HOW TO CONDUCT YOUR OWN PUBLIC SORT

SET-UP:

1. Conduct a cleanup to have debris to sort!
2. Find a space
   a. This can be anywhere. Your spot should be public, busy, and approved for your use of that space.
   b. Consider asking a local business on your town's shopping street to see if they would host the space for the sort outside their storefront!
3. Get volunteers
   a. A public sort needs 5-6 volunteers. Consider advertising to reach more people: forums, social media, school clubs or teams, and postings around town are great ways. Keep extra gloves and tongs around for anyone that may want to come help!
4. Set up an information table closeby
   a. We like to keep information nearby, maybe regarding your company, where this trash came from, how long it took to collect, how to prevent this, and/or possible solutions the public can take on.
   b. Have a sign out front with detail about where the debris came from.

Ex. *Look what we found in just 1 hour at Waybury Park! Can you see anything here that you use everyday?*

MATERIALS:

Tarp
Barbecue tongs
Reusable gloves
Debris sort sign
3-gallon buckets
Garbage bags
Scale
Hand sanitizer
Information table
Speaker
Rozalia Project Cleanup Data Cards
Sharps / Biohazards Kit

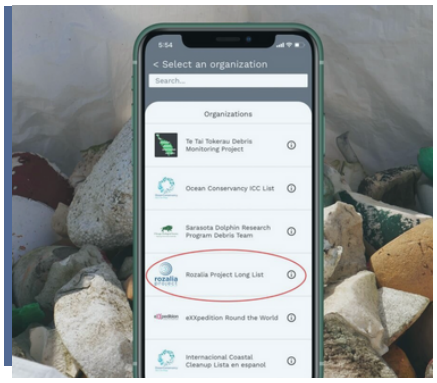
SORT!

Spread your debris on a large tarp. Organize piles separated by the categories listed on the Rozalia Project Data Cleanup card. Have volunteers wear gloves and use tongs while sorting. 3-gallon buckets are great for holding small bits of plastic and as seats! To make a visual display of the sort, label the piles with our sorting signs to demonstrate findings to the public and keep track of data.

DATA ANALYSIS

Count and Record.

Using the Rozalia Project Cleanup Data card to record your results, count the pieces of debris per category. Record these results and weigh the final amount of debris using garbage bads and scale



Upload Results.

Upload results to the Rozalia Project Marine Debris Tracker App after the sort.

Open Discussion.

Is there anything found that you can identify to a certain business in the area?
What was the most common item?
Is there anything in the pile that you use on a daily basis?
These questions drive solutions.

CLEANUP:

If some of the litter is in recyclable condition, it is best to recycle what you still can. But, sadly a lot of the findings must go into a local dumpster due to their condition. Better in the waste sorting system than in the ocean!

IMPORTANT!

Be sure to dispose of sharps and biohazard items appropriately. Wear gloves!

TAKE ACTION:

If you are feeling especially motivated, take these results to another level! At the sort and your informational table, keep a petition nearby to ask a business or your governor to adopt plastic-free habits. Bring your signatures and data from the sort as support for your initiative!

Another great option is to have other legislative options with petitions on hand. The Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act needs support on its journey through Congress, and offers the most comprehensive federal legislation on plastic! Consider collecting signatures for this type of legislation.

Plastic Straws

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Bottlecaps

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Food Wrappers

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Waterbottles

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Takeout Containers

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Plastic Sheeting/Tape

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Textiles

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Plastic Bags

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Cigarettes

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Vaping Products

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Masks / PPE

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Personal Hygiene Products

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Styrofoam

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Glass

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Cans

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Balloons

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Feel free to use these sorting signs as a way to organize and display the debris in your public sort.

We recommend attaching them to a stand!

Thank you for being an ocean protector and enjoy sorting :)

Hi ,

My name is and I am working with to organize a public sort of litter collected from . A public sort is essentially a way to demonstrate to the public the pollution that is hiding in their own communities and discover what the sources of this pollution may be. Through a trash sort, we can discover if there are any local companies that may be major polluters or what kind of products are most heavily used + tossed in the area. These results can then inform important legislation or campaigns to reduce plastic use in the first place. A public sort also demonstrates that individual consumer choice can make a big difference in the plastic pollution crisis.

