MRCTI

Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative

THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER PLASTIC POLLUTION INITIATIVE

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Mississippi River Cities & Towns Initiative: An Association of United States Mayors

- ★ Clean Water
- ➢ Sustainable Economies
- ➢ Disaster Resilience and Adaptation
- ➢ International Food and Water Security
- ➢ Celebration of River Culture, History, and Heritage

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COMMITMENT TO REDUCING PLASTIC WASTE

Plastic Pollution impacts more than the river valley. Up to 80% marine plastic originates from land-based sources.

The Mississippi River drains 40% of the continental United States, creating a conduit for our litter to reach the Gulf of Mexico.

https://youtu.be/lhGvFLLp6dA

THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER PLASTIC POLLUTION INITIATIVE

CLEAN RIVER, CLEAN SEAS

The Mayors of the Mississippi River, in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme, National Geographic Society and the University of Georgia, launch an initiative to combat plastic pollution along one of the world's greatest waterways.

Working with volunteer citizen scientists from local communities, the initiative will record data on the state of plastic pollution at key sites along the river. This data will be used to generate a 'plastic pollution map' that will help policy makers, business and citizens take action.

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Protecting Our Water from Waste

PILOT CITIES SELECTED:

SAINT PAUL
MINNESOTA

- St. Paul, MN (upper)

THE COMMON SEAL OF THE CITY OF ST. LOUIS

- St. Louis, MO (middle)

BR
CITY OF BATON ROUGE
PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE

- Baton Rouge, LA (lower)

Do you have what it takes to be a marine debris detective?

Join the Mississippi River Plastic Pollution Initiative!

Up to **80% of marine plastic originates on land**, and rivers are a major route for litter to travel to the ocean. **You can be part of the solution** to combat plastic pollution along the Mississippi River by helping to collect data on marine litter here in St. Louis!

Click to access the map for St. Louis

1. Download the **Marine Debris Tracker App** on your device.
2. **Select 'MRCTI'**
3. **Pick a data collection area on the map.** Google Maps will open, showing the highlighted areas so you can easily find your location.
4. **Find your data collection site.** Find a 3ft (1m) wide pathway where litter accumulates, like a roadside or sidewalk.
5. **Take a walk, collect data!** Follow the 3ft-wide path and record all items within it for at least 30 minutes. Do your best to track the debris you find within the marked square or just adjacent to it. We'll use this randomly sampled data for scientific analysis.

Want to find out more about the Mississippi River Plastic Pollution Initiative? Click here!

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Marine Debris Tracker

Powered by Morgan Stanley

THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER PLASTIC POLLUTION INITIATIVE

CLEAN RIVER, CLEAN SEAS

March 15 – April 25, 2021

Mississippi River Basin Facts

75,184 items

74% plastic

8% metal

7% paper

Top Items

cigarette butts

food wrappers

beverage bottles

94% of items were logged within 50km of the main stem of the Mississippi River.

St. Louis

28,540 litter items logged

74 surveyed target areas across city

40,023 m² of transects surveyed

0.69 items/m² average litter density

195 brands of litter identified

NOTE: Points on the map represent litter items logged with Debris Tracker from March 15 – April 25, 2021 as a part of the Mississippi River Plastic Pollution Initiative.

LINK: unep.org/mississippi

THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER PLASTIC POLLUTION INITIATIVE

CLEAN RIVER, CLEAN SEAS

Item Breakdown By Material

Top 10 Items

BOTTLE TAG – GPS TRACKING

THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER PLASTIC POLLUTION INITIATIVE

CLEAN RIVER, CLEAN SEAS

WHAT'S NEXT?
INSPIRE AND TAKE ACTION

- Analyze the data to find:
  - What are the most common items we can target
  - Where are the best places to target
  - Understand the interconnected nature of our communities
- Expand the initiative to gain a broader perspective on debris entering the river
- Work together with corporate partners to reduce their consumer waste and ensure higher reuse and recycling rates

Thank you!

Jennifer Wendt
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Learn more at:
The Mississippi River Plastic Pollution Initiative | UNEP - UN Environment Programme

www.unep.org/regions/north-america/regional-initiatives/mississippi-river-plastic-pollution-initiative