volunteer groups. Some AAH volunteer groups were also recognized by the department via social media in 2024.

In 2024, the AAH Program cost \$704,814. Program costs include administration, sign installation, provisions, etc. There were 7,725 man-hours charged to this program.

The State Litter Management Program Outreach Coordinator utilized the assistance of Division Litter Managers and various program coordinators and co-coordinators throughout all 14 divisions. The coordinators manage the adoption and signage approval processes and other program administrative responsibilities within their assigned counties.

At the close of 2024, there were 9,488 road miles adopted by 4,900 AAH groups. The volunteer cleanup efforts of the AAH program saved the state's taxpayers millions of dollars. Volunteers reported working 110,388 hours and picked up 1,053,495 pounds of litter.

Other Volunteers, who do not have an AAH contract, reported picking up 154,890 lbs. during 2024.

### **1.3 NCDOT Sponsor-A-Highway Program**

NCDOT's Sponsor-A-Highway (SAH) Program was initiated in 2011 as a public-private partnership. Beginning as a pilot, it covered 22 counties. In 2015, the program expanded statewide covering all NC interstate highways. In 2017, the program stretched beyond interstates. The SAH Program provides a means for businesses, individuals and other organizations to participate in beautifying and environmentally enhancing North Carolina roadways while having the advantage of advertising their company name at the same time. The first individual to sponsor a highway segment was in 2022 and in memoriam of someone.

This public private partnership is pursuant to North Carolina Section 3. General Statute 136-28.1 (I). Per the terms of the program, a service provider's responsibilities include marketing, securing sponsors, sign installation and maintenance, and litter removal and disposal using their own crews. The sponsors, who hire the department's approved service providers for highway litter removal, receive a logo acknowledgement panel that's attached to the SAH program sign. The signs are installed at the beginning of each sponsored one-mile segment.

There are two service providers who have contracted with NCDOT. They are Adopt A Highway Maintenance Corporation of Costa Mesa, California, and Adopt-A-Highway Litter Removal Service of America, Inc., of Encinitas, California. Both companies have a long history in the roadside litter removal industry, and use their own staff, cleaning supplies, and vehicles. Their employees are trained to work on interstates and other high traffic volume roadways.

The cost for sponsors participating in the program is negotiated solely between sponsor and service provider. There is no money exchanged between NCDOT and the service providers. At the close of 2024, SAH service providers maintained 1369 sponsored one-mile segments. Some sponsors have multiple segments. Each segment is cleaned monthly. SAH service providers recovered 937,515 pounds of litter from NC roadways in 2024.

## **1.4 NCDOT Contract Litter Management**

At the close of 2024, a total of 8,846,415 pounds of litter was collected over a span of 190,207 shoulder miles by litter and mowing/litter combined contracts at a cost of \$20,310,723. NCDOT Roadside Environmental Litter Managers in NCDOT's 14 divisions oversee multiple litter and debris removal contracts that support litter collection efforts statewide. In 2024, contractors contributed to NCDOT's Contract Litter Removal (CLR) efforts. The contract types include, but are not limited to, litter only, mowing & litter removal, corridor only, on-call and large debris removal contracts. The success of NCDOT Contract Forces continues to be dependent on the outstanding efforts put forth by NCDOT Roadside Environmental staff and the department's litter removal contractor partners.

## **1.5 NCDPS Road Squads/ Litter Crews**

Per the Appropriations Act of 2017 (SB 257), after the issuance of a request for information (RFI) and receipt of bids by the Department of Transportation for litter pickup on State highways and roads, the Department of Transportation shall first offer the contract to the Division of Adult Correction upon the same terms and conditions as the most favorable bid received by the Department of Transportation from a suitable contractor. The Division of Adult Correction shall have 30 days to accept or decline the offered contract.

In 2022, Correction Enterprises began to pick up litter for the NC Department of Transportation in Division 8. The two Departments continue to look for other opportunities for DPS crews to assist in litter pick up across the state.

