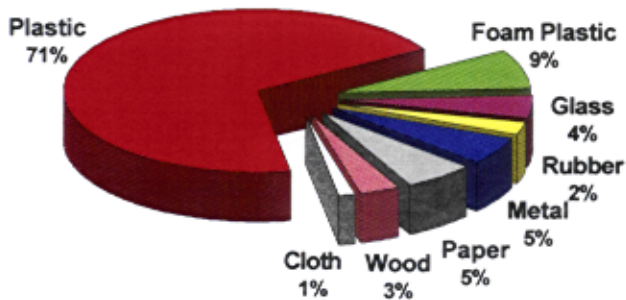


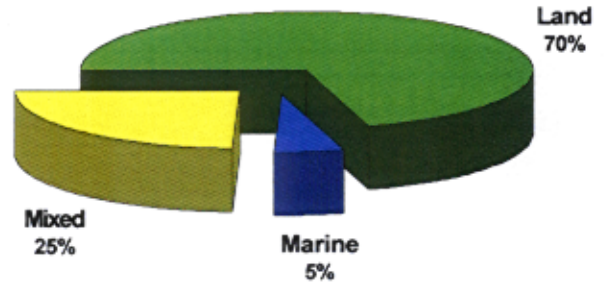
New Jersey's Marine Debris - 2004

Percent Breakdown by Material



The most prevalent type of debris found on New Jersey's beaches and in our waterways is plastic. The major reasons that plastic items rank so high are: **1)** disposable plastic materials are found in nearly all consumer products, **2)** the longevity of plastic (taking many decades to several hundred years to break down), and **3)** littering or failure to recycle. Due to the strength of the material and its ability to last a long time, plastic items cause the most needless deaths of marine animals.

Percent Breakdown by Source



Does marine debris come from the ocean or from land? The majority of the items found on New Jersey beaches come from a source on land: being left on the beach, blown to the beach, or brought to the shore via storm drains along the coast and inland. Three simple changes in lifestyles can help reduce litter in the marine environment: **1)** do not litter, **2)** dispose of trash in a proper method so that it cannot be reintroduced into the environment, and **3)** the three "R's": Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.

New Jersey's Dirty Dozen

2004 Ranking	Item	2003 Ranking	1993-2002 Ranking	1993-2002 Average Ranking
(1)	37,795 Plastic Caps & Lids	2	4	4
(2)	33,955 Plastic Food Bags & Wrappers	4	2	3
(3)	33,843 Cigarette Filters	1	1	1
(4)	30,059 Plastic Pieces	3	3	3
(5)	21,822 Straws & Stirrers	5	5	5
(6)	16,723 Foam Plastic Pieces	7	6	5
(7)	13,796 Plastic Beverage & Soda Bottles	6	8	8
(8)	8,603 Lumber Pieces	8	12	12
(9)	7,409 Metal Beverage Cans	10	11	12
(10)	6,591 Paper Pieces	9	7	8
(11)	6,515 Plastic Fork, Knives & Spoons*	12	-	-
(12)	6,485 Glass Pieces	14	9	9
223,596 Total		66% of Total Cleanup		

*New category in 2003

conditions during the cleanup (i.e., wind blowing and covering smaller items in the sand), volunteers picking up only larger debris, and smoking sections or partial bans on smoking on beaches in New Jersey.

Nonetheless, the number of cigarette filters collected during the beach cleanups is a small fraction of what may be in the environment. Cigarette filters are not only unsightly, they can harm marine life. The filter traps carcinogenic (cancer-causing) chemicals which are introduced into the marine environment when the cigarette is not disposed of properly. Cigarette filters have also been found in the stomachs of fish, whales, and birds, blocking and affecting their digestion.

The "Dirty Dozen" are the top **12** items most frequently collected and recorded during the Beach Sweeps in New Jersey. In 2004 these twelve items nearly equaled the total number of items collected in the previous year. These **12** items accounted for **66** percent of the debris collected at the 2004 beach cleanups. In 2003, new data cards were used at the Sweeps that listed more items and deleted items from the old card. Still, the items remained fairly consistent in their ranking with slight variations over the ten years.

For the first time since their addition to the data cards, cigarette filters were not the **number one** item found on New Jersey's beaches. Possible reasons for this change include weather