

City of Monterey

Litter on State Highways 1 and 68

1. What is the problem?

The City of Monterey prides itself on its beauty. Visitors from all over the world continue to visit our City because of its historic amenities and clean appearance and to visit attractions such as the Monterey Bay Aquarium. When citizens and visitors drive State Highways 1 and 68 to reach our city, they are blinded by the amount of litter in view. Letters, phone calls and complaints are received daily. The litter on these highways also frequently reaches our storm drains and eventually finds its way to the Bay.

2. Who is at fault?

Where does litter come from? Litter flies out of open beds of pick up trucks, sometimes garbage haulers have debris in the hoppers (top portion of the service trucks) and it flies out, sometimes people hauling their material to the landfill do not secure their loads properly and material escapes, and sometimes people carelessly toss their trash out the window..

3. Who is responsible to clean the litter from State highways?

To summarize a complex situation, the cleaning of the highways falls on Caltrans. Unfortunately, the simple fact is that Caltrans Maintenance Division has four employees to maintain the areas from Garapata Bridge in Big Sur to Santa Cruz. Maintenance priorities are fence repairs and safety issues and then, if at all possible, the cleaning of the highways. Small sections of the highways may be adopted and cleaned once or twice per month. Two Monterey sections are adopted, one by Victory Toyota and one by Lexus. But many sections cannot be adopted due to safety issues. Those are the portions that continue to build up with litter causing safety and health concerns.

4. What is the City doing to meet this challenge?

Thanks to a generous donation from Monterey City Disposal Service, the City of Monterey has contracted to have several on and off ramps cleaned once or twice per month. This will help a great deal, but two ramps (the first ramp to exit Monterey from Carmel and the ramp exiting Monterey to Highway 68 eastbound) were not included due to safety issues. The Highway 68 ramp is by far in the worst condition and most frequently traveled by visitors going back to Highway 101 and to the airport.

The City has asked Caltrans to install the signage "Don't Trash California" in our area. They are also working with City staff to clearly define adoptable sections. Staff will then encourage more groups to help keep this area clean and beautiful by adopting more sections of the highway.

5. What can you do?

Be aware! Secure loads in your vehicles. If you are transporting loose material in a truck or trailer, ensure that it is tarped properly, especially the back end. If you see vehicles or commercial vehicles with litter coming out of their vehicles, get the license plate, location, time and date and call the company. If you see any of the garbage trucks dropping litter, get the license plate number, location, time and date and call them and report it. If you see a vehicle drop something in the road that can cause an accident (couch, box of nails, large pieces of wood, etc.), get the license plate number, time, location, date and call 911 immediately. The California Highway Patrol (CHP) can and will ticket someone that does not secure their load properly as this could cause an accident. If it is just litter, the CHP would actually have to witness this themselves in order to fine them (do not call 911 for litter only).

Contact / Phone Numbers:

- **California Department of Transportation**
District 5
50 Higuera Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-5415

Monterey Peninsula area: (831) 372-0862
 - **California Highway Patrol** (non-emergency) (831) 796-2100
 - **Waste Management Services** (831) 384-5000
 - **Monterey City Disposal Services** (831) 372-7977
 - **BFI** (831) 7753840
 - **TriCities Disposal** (888) 678-6798
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- **Of course, you can always send comments to the City's Suggestion Hotline at**
suggest@ci.monterey.ca.us (email)
646.3799 (voice mail),
646.3793 (fax), or

Mail c/o City Hall, Monterey, CA 93940