The Minimum Custody Road Squads are utilized within DOT crews at the discretion of County Maintenance Engineers. In 2024, NCDOT used Minimum Custody Road Squads for a total of 173 man-days at a cost of \$1/day. Minimum Custody Road Squads picked up litter along 1,933 road miles for a total cost of \$173.00.

## **1.6 Community Service Work Program – Litter Control Efforts**

The Community Service Work Program (CSWP) was established as a grant funded initiative in the early 1980's. During 1983, it was established as a program through the Safe Roads Act. Effective January 2002, CSWP was transferred from the Department of Crime Control and Public Safety to the Department of Correction, Division of Community Corrections through legislative action.

As of January 1, 2012, CSWP is now a part of the NC Department of Adult Corrections, Division of Community Supervision. CSWP is a separate program from the inmate work crews. Offenders in CSWP are not incarcerated, but are ordered to perform community service work hours, as a condition of either supervised or unsupervised probation, depending upon the criminal offense committed and the offender's history.

Community Supervision judicial services coordinators place offenders at government or non-profit agencies, within the local community, to perform work needed by the agency. During 2024, there were more than 1,200 agencies statewide which participated in the CSWP by contracting as worksites for placement of community service offenders.

Offenders perform a variety of work, including general labor, skilled labor, clerical labor, professional labor and litter removal. The value of the various types of labor is calculated upon the North Carolina Department of Labor categories and relative market value minimum payment rates. Many of these agencies focus on litter control regularly and also participate in the NCDOT Litter Sweeps. Table 1-1 below summarizes CSWP litter pickup results by year.

**Table 1-1 CSWP Litter Pickup Results by Year**

Year	Pounds Collected	Number of Hours Worked
2024	686,919	38,162
2023	713,106	39,617
2022	707,191	39,288
2021	692,395	38,466
2020	666,530	37,029

**1.7 NCDOT Litter Removal Disbursements Summary**

Table 1-2 below summarizes NCDOT disbursements for litter removal by year.

**Table 1-2. NCDOT Disbursements for Litter Removal by Year**

NCDOT Disbursement by Year					
Program	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
NCDOT Employees	\$4,785,632	\$5,326,668	\$5,008,896	\$6,604,912	\$7,048,064
AAH	\$704,814	\$595,113	\$538,953	\$619,241	\$312,098
NCDPS (Minimum Custody Road Squads)	\$173	\$442	\$452	\$82	\$139
Contract Litter Removal	\$20,310,723	\$19,334,950	\$16,748,565	\$11,839,580	\$3,820,017
Total Disbursement by Year:	\$25,801,343	\$25,257,173	\$22,296,866	\$19,063,815	\$11,180,318



## 1.8 North Carolina Department of Natural & Cultural Resources

### 1.8.1 Division of Parks and Recreation

The Division of Parks and Recreation hosts litter cleanup events and educational programs to demonstrate the importance of litter abatement and recycling. The division reported 1,143 bags of litter collected in 2024.

## 1.9 Other Statewide Litter Cleanups

### 1.9.1 Keep America Beautiful Affiliates

Affiliates of Keep America Beautiful participate throughout NC to help beautify the environment. Collecting litter is one of the many ways they participate. Listed below are agencies who reported efforts for 2024.

- **Keep Charlotte Beautiful** had 468 active Adopt a Street groups and 21 Adopt a Bus Stop groups. There were 5,252 bags of litter removed and 10,806 hours of volunteer work in 2024.
- **Keep Durham Beautiful** reported having 4,713 volunteers who worked together to impact the Durham community. There were 9,413 hours served to prevent litter, reduce waste and green the community. A total of 59,069 pounds of litter and 212 tires were removed from Durham's streets, waterways and parks. KDB hosted 460 events to prevent litter, reduce waste and green the community.
- **Keep Gastonia Beautiful (KGB)** collected 4,954 pounds of litter during their Great American Cleanup that ran from March 20 to June 20, 2024. Waterway cleanups resulted in a total of 850 pounds of debris being collected and 987.5 pounds from adopt a street efforts totaling 6,791.50 pounds collected for 2024. KGB also had a paid contractor for pickups prior to mowing and for spot cleanups. This group collected 2,920 bags of trash.
- **City of High Point/Keep High Point Beautiful** reported having a total of 12,412 pounds of trash and recycling collected.
- **Keep America Beautiful of Nash & Edgecombe Counties** had 540 volunteers who worked 2,160 hours and collected 420 bags (12,600 lbs) of litter in 2024.
- **Keep Rutherford Beautiful** collected a total of 7,576 pounds of litter.

