

North Central Texas
Council of Governments



March 2021

Trash Free Waters: North Central Texas Newsletter

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What is the Trash Free Waters: North Central Texas Newsletter?

NOTE: You have been included in receipt of this first newsletter due to one of the following: attendee on a recent workshop; supporting organization of NCTCOG's Trash Free Waters grant; a partner in the Trash Free Texas efforts over the past years sponsored by the Environmental Protection (EPA); or, you are a current Trash Free Texas partner located in North Texas or across the State. NCTCOG is working to build a coalition of partners and organizations to work collaboratively together to build on the many North Central Texas and statewide initiatives focused on the challenge of reducing trash in waterways, and litter in general. If you would like to be removed from this newsletter, please use the [unsubscribe](#) link at the bottom of this email.

[Subscribe to future editions of this newsletter.](#)

The North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG) is excited to release our inaugural Trash Free Waters: North Central Texas Newsletter. This newsletter is intended to highlight all the many great ongoing partnerships, projects, and events that focus on reducing trash in North Central Texas waterways, including a focus on the products and resources being produced by NCTCOG and partners under a specific grant focused on these efforts. We all know that litter and trash in waterways is a problem. And, most of the trash that pollutes our rivers, lakes, estuaries, and oceans comes from sources on land. To approach this regional challenge that many of NCTCOG's members expend so much time and money on to address, NCTCOG has partnered with the Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) and the Texas State University Meadows Center for Water and the Environment, to conduct work activities under an EPA Grant over a three-year timeframe.

Taking a basin-wide approach to addressing trash in waterways allows NCTCOG to leverage funds and partnerships to expand the reach and impact of the EPA funds to amplify outcomes across not only the North Central Texas region, but the Houston-Galveston area, and statewide.

NCTCOG's goals under this project include fostering a clean-up culture in North Central Texas, improving water quality, and producing sustainable outcomes that are replicable across any river basin in Texas. A large focus of the project is updating and providing new tools and resources and leveraging the existing [Trash Free Texas](#) website. Through this three-year effort, the project seeks to:

1. Increase Adopt-A-Spot locations and promote a statewide Trash Collection Database.
2. Support regional clean-up events through partnerships with local governments, recreational clubs, and Keep Texas Beautiful affiliates.
3. Partner with Texas-based restaurants to reduce the use of single-use plastic.
4. Share project successes with other councils of government and replicate this work across the state.

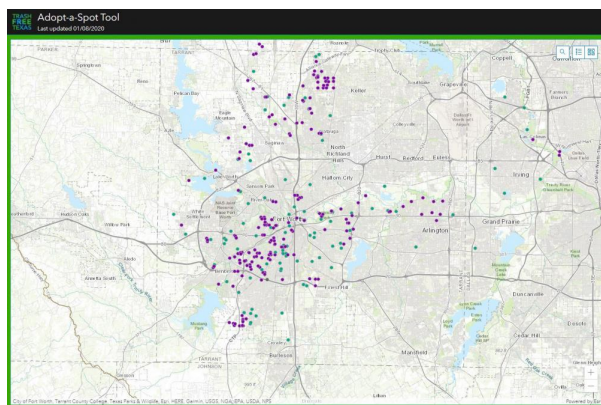
We hope that you will [forward this newsletter](#) to partners and organizations interested in this topic. This project will only be successful through partnerships and collaborations across the North Central Texas region and between the North Central Texas and the Houston regions, as what our region does here impacts Houston and the Galveston Bay. This newsletter will be the new mechanism to post updates, share resources, and provide updates on activities around the region in addition to the [Project Website](#). If you have something of interest to the region related to trash in waterways, please send it to our team and we will include it in an upcoming edition! Thank you for your collaboration and partnership!

NCTCOG Trash Free Waters Team – Cassidy Campbell, Elena Berg, Crysta Guzman, Brian Geck, Renee Pearl

TRASH FREE TEXAS

North Central Texas Spotlight

Trash Free Texas Welcomes New Partners and Adoptable Spots from North Texas



The Trash Free Texas website, <https://www.trashfreetexas.org/>, Adopt-A-Spot map has recently been updated with new adoptable locations from Keep Lake Dallas Beautiful and Groundwork Dallas! The locations from these organizations have been added to existing locations from Keep Fort Worth Beautiful, Keep Denton Beautiful, Keep Arlington Beautiful, Keep Garland Beautiful, Keep Grand Prairie Beautiful, and Keep Irving Beautiful sites.

