



COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION
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CITY OF MUSCATINE PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TAKE THE PLEDGE TO CREATE TRASH FREE LAND, WATER

Help keep Muscatine beautiful and safe by disposing of trash properly

MUSCATINE, Iowa – Earth Day is an annual event held on April 22 of each year when individuals young and old demonstrate support for environmental protection by picking up trash or planting a tree. The event started in 1970 and will mark its 55th anniversary in 2025. The theme for 2024 is “Planet vs. Plastics”.



The City of Muscatine is committed to a sustainable future and being environmentally friendly joining with communities throughout the state in inviting residents and visitors to take the pledge against litter.



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"We all take pride in where we live, work, and recreate," Brad Bark, Muscatine Mayor, said. "And we should be naturally compelled to act, to pick up litter and keep Muscatine beautiful. The less litter people see, the less likely they will be to litter."

Bark is urging Muscatine residents to collect and properly dispose of litter (small pieces of trash placed in places where it should not be) during their visits to the parks, business districts, and residential areas of the community.

The 24on24 Pledge is a program sponsored by the Iowa Stormwater Education Partnership that asks individuals to pick up, and properly dispose of, 24 pieces of litter on the 24th of each month.

But that is just the start. Keeping Muscatine Beautiful is not just a once-a-month event. It should be a daily exercise that will benefit our land, our water, and our community. Throw all your trash in a garbage can and not on the street, sidewalk, grass, or in a storm drain. If you see litter, pick it up and put it in a garbage can.

"The City dedicates large amounts of time and resources to keeping public spaces as litter free as possible," Bark said. "But we cannot do it alone. We need the public's help in preserving the natural beauty of our community."

Litter is a problem that negatively affects our land and water, not just in Muscatine, but in communities across Iowa. If you are ready to be part of the solution to stop litter pollution then take the pledge and agree to the following:

I/we pledge to pick up 24 pieces of litter near my/our home, work, or place of recreation on the 24th of each month.



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I/we pledge to dispose of trash only in intended receptacles.

I/we pledge to secure items in my/our vehicle so that they do not become litter on the highway.

I/we understand that when our land and water are litter-free, they attract more people, improve business, and foster a greater sense of community pride.

Is Trash Still a Problem?

The Iowa Stormwater Education Partnership states that we've taken huge strides to reduce, reuse and recycle in Iowa. Many communities have extensive recycling and garbage collection systems in place. Unfortunately, we are still seeing an alarming rate of litter along banks and shores as well as in our streams, rivers, and lakes.

Once garbage enters our waterways, it is referred to as aquatic trash. Not only is aquatic trash an unsightly pollutant, but creates a long list of problems. For example:

- Cleaning it up can be expensive for communities and their residents.
- Can be a breeding ground for bacteria and pests that can spread disease to humans.
- Clogs up the flow of water that can result in localized flooding.
- Its an eyesore that reduces the appeal of waterfront destinations.
- Potential to damage boats when entangled in propellers or clogged intakes.
- Suffocation and drowning hazard for animals that get entangled.
- Once ingested by aquatic life, it can cause starvation and other harmful effects.
- Smothers plants and covers up habitat necessary for the survival of aquatic life.



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- Negatively impacts local economies that rely on the fishing industry for employment, income, and tourism.

How Does Trash Get Into Our Water?

Garbage that originates on land has the potential to make its way to our water in various ways.

- **Wind: Strong Gusts of Air Moves Litter**
 - Along highway on/off ramps
 - Litter from uncovered truck beds and other moving vehicles
- **Storm Drains: Trash Moved by Rain Water**
 - Overflowing or uncovered trash bins
 - Spills from garbage collection
 - Litter from outdoor events, around businesses and public transit stops
- **Dumping: Illegal Dumping of Waste**
 - Dumping of household waste on land or in a stream
 - Illegal encampments near water