- **Keep Ashe Beautiful** had 387 volunteers who worked 1,646 hours and collected and disposed of 42,050 pounds of litter. They recycled 1,432 pounds of aluminum cans, cardboard and plastics and 97 tires. Tons of storm debris due to Hurricane Helene could not be quantified. A few pictures were provided as cleanup continues.



- **Keep Warren County Beautiful's** board is currently in an inactive state. However, The Warren County Board of Elections works with NCDOT to distribute bags, gloves and pickup sticks to various county agencies that are easily accessible to residents as many churches and local citizens maintain roads in their communities. The lake area serves a lot of retirees that regularly pick up trash along major roads. The local newspaper helps to keep the "Keep Warren County Beautiful" message in the news. In addition, the county commissioners have made budgetary appropriations that allow contract labor in some of the worst communities. Approximately 800 to 1,000 bags are distributed locally on an annual basis.
- **Keep Wilkes Beautiful** stated their Enforcement Officer brought in 92,460 pounds of trash from dumpsites across the county in 2024. Their Roadside Litter Project brought in 7,339 pounds of trash from secondary roadways throughout Wilkes County in 2024.

## 2.0 Anti-Litter Education/Prevention

### 2.1 Department of Environmental Quality

#### 2.1.1 Division of Environmental Assistance and Customer Service (DEACS)

The Division of Environmental Assistance and Customer Service conducts two campaigns designed to reinforce recycling behavior and to encourage North Carolinians to properly manage their discarded materials at home, work, school and on-the-go. These programs are described briefly below:

#### **Recycle Guys**

The Recycle Guys campaign is intended to reach elementary and middle school children with videos, activity books, stickers, pencils, temporary tattoos and other promotional materials to encourage recycling behavior. Of the most used Recycle Guys videos, one specifically addressing litter (developed through a partnership with DOT) is consistently among the highest accessed links on the [www.recycleguys.org](http://www.recycleguys.org) website.

## Recycle Right NC



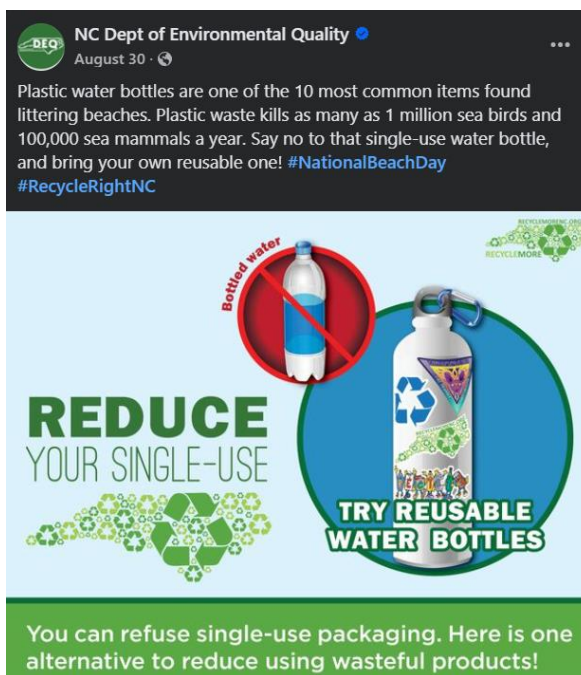
In 2024, DEACS continued the promotion and use of *Recycle Right NC*, a statewide anti-contamination campaign to increase and improve the quality of recycling. The campaign makes available free outreach toolkits for local governments to customize and distribute to their residents.