The Adopt-a-Spot Tool and map can be viewed from the Trash Free Texas website [here](#).

By July 2023, NCTCOG has a goal to add at least 25 new organizations to this mapping tool to build a comprehensive map of adoptable sites in North Central Texas. NCTCOG will be contacting cities, Keep Texas Beautiful (KTB) affiliates, and non-profits in the next few weeks with specific requests to add locations to this map.

Any organization that hosts or coordinates clean-up events or individuals that know of locations within their community that need clean-up can request to have their data added to this site. This map and website can be linked to any city, KTB affiliate, or other non-profit website so residents and businesses interested in adopting a location can view the available spots.

Add your Adopt-A-Spots to the Map!

If you are interested in adding your organization's Adopt-a-Spot (ex. road, waterway, stream, river, school, or other spot), please contact the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at contact@trashfreetexas.org or fill out the Adopt-A-Spot Data Submittal Form at <https://www.trashfreetexas.org/become-a-coordinator>.

Trash Free Texas Call for Partners



The Trash Free Texas website, <https://www.trashfreetexas.org/>, "Adopt-a-Spot" site, and Online Mapping Tool was created in 2018 to foster a litter-free environment in Texas watersheds and track trash removal activities. The website is intended to connect people to places in need of routine cleanup activity. Over the past years, the original Trash Free Texas partners have worked to gain interest and additional partners in supporting this effort. As a statewide platform, Trash Free Texas will be used by NCTCOG, HGAC, and the Meadows Center for Water and the

Environment as the key website to provide new resources and tools for local governments and other partner organizations as a result of the EPA grant currently underway.

Take Action: Become a Trash Free Texas Partner!

Trash Free Texas Partners share Trash Free Texas with volunteers and stakeholders in your community. Partners help create an online community where we can educate volunteers and the public to encourage positive environmental change. Partners provide feedback on the website, mapping interface and other tools as the program expands to respond to the needs of our communities and volunteers.

Over the past three months, three organizations have joined Trash Free Texas as a Partner. Thank you to the following three new members representing efforts around the State:

- Coastal Bend Council of Governments
- Keep Midland Beautiful
- Keep Houston Beautiful

As an entity interested in litter prevention and reducing trash in waterways, if you would like to join the Trash Free Texas effort as a Partner, please visit <https://www.trashfreetexas.org/partner> and fill out the Partner form.

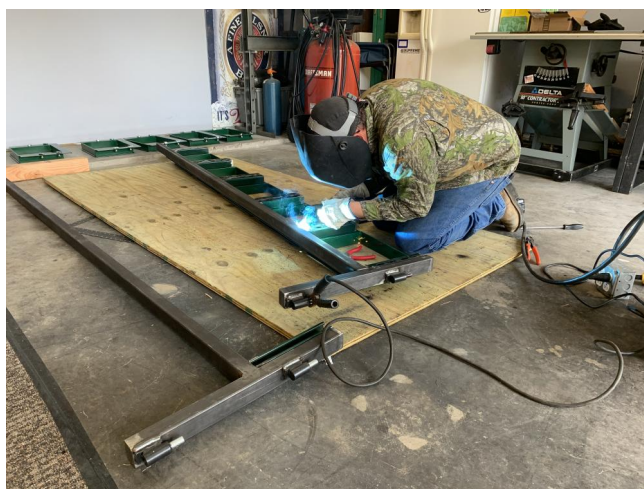


City of Frisco Installs New Trash Capture Device

In November 2020, the City of Frisco's stormwater team installed a new on-stream/in-channel trash capture device, referred to as a Swinging Trash Rack. The swinging trash rack was designed and fabricated by City of Frisco and is installed in a creek upstream of a park. Prior to installation, this section of creek was full of trash. As a Phase II, Tier 4 city, Frisco is required to install two trash collection devices in their city. This is the first installation of a trash collection device and as of early February 2021, the trash rack has collected approximately 600 pounds of debris. The trash rack was

designed to be a low-cost option compared to other products on the market and includes materials commonly available at hardware stores. The City estimates the total cost to build and install the trash rack to be under \$5,000, including labor. Use of inexpensive mesh laundry bags available from an online retailer, are fastened on by ratchet straps, and last about 2 months before needing to be changed. Curb stops direct low flow through the bags. Maintenance of the trash rack currently includes weekly maintenance checks, and collection of the organic and trash materials in the bags during low-flow times. Frisco weighs the bags and transfers the materials to large contractor bags that can be disposed of appropriately. A key design element was the concrete apron to provide a secure foundation and fastening of the trash rack. These aprons are widespread throughout the city making this approach possible in many locations. Additionally, the trash rack includes a break-away function. The advantages of the breakaway function:

- Since the device will break open during flood events, a flood study should not be required. At this site a flood study was run to demonstrate that a one-foot weir would not cause flooding. The study was done when a fixed device was being considered. The cost of the study was \$10,000. That cost will be avoided on future sites.
- The weakest point in the structure is the breakaway pin. Therefore, no complex calculations of the force and drag of the water through the structure is necessary. The rest of the structure only needs to be stronger than the force required to break the pin.
- In the event large floating debris like logs, ice, or fence panels are caught on the device, the breakaway pin will snap to avoid a debris dam.
- If a significant event is forecasted, opening the gate or even removing the entire device is an option.



Fabrication



Transport in Bed of Truck



Low-Flow Open Gate with Debris in Bags

The City of Frisco is willing to share additional information, costs, and maintenance of the swinging trash rack. Please contact Perry Harts, plharts@friscotexas.gov.

North Central Texas Trash Free Waters Partner Resources

New Webinar Recording Available! Trash Free Texas Webinar: Connecting Volunteers with Litter Cleanup Locations

On January 19, NCTCOG hosted the first North Central Texas Trash Free Texas Webinar: Connecting Volunteers with Litter Cleanup Locations. The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment and the City of Fort Worth joined NCTCOG to share information with over 100 attendees related to EPA Trash Free Waters grant, Trash Free Texas website, and how to add Adopt-a-Spot litter cleanup locations to the Trash Free Texas website. Efforts to develop a statewide Trash Collection Database were also covered in addition to preliminary results from a recent survey on organized litter cleanup events that was conducted in December 2020.

The recording of the webinar is available [here](#) along with the [presentation slides](#) under the green banner called "Past Events" on NCTCOG's Trash Free Waters project website [here](#).

Trash Free Waters Project Cleanup Events

As part of our work on the Trash Free Waters Project, NCTCOG will be coordinating with cities, Trash Free Waters Project partners, and hobby groups in the region, such as paddling or running groups, on litter cleanup events. Some of these litter cleanup events may invoke a little friendly competition within the region or between other regions. Planning is still in the initial stages so more details will be provided in this newsletter as they become available. If your city or organization is interested in discussing the potential to partner in these events, contact Crysta Guzman at cguzman@nctcog.org.

2021 Governor's Community Achievement Awards (GCAA) Application Now Open

For more than thirty years, Keep Texas Beautiful, in partnership with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), has awarded the prestigious Governor's Community Achievement Awards to Texas communities for their outstanding overall efforts to keep their communities beautiful.

Applications are due on Thursday, March 4 at 5 p.m. CST. Visit <https://www.ktb.org/gcaa> to apply.

This year, ten winning communities will share \$2 million in landscaping awards from the Texas Department of Transportation, with the amount based on population size. The funds are used for landscaping projects along local rights-of-way. A community's environmental program is judged on achievements in seven areas:

- Community Leadership and Coordination
- Public Awareness and Outreach
- Environmental Education
- Beautification and Community Improvement
- Litter Prevention and Cleanup
- Solid Waste Management
- Litter Law and Illegal Dumping Enforcement

If you have any questions regarding this year's application, please reach out to programs@ktb.org.

Don't mess with Texas® Trash-Off 2021

Don't mess with Texas®

TRASH-OFF

2021

The Don't mess with Texas® Trash-Off is a program to support efforts to clear Texas roadways of litter. Don't mess with Texas Trash-Off events can take place on any public roadway and includes cleanups taking place from April 1 - 30. Volunteers from all organizations are welcome to join and participate in a clean-up! The Keep Texas Beautiful website provides a Don't mess with Texas® Trash-Off Toolkit with helpful guidance documents, media kits, and social media posts.

To learn more about this statewide effort visit <https://www.ktb.org/dmwfto> and register your event and request supplies!