We are hoping to use the outdoor space by the front of your business as a location to hold this sort. This opportunity would be amazing, as your business has a very busy location that may attract a lot of attention from passersby of the community. As well, this would add credibility to your green mission as a business. Many shoppers these days are much more drawn to businesses that have eco-friendly values, and therefore you may also gain a new customer base. Additionally, the public sort tends to attract a lot of attention, which also reminds passersby to stop at the storefront directly next to the event.

Please let me know what you think!

Best,

Legislative Inspiration

Plastic legislation varies from state to state or even county to county. Although individual choices can make a real difference, legislative action and policy change are the most effective routes for more rapid and widespread change.

Public cleanups and sorts offer valuable information about where the sources of pollution are coming from in your community. One can use these results to identify certain local businesses or products that may be more significant polluters. Then, consider taking up specific initiatives to propose to the significant polluters or to local businesses so all can reduce their negative plastic impact.

Use these as inspiration for your campaign:

Business-focused:

- Skip the straw: Only offer a straw to customers on request
- Follow suit with silverware: only offer takeout disposable silverware when asked
- Reward customers that bring in a reusable cup
- Consider changing receipts to a paperless model
- Switch plastic water bottles in the cooler to a refillable water container with washable cups
- Support vendors with sustainable packaging!

Local Legislation Ideas:

- Ban plastic straws
- Plastic bag tax
- Ban styrofoam foodware
- Limit legal balloon releases

For more inspiration on plastic legislation and policy rhetoric, check out this *link*

First name	Last name	City	Zip code	Email (if you would like updates on the campaign)

International Coastal Cleanup

WHAT WILL YOU FIND?

Plastic Beverage Bottles

In the sun and salt water, plastic bottles become brittle and break into smaller pieces.

⋆ Opt for tap water or fountain drinks in a reusable bottle.

Breakdown Time: 450 years

Food Wrappers

Even though many food wrappers look like foil, most are made of plastic.

⋆ Try buying in bulk and using reusable containers to store on-the-go snacks.

Forks, Knives & Spoons

Volunteers collect enough utensils—more than half a million in one day—to host a picnic for every resident of Washington, D.C.

⋆ Entertain with reusable forks, knives and spoons made from bamboo or recycled plastic.

Fishing Gear

Abandoned fishing gear can trap and harm ocean life long after it is lost or discarded.

⋆ Don't leave your line behind; participate in a fishing-line recycling program.

Breakdown Time: 600 years

Cups & Plates

Foam cups and plates cannot be easily recycled and often crumble into small pieces.

⋆ Grab a reusable mug that can go from coffee to smoothie with just a rinse.

Breakdown Time: 50 years

Straws/Stirrers

Volunteers collect enough straws and stirrers in one day to line California's 840 mile coastline.

⋆ Next time you're out, politely refuse plastic straws or carry your own reusable straw.

Bottle Caps

Plastic bottle caps are one of the most commonly found items in the stomachs of sea birds.

⋆ Keep your bottle caps to use for art projects or on-the-go games. Checkers, anyone?

Cigarette Butts

The most common item found during beach cleanups, cigarette filters are actually plastic.

⋆ Properly dispose of cigarettes in receptacles or use a portable ashtray.

Breakdown Time: 1-10 years

Plastic Grocery Bags

Plastic grocery bags pose high risks to sea turtles when they mistake them for their favorite food, jellyfish.

⋆ Toss reusable bags in your backpack, purse or car so they are handy for every trip to the store.

Breakdown Time: 1-20 years

Takeout/Takeaway Containers

Volunteers collect enough containers in one day to get takeout for breakfast, lunch and dinner every day for 858 years.

⋆ Reuse these containers for tomorrow's leftovers or other storage needs.