*Recycle Right NC* campaign materials can be accessed through the campaign website: <http://www.recycleright.nc.gov>.

The following provides a description of the activities of DEACS' outreach programs in 2024:

- Coordination with DEQ's communications team to promote messaging about proper recycling and litter reduction on NCDEQ Facebook, Twitter (X), and Instagram accounts.
- Posted NC DEQ anti-litter messaging to the NC DEQ social media accounts and promoted opportunities to clean up litter, like celebrating Clean Beaches Week.
- Assisted promotion of the NC DOT Statewide Litter Sweep opportunities on the [NC DEQ Outreach and Education webpage](#).
- Production of promotion materials distributed directly to the public or through local government recycling programs.
- Training of recycling and solid waste staff and environmental educators on recycling and outreach methods.
- Encouragement of Away-From-Home recycling best practices that include proper trash and recycling bin selection and siting to reduce contamination and litter issues.
- Funding multiple local government grant projects to create and improve infrastructure for away-from-home recycling, including for the Town of Davidson and Town of Apex. Grants will help fund both permanent and event away-from-home recycling access.

Continued Focus on Recycling Education in 2024:



During 2024, the NC DEACS Recycling Office provided graphic support and technical assistance to promote proper recycling with a specific focus on materials that do not belong in the recycling bin. More than 19 local governments received graphic design support from DEACS in 2024. Specific focus areas include:

- DEACS provides graphic design support for local governments seeking to educate their citizens about proper management of plastic bags, which incorporate the “no plastic bags in recycling” and “return to retail” message.
- DEACS has outreach materials focusing on items that are considered contaminants in the recycling process that should not be placed in recycling bins. Outreach focuses on plastic bags and other common problematic materials: scrap metal; textiles; cords, hoses and strings that could tangle equipment; food waste; and hazardous or medical waste. Messaging includes instruction on proper disposal methods to discourage releases into the environment. DEACS offers posters, signs, and social media toolkits which are all available for any North Carolina government, agency, business, or resident to use.

#### Other Participation from DEACS on Littering Issues in 2024:

- DEACS provides ongoing support for local chapters of Keep NC Beautiful in their recycling education, away-from-home recycling and litter prevention efforts.
- DEACS collaborates with the NC Solid Waste Enforcement Officers Association (NC SWEOA) to encourage proper materials management and expand recycling programs and community efforts to reduce illegal dumping.
- DEACS collaborates with the NC Marine Debris Symposium to support the organization's annual conference to educate, inform, and provide action on ways to eliminate and reduce marine litter in our environment.
- DEACS presented at the 2024 NC SWEOA and the 2024 NC SWANA Fall conferences in September and October on statewide recycling data, trends and market prices.



- DEACS organized three meetings of the NC Circular Economy Council (NC CEC), which is made up of organizations and industries involved in the recycling sector, to consider ways to expand and strengthen the state's circular economy infrastructure.
- DEACS functions as the Department of Environmental Quality's customer service center and handled numerous inquiries in 2024 on littering and illegal dumping issues.
- DEACS also oversees the state of North Carolina's recycling efforts, which includes technical assistance to local government recycling programs across the state. Through regular communication in email newsletters, workshops, conference sessions and other settings.

DEACS staff provided information to communities about littering issues, opportunities for anti-litter initiatives (such as the tarp program) and the management of illegal dumping.

## **2.2 North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission**

North Carolina Wildlife Law Enforcement Officers often come across numerous littering violations while out on patrols in the performance of their duties. They often set up patrol details targeting littering along waterways, boating and fishing access areas and game lands. Officers address littering violations on NC Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) managed property, state highways, state waterways, private property and public property.

## **2.3 NCDOT – Litter Management Programs**

In 2024, NCDOT's Litter Management Programs promoted litter prevention awareness through its website. Each year, Keep Gastonia Beautiful Inc., of Gastonia provides access to their Beautification and Environmental Education Programs. Their entire curriculum is posted on a website which allows an easy download for classroom usage. The link is carried on NCDOT's Litter Management website.