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Trash Free Waters Resources

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has a wealth of information on their Trash-Free Waters website, including recorded webinars, best management practices, tools, and case studies. Recorded webinars can be viewed here: <https://www.epa.gov/trash-free-waters/trash-free-waters-webinars>. EPA also issues a Newsletter called *The Flow of Trash Free Waters* that is released regularly and provides a nation-wide view of this topic and provides great information. Sign-up here: <https://www.epa.gov/trash-free-waters/newsletter-flow-trash-free-waters>.

Upcoming Events of Interest

The Economist Group's Eighth Annual World Ocean Summit Virtual Week

This week-long event features more than 60 sessions and 150 speakers all discussing how to create a more sustainable ocean economy. The summit facilitates high-level conversation and policymaking in plenary sessions as well as specific industry detail in six dedicated tracks. Industry tracks include: Aquaculture, Energy, Fishing, Shipping, Tourism, and Plastics.

The Plastics industry track will focus on changing the course of plastic pollution from source to sea, discussing the role of the consumer-goods sector to minimize plastic use, and covering opportunities for waste collection infrastructure and management. Registration is free.

Dates: March 1st – 5th

Register here: <https://events.economist.com/world-ocean-summit/>

Third Annual Texas Plastic Pollution Symposium

The 3rd Annual Texas Plastic Pollution Symposium will take place both virtually and on South Padre Island, TX. The purpose of the Symposium is to bring together scientists to discuss plastic research being conducted around the state of Texas, and to bring awareness to plastics in the environment.

The research symposium and a poster session will be held on the first day, and workshops and a beach cleanup will be held the following day. Poster presentations will cover a wide range of topics, including: 1) Monitoring, 2) Policy and Urban Communities, 3) Chemistry of Plastic Pollution, 4) Fish and Wildlife, and 5) Solutions. Registration is free and will cap at 150 people, so remember to register today.

Dates: March 4th – 5th

Registration: <https://missionaransas.org/tx-plastic-pollution-symposium>

Don't mess with Texas® Trash-Off 2021

The Don't mess with Texas® Trash-Off program is part of [Texas Department of Transportation's](#) litter prevention program and supports cleanup efforts taking place April 1-30 to clear Texas roadsides of trash.

Anyone can participate and volunteers come from all walks of life: students, civic and non-profit organizations, individuals, community groups, sports teams and more. If you have some free time, please volunteer and make a difference. Participants can [request](#) to receive cleanup supplies and find a host of promotional items and resources via the toolkit on the program page.

Dates: April 1st – 30th

Learn more and register here: <https://www.ktb.org/dmwtto>

Save-the-Date: 2021 Trash Summit 2021

Join the annual Houston-Galveston Regional Trash and Marine Debris Meeting, presented by the Partners in Litter Prevention, on May 5th. Additional details and a link for registration to follow closer to meeting. Learn more at: <https://www.donttrashagoodthing.org/workinggroups>

Date: May 5, 2021

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Coming Soon: North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge Scheduled for Fall 2021



The first ever North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge (NTCCC) has been scheduled to take place this fall during the months of September and October! An initiative of the Regional Stormwater Management Coordination Council (RSWMCC), the NTCCC layers a friendly region-wide competition on top of all litter cleanup events and activities happening during this designated timeframe. The RSWMCC recognizes the negative impact that escaped trash and litter has on our environment, particularly when it reaches our local waterbodies where it can harm wildlife and negatively impact our drinking water sources. The North

Texas Community Cleanup Challenge is an effort to tackle this problem from a region-wide perspective. The great thing about the challenge is that *any* type of litter cleanup activity counts towards the overall totals for each city where the activity occurred. This means that organized cleanups through KTB affiliates, city departments, local non-profits, Scout troops, and environmental clubs all count! Informal cleanup activities such as collecting trash and litter on a daily walk or jog through neighborhoods and parks also count towards the goal of removing as much trash and litter from our environment as possible! Each of these activities can be logged to help push cities closer towards the goal of being the community that collected the most trash and litter during our challenge timeframe. To learn more, please visit: [North Texas Community Cleanup Challenge](#). Additional details on how to sign your city on to the challenge, and resources to support cleanup efforts will be posted to the website in the coming months.

View additional events and training opportunities at www.nctcog.org/envir/events.

For questions or additional information on any of these items, please contact:

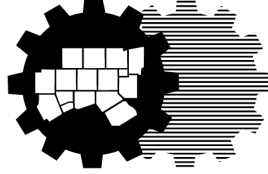
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Join Trash Free Texas efforts on Twitter and Facebook and share posts and information!



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