

THE IMPACT OF TRASH ON OUR BEACH

To marine animals, our items of convenience can be a floating minefield. **When plastic reaches our waters, it poses a threat to the animals that depend on the oceans for food.**

To a **sea turtle**, a floating plastic bag looks like a jellyfish. Clogging their intestines, and missing out on vital nutrients, the turtles starve to death.

Seabirds undergo a similar ordeal, mistaking plastic pieces or pellets for fish eggs, small crabs and other prey, sometimes feeding the pieces to their young.

Drifting nets and fishing line entangle birds, fish and **marine mammals**, making it difficult, if not impossible, to move or eat, eventually killing them.

Wouldn't this debris simply get dispersed? The answer is NO. While the ocean does disperse the trash, it also runs in currents, which can keep floating trash traveling, concentrating it in areas where currents meet. Usually the only ways to escape this constant circular pattern is if the plastic decays enough to sink, or lands onshore to be, hopefully picked up by a passerby.

Wildlife is not the only area to suffer from the effects of marine debris. **Plastic bags and other plastic items are leading external cause of marine engine damage.**

MARINE DEBRIS

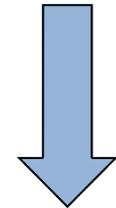
Paper Bag
Cardboard
Aluminum Can
Plastic Bag
Plastic Bottle
Disposable Diaper
Plastic Straws
Glass
Styrofoam
Monofilament Line
Cigarette Butts/Filters

BREAKDOWN TIME

1 Month
50 Years
200-500 Years
500-1000 Years
450-1000 Years
550 Years
700 Years
1-2 Million Years
1+ Million Years
NEVER
NEVER



Don't leave your trash on the beach!



Let's Keep Our Beach Beautiful!

What You Can Do:

1. Look for **alternative materials or avoid excessive packaging** when making purchases. **Use reusable** or paper bags, milk and juice cardboard, and cloth diapers. Insist on paper bags and glass bottles.
2. **Recycle**
3. **Educate** others about the problems of marine debris, enhancing "voluntary compliance through awareness".
4. **Get Involved.** Volunteer for a City of Marco Island Beach Clean UP.

*It's really just common sense -
Take it with you and recycle it later!*

**TO PARTICIPATE IN A BEACH CLEAN UP OR BE
A VOLUNTEER BEACH STEWARD, PLEASE CONTACT THE
CITY OF MARCO ISLAND AT 239-389-5000**