Other items available through NCDOT's Litter Management website include previous Litter Reports, the litter law, Swat-A-Litterbug, AAH and SAH Program information and Litter Sweep details including related forms. In addition, the cleanup safety videos are provided. A *Litter Activity Book* with litter prevention lessons and activities for students through third grade is available to print. There are also a variety of links to other sites supporting litter prevention.

Anti-litter characters Ava and Oliver, encourage actions to create a healthy, clean environment. Linnie, the Litter Bug, is not such a good role model. These characters are displayed on bookmarks, stickers and activity/color sheets. Wooden rulers are available with the message,

“Measure Up! Don't Litter” or “Clean Water Rules” along with NCDOT's Highway Stormwater Program logo. “Do Not Litter” messages are included on promotional items for older students, as well.

NCDOT's Litter Management programs also distributed thousands of car litter bags and other litter prevention handouts, fliers and brochures through Visitor and Welcome Centers, Earth Day events and upon request, to numerous groups. The car litter bag's graphics promote the message that littering is illegal. NCDOT Litter Management's website offers an option to order teacher kits online.



**NCDOT Anti-Litter Messages:** In 2024 NCDOT continued promoting its public education programs related to Anti-Litter messages with social media posts and press releases. There were 75 posts throughout 2024. These communications help educate and encourage NC residents to not litter, secure their loads, and work together to keep NC clean.

A social media toolkit for the biannual Litter Sweep was also created to help inspire NC residents to post their own Anti-Litter social media content and to encourage them to share their efforts to help keep NC clean.

**Adopt-A-Highway Program:** The AAH program began its 36th year of operation in 2024. Each year the AAH groups are recognized for their consecutive years of service beginning with 10-years and at years 15, 20, 25, 30 and 35. In 2024, 388 AAH groups, 74 of those being 35 year participants, received awards for their years of volunteer service to the program. Additionally, NCDOT recognized some AAH groups via social media.

**Other Litter Prevention Initiatives, Meetings, and Presentations:** The Litter Management office continued to promote the use of NCDOT trash bags. The bags are orange on the outside and reversible to blue on the inside for items to be recycled. The bag also has a draw string for safe and easy closure. The bags display the NCDOT logo and a "Do Not Litter" message. These bags are available at NCDOT maintenance yards for volunteers and are available for AAH coordinators to order as needed.

**Swat-A-Litterbug Program:** This program is administered by the Litter Management office in conjunction with the State Highway Patrol and is intended to educate motorists that littering is illegal. Motorists are utilizing the Swat-A-Litterbug phone application that was developed in 2021 which enables the public to report litterers from their mobile phones. Additionally, motorists observed littering can be reported through the mail, by calling toll free 1-800-331-5864, or using the Swat-A-Litterbug online reporting mechanism on NCDOT's Litter Management website.

Reports include information regarding the offender's vehicle license plate number, time of observance, date, street, city, county and a description of the littering offense observed. The cards include the Swat-A-Litterbug logo.

When reports are received, a letter is mailed to the registered owner of the vehicle reported. The recipient is informed of the littering offense observed, that littering is illegal and that it's a fineable offense upon conviction. There are no citations or warnings issued from these reports. The program is totally anonymous, and no record is kept regarding who submits a report or receives a letter. Close to 5,000 Swat-A-Litterbug letters were mailed in 2024.

NCDOT receives many complaints via online and by phone stating trash collection trucks are not secured and litter is landing on the roadsides. Litter Management office personnel contact

these trash collection companies directly to discuss the complaints and to remind trash collection companies to secure their loads.

**Litter License Plate:** The NC General Assembly approved the "Litter Prevention" specialty license plate in 2001. Ten dollars of each plate renewed is diverted to the "Litter Prevention Fund" on a quarterly basis. The funds are used to help support statewide anti-litter efforts.

