



Zero Tolerance for Litter Campaign



Resolution and Policy Guidelines

The James City Clean County Commission has worked hard for over 40 years to improve the aesthetic quality and environmental health of our shared community. Unfortunately, litter continues to accumulate throughout the County, which is a detriment to our economic and environmental health.

Throughout our recent affiliation with Keep America Beautiful, Keep James City County Beautiful presents new opportunities for citizen volunteers to collaborate with all County departments on new strategies to address the litter problem. The following Zero Tolerance for Litter directly support multiple goals and operational initiatives outlined in the 2035 Strategic Plan. The Board of Supervisors approved the Resolution, Policy & Guidelines on June 12, 2018.

Zero Tolerance for Litter Resolution

- WHEREAS, litter leaves a blighted stain on our quality of life and is destructive to wildlife and the natural environment; and
- WHEREAS, littering is a crime and attracts additional criminal behavior; and
- WHEREAS, littering influences others to litter; and
- WHEREAS, James City County continues to have litter problem and spends tax dollars to pick up litter along our roadsides and in our public spaces; and
- WHEREAS, littering creates a negative impression for tourists and visitors; and
- WHEREAS, James City County will increase enforcement of this crime, raise awareness about the act of littering, reduce the overall amount of litter, and will not tolerate this crime through a policy of Zero Tolerance for Litter; and
- WHEREAS, special attention will be given to vehicles hauling unsecured loads, acts of illegal dumping and motorists or pedestrians improperly tossing away items including cigarette butts. Other items of focus will be improperly containerized household garbage, commercial dumpsters and construction debris; and
- WHEREAS, James City County is a leader in litter prevention and takes a proactive stance each day through litter education in the schools and partnering opportunities with neighborhoods and civic organizations as well as regional, state and national organizations.
- NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors of James City County, Virginia, does hereby proclaim a policy of Zero Tolerance For Litter and encourages all citizens to work together, stand firm against the act of littering, and to act responsibly throughout the year for a cleaner community to preserve the natural beauty, quality of life and health of our community.

FUN FACTS:

-  25,000 accidents per year in the U.S. are caused by litter.
-  The most common littered objects are: fast food waste, paper, aluminum, glass, & plastic.
-  An estimated 100,000 marine mammals and sea turtles die each year from plastic pollution.
-  48% of Americans admit to littering on a regular basis.
-  270,000 tons of plastic are currently floating on the surface of the ocean.
-  Cigarette butts make up over 50% of all littered objects.
-  \$2 billion is spent in Hampton Roads to clean up litter.
-  Litter can carry and spread over 13 different germs, bacteria and viruses that cause illness.
-  Litter reduces property value by 7%.
-  700 marine species are expected to go extinct because of plastic pollution.

PENALTIES:

- i. Section 10-7 of the County Code states that any person convicted of a violation of the Garbage and Refuse Ordinance shall be subject to a civil penalty. Continued violations could lead to \$3,000 in civil penalties in a 12 month period.
- ii. Section 33.1-346 of the Code of Virginia makes littering or dumping trash a Class 1 misdemeanor, punishable by up to 12 months in jail and/or a fine up to \$2,500.
- iii. Section 10.1-1143 of the Forestry Codes makes it unlawful to throw "any lighted smoking material" from a vehicle. This is a Class 2 misdemeanor violation, punishable by up to 6 months in jail and/or a fine of up to \$1,000.

Facts References:

- Australian Department of Health *Rubbish & Disease 2010*
- Green Eco Services *Deadly Litter & Car Accidents 2009*
- Keep America Beautiful *Litter Curriculum 2016*
- Newport News Government Litter Hotline Webpage
- Whale and Dolphin Conservation *Litter in the Seas & Oceans*



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Zero Tolerance for Litter Policy & Guidelines:

1. Decrease litter and related expenses by increasing enforcement through penalties and public service by offenders.
2. Establish a partnership with VDOT to clarify responsibilities and goals related to roadside litter, improve roadside appearance, maintain clean entrance and exit ramps, put out additional litter prevention signage, and prevent allocation of additional JCC budget expenditures related to littering.
3. Organize and implement a program for 'Catch a Litterbug' so that citizens may report roadside debris, dumping and other offensive littering actions.
4. Enforcement of the litter law and public education regarding requirements for covered loads to prevent truck debris will decrease roadside litter, improve public safety, minimize the attraction of additional litter and reduce crime.
5. Create stronger partnerships with law enforcement, VDOT, askHRGreen.org, Keep America Beautiful, and other national, state and local organizations to educate the community and prevent litter.
6. Partner with businesses on cigarette litter prevention to address problem areas near entrances, curbing dumpsters and parking lots as well as bus stops and other transitions sites.
7. Receptacles at construction sites for recycling and litter/cigarette disposal should be made available in addition to construction debris containers and dumpsters to minimize litter that accumulates as a result of contractors and transient workers.
8. Partner with churches, HOAs, school groups and community organizations, to establish community partnerships and partnerships through neighborhoods.
9. Educate building and construction contractors, developers, landscape companies, and property managers on the importance of litter prevention and James City County's zero tolerance for litter. Enforce litter control measures through inspections upon site permitting and approvals.
10. Work with all citizens to "Team Up 2 Clean Up", organize litter clean ups, and distribute bags and educational materials to group and businesses.
11. Identify illegal littering and dumping sites so that police enforcement can be increased in those problem areas through additional monitoring measures.
12. Partner with youth offenders to deter future criminal behavior, instill basic job skills, and offer education on the nuisance of litter and impact on the environment.