International COASTAL Cleanup

Ocean Conservancy

Photo: NOAA

Plastic Marine Debris

Plastic debris is the most abundant type of marine debris in our ocean, waterways, and Great Lakes. The word "plastic" is used to describe a collection of synthetic or manmade organic compounds (polymers), often derived from petroleum. Plastic polymers can be altered to come in many shapes, sizes, colors, and densities.

Plastic marine debris found in our ocean or waterways is often consumer items such as food wrappers, plastic beverage bottles, plastic bottle caps, plastic/foam carryout containers, drinking straws, and grocery bags. Plastic marine debris also includes items such as lost/discarded fishing gear or plastic sheeting. All of these plastic items can enter the marine environment in a variety of ways, including ineffective or improper waste management, intentional or accidental dumping or littering, or through stormwater runoff. Once in the environment, plastics will remain there indefinitely, which is why preventing these items from entering our waters in the first place is especially important.

Common Types of Plastic

Resin Code	Name	Product Examples
1	Polyethylene Terephthalate **(PETE, PET)**	Plastic bottles, food jars, ovenable and microwavable food trays, textiles (polyester), monofilament, carpet, and films.
2	High-Density Polyethylene **(HDPE)**	Bottles (beverage, detergent, shampoo), bags, cereal box liners, extruded pipe, and wire and cable covering.
3	Polyvinyl Chloride **(PVC)**	Packaging (clamshells, shrink wrap), pipes, siding, window frames, fencing, flooring, and medical products (blood bags, tubing).
4	Low Density Polyethylene **(LDPE)**	Bags (produce, dry cleaning, newspaper, and garbage bags), squeeze bottles, container lids, shrink wrap, toys, coatings for milk cartons and beverage cups, and wire and cable coverings.
5	Polypropylene **(PP)**	Yogurt and other food containers, medicine bottles, straws, bottle caps, fibers, appliances, and carpeting.
6	Extruded and Expanded Polystyrene **(PS)**	CD cases, yogurt containers, cups, plates, bowls, cutlery, hinged takeout containers (clamshells), electronic housings, building insulation, coat hangers, medical products, packing peanuts and other packaging foam, foamed coolers, and egg cartons.
7	Other is a resin different than the six listed above, or made from a combination of resins.	Three- and five-gallon reusable water bottles, glasses (lenses), some citrus juice and ketchup bottles, oven-baking bags, and custom packaging.

Plastic Marine Debris

Lifespan

If plastics never really go away, why don't we see more large plastic debris items in the ocean? There are several reasons. Since plastics have different densities, not all plastic debris remains at the surface and some items sink very quickly. Plastics can also break apart into smaller and smaller pieces, called "microplastics" (plastics < 5mm in size). Most commonly used plastics can break into these small pieces, but may never fully degrade in marine environments with colder temperatures and reduced sunlight. Even plastics labeled as "bio-based" or "biodegradable" that may break down in industrial composting facilities, are not designed to quickly degrade in ordinary compost piles, soil, or in the marine environment. Therefore, plastics of all types have the potential to remain in the marine environment indefinitely.

Impacts

The health of marine ecosystems are strongly affected by marine debris. Plastic marine debris can damage habitats, entangle wildlife, cause injury via ingestion, impair vessel engines, create navigation hazards, inflict economic loss, and transport non-native species. Researchers are actively examining the physical and chemical effects of ingesting microplastics on organisms and how those chemicals may travel through the food web. Though we know marine debris can impact individual organisms, it is still not clear how it affects populations and communities. This is a data gap that researchers are beginning to explore.

How YOU can help!

The best way to prevent plastic debris from entering the ocean and Great Lakes is to stop debris from entering the them in the first place.

REMEMBER
that our land and sea are connected.

REDUCE
the amount of waste you produce.

REUSE
items when you can. Choose reusable items over disposable ones.

RECYCLE
as much as possible! Bottles, cans, cell phones, ink cartridges, and many other items can be recycled.

REFUSE
unnecessary single-use items, like plastic straws or cutlery when possible.

GET INVOLVED
and participate in local cleanups in your area.

DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY
no matter where you are.