## 2.4 NCDOT – Litter Related Signage

NCDOT has "Keep NC Clean & Green" litter prevention signs posted along state roadways and at various Rest Areas and Welcome Centers. In addition to the "Keep NC Clean & Green" signs, there are "Littering Is Illegal" signs posted across the state.

## 3.0 Litter Law Enforcement

### 3.1 North Carolina Department of Public Safety

In 2024, the NC State Highway Patrol issued 652 citations for littering (G.S. 14-399 and local ordinances) and 494 citations for failing to properly secure a load (G.S. 20-116 (g)), for a total of 1,146 citations. The State Highway Patrol also partnered with NCDOT by participating in the Spring 2024 Litter Sweep and focused on citing motorists that either littered or failed to properly secure and/or cover their loads. Troopers issued 17 litter and 12 load securement citations during the Spring 2024 Litter Sweep. The State Highway Patrol units again partnered with NCDOT by participating in the Fall 2024 Litter Sweep and focused on citing motorists that either littered or failed to properly secure and/or cover their loads. Troopers issued 11 litter and 20 load securement citations during the Fall 2024 Litter Sweep. In addition, various State Highway Patrol units partnered with local businesses around the state in Litter Sweeps on highways, at businesses and at schools using supplies provided by NCDOT. State Highway Patrol citations for past years are shown in the tables below.

**Table 3-1. State Highway Patrol Recap of Litter Charges**

Year	Number of Litter Charges
2023	357
2022	413
2021	429
2020	None reported
2019	481

**Table 3-2. State Highway Patrol Recap of Improper Loading/Covering of Vehicle**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of Charges</b>
2023	703
2022	629
2021	662
2020	None reported
2019	743

### **3.2 NCDNCR, Division of Parks and Recreation**

DNCR, Division of Parks and Recreation hosts litter clean up events and educational programs to demonstrate the importance of litter abatement and recycling. In addition to these educational measures, state park rangers issued 15 littering citations in 2024.

### **3.3 NCDEQ, Division of Marine Fisheries – Marine Patrol**

From January through December 31, 2024, Marine Patrol officers issued 8 citations and 1 warning for littering violations. Marine Patrol officers attributed 434 hours to this effort.

Below is a table comparing 2024 to previous years. 2018 through 2023.

**Table 3-3. Marine Patrol Citation Recap**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Littering Citations</b>	<b>Littering Warnings</b>	<b>Time Spent (hours)</b>
2024	8	1	434
2023	2	2	393
2022	3	1	289
2021	4	0	314
2020	6	2	334
2019	5	5	300
2018	3	0	240



## **3.4 North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission**

### **3.4.1 2024 Littering Report for NC Wildlife Resources Commission**

North Carolina Wildlife Enforcement Officers often come across numerous littering violations while out on patrols in the performance of their duties. They often set up patrol details targeting littering along waterways, boating and fishing access areas and game lands. Officers often address littering violations on NC Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) managed property, state highways, state waterways, private property and public property.

In 2024, under NCGS 14-399, 187 citations were issued. Possible fines for all citations issued is a total of \$46,750. Possible court cost for all citations issued is a total of \$33,660.

NOTE: Fines and cost are either paid prior to the court date or are assigned by the District Court Judge.

The Land and Water Access Division combined efforts in litter cleanup. The Land and Water Access Division spends countless hours maintaining boating and fishing access areas along with game lands. Within their time maintaining these areas they are picking up litter and emptying trash receptacles that are located on these areas. With 251 boating access areas, 222 public fishing access areas, 536,560 owned state game lands and over 2 million acres of managed game land areas, the NCWRC has installed signage for these areas that deal with littering and how it impacts the environment.

## **3.5 North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts**

The North Carolina Administrative Office of the Courts (NCAOC) provides a 2024 recap of statewide littering charges by offense code and by law enforcement agency. There were 2,734 charges and 787 convictions in 2024. Littering charges and convictions are also shown by offense code and by each county in a detailed table at the end of this section.

As in previous years, the Conference of Chief District Court Judges continued to provide an alternative to first-time offenders charged with littering of less than 15 pounds. On execution of written waiver of appearance and trial and plea of guilty/responsible, an offender may have the court appearance waived. The fine for intentional littering is \$250 plus costs and \$50 plus costs for unintentional littering. This was adopted by the Conference of Chief District Court Judges on October 9, 2024, pursuant to NC G.S. 7A-148, and applies to any new offenses on or after December 1, 2024.

Calendar year 2024 data on charges and convictions, including the number of charges disposed and the manner of disposition are tracked for the thirteen offenses listed in Table 3-4. Table 3-5 shows the following data provided from the NCAOC's Automated Criminal/Infraction Systems for 2024. The number of charges, convictions and dispositions represents totals from district and superior court. Some of the defendants have other charges in addition to littering offenses. It is possible for a defendant to be charged in one calendar year and convicted in the next. Thus, for any given calendar year, the defendants convicted are not necessarily the same defendants charged in that year.

**Table 3-4 List of Offenses**

<b>Offense Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Reference</b>
4425	Improper Loading/Covering of Vehicle	§ 20-116(g)
5370	Commercial Littering	§ 14-399(e)
5371	Littering Hazardous Waste	§ 14-399(e)
5372	Littering not more than 15 pounds	§ 14-399(c)
5373	Littering more than 15 but less than 500 pounds	§ 14-399(d)
5374	Littering more than 500 pounds	§ 14-399(e)
5375	Unintentional Littering not more than 15 Pounds	§ 14-399(c1)
5376	Unintentional Littering more than 15 but less than 500 Pounds	§ 14-399(d1)
5377	Unintentional Littering more than 500 Pounds	§ 14-399(e1)
5378	Second or subsequent offense of littering not more than 15 lbs	§ 14-399(c)
5379	Second or subsequent offense of unintentional littering not more than 15 pounds	§ 14-399(c1)
6248	Litter Gameland/Access Area	§ 113-264(a)
8514	Littering Beer/Wine Container	local ordinance

# Table 3-5 Statewide Littering Charges and Convictions

## STATEWIDE LITTERING CHARGES AND CONVICTIONS

Calendar Year 2024

The following data are from the NCAOC's Automated Criminal/Infraction and Enterprise Justice Systems for calendar year 2024. The number of charges, convictions, and dispositions represents totals from district and superior court. Some of the defendants have other charges in addition to a littering offense. It is possible for a defendant to be charged in one calendar year and convicted in the next. Thus, for any given calendar year, the defendants convicted are not necessarily the same defendants charged in that year.

Offense Code	Charges	Convictions	CHARGES BY CHARGING AGENCY								Charges Disposed	METHOD OF DISPOSITION				
			ABC	ALE	DMV	Police	Sheriff	SHP	WRC	Other		Guilty Plea	Trial: Guilty	Trial: Not Guilty	Dismiss	Other
4425	801	276	0	1	0	193	56	549	0	2	759	80	0	0	466	213
5370	10	0	0	0	0	4	3	0	1	2	5	0	0	0	5	0
5371	28	2	0	0	0	8	17	0	0	3	19	3	0	0	10	6
5372	1389	369	0	12	0	556	210	332	183	96	1482	219	12	4	1042	205
5373	234	59	0	1	0	125	49	12	18	29	199	54	1	3	133	8
5374	47	3	0	0	0	23	18	0	2	4	53	9	0	0	29	15
5375	72	44	0	4	0	23	9	30	3	3	96	9	0	0	66	21
5376	4	1	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	1
5377	3	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	4	1	0	0	3	0
5378	9	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	7	0	4	2	0	0	2	0
5379	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6248	24	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	0	114	7	0	0	97	10
8514	113	13	0	0	0	70	12	28	0	3	90	13	0	1	74	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2734</b>	<b>787</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1007</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>954</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>2827</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1928</b>	<b>481</b>

## Appendix A: Contacts

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