

WHY RUN A BEACH CLEAN-UP?



According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), an estimated 19 to 23 million tonnes of plastic waste enter aquatic ecosystems - including oceans, rivers, and lakes - each year.

WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

The Australian Marine Debris Initiative (AMDII) Network has now removed and recorded over 2000 tonnes of marine debris. And you can help too!

This guide is for individuals and groups who want to help tackle marine debris locally.

PLASTIC BREAKS UP NOT DOWN

Once discarded, plastics stay in the ocean for centuries, breaking up into microplastics but never disappearing. Plastic bottles can take an estimated 450 years, fishing line 600 years, and cigarette butts up to 10 years to break up, giving debris countless chances to harm marine life again and again.

HELP PROTECT AUSTRALIAN SPECIES

Marine debris impacts Australian wildlife through ingestion, entanglement, loss of critical habitat, even plastic on turtle nesting beaches can impact the temperature of the sand influencing the sex of turtle hatchlings.



WILDLIFE IMPACTS

Marine debris can entangle necks, flukes, flippers and fins. Plastics and ropes don't stretch as animals grow, causing painful infections, and even death. Plastics (including microplastics) are also ingested, causing potentially fatal problems in digestive and nervous systems.



AUSTRALIAN
MARINE DEBRIS INITIATIVE®



HOW TO RUN A CLEAN-UP

- 1) **Choose your clean-up site** and run a risk assessment (page 3).
- 2) **Promote your event locally**; consider a BBQ or picnic to thank volunteers.
- 3) **Check the site** again the day before. Have a first aid kit and phone ready.
- 4) **Hold a safety briefing** (see page 4). Complete insurance and paperwork; under-18s must be with an adult.
- 5) Assign areas, explain hazards and timings. **Volunteers must work in pairs** or groups.
- 6) Provide clean-up materials and ask volunteers to **collect all man-made debris**.

TOP TIPS

- Avoid nesting sites or cultural heritage areas — contact local Indigenous Affairs or Environment if needed.
- Arrange rubbish disposal with council or contact us for help.



COLLECTING VITAL DATA

Download the AMDI App for free and easy data entry and help us prevent marine debris at its source!

After your clean-up, empty bags onto a tarp, sort items for the AMDI Database, separate recyclables and dispose responsibly.

Contact data@tangaroablue.org if you have any questions about data entry.



SAFETY FIRST

- Ensure everyone has gloves, sturdy shoes, sunscreen, water, eye protection and suitable clothing. Provide handwashing or wipes.
- Have someone trained in first aid on-site and at least one volunteer trained to handle syringes (page 4).
- Report abandoned cars, weapons or suspicious items to local police.



AUSTRALIAN
MARINE DEBRIS INITIATIVE®



**GOT QUESTIONS? EMAIL US AT
CONTACT@TANGAROABLUE.ORG**

CLEAN-UP SAFETY

SAFETY INSPECTION

Are there holes, fallen branches or other trip hazards? Y / N	Are there likely to be discarded syringes at the site? Y / N	Is there a chance that electrical storms (thunder/lightning) could occur? Y / N
Is the area thickly vegetated; could volunteers become lost? Y / N	Will vehicles be passing in close proximity? Y / N	Will there be a large number of children volunteering? Y / N
Are there likely to be snakes, spiders, bees, wasps, ticks, bull ants or crocodiles? Y / N	Could asthmatics be exposed to dust or pollen? Y / N	Will there be volunteers that are physically or intellectually disabled? Y / N
Is there a bushfire risk? Y / N	Could volunteers be exposed to asbestos in old buildings or building material? Y / N	Will there be volunteers who do not speak English? Y / N
Is there deep, murky or moving water nearby? Y / N	Is the site isolated or remote from emergency assistance? Y / N	Will there be volunteers with challenging behaviours? Y / N
Will the site be affected by tidal water? Y / N	Will volunteers be working in direct sun? Y / N	Will members of the public who are not clean-up participants visit or pass through the site while work is occurring? Y / N
Could volunteers be exposed to contaminated substances / sewage? Y / N	Could volunteers experience temperatures that could cause heat stress? Y / N	Will members of the public visit the site after the participants leave but before the rubbish is removed? Y / N
	Will volunteers be exposed to frost, cold winds or rains? Y / N	

If you have answered 'Yes' to any of the above questions ensure that you also identify risk controls and incorporate these into your site briefing.

You can approach your local council in planning to control these risks. You will also need to conduct another survey the day before the clean-up to ensure there have been no changes to the site conditions.



AUSTRALIAN
MARINE DEBRIS INITIATIVE®



WWW.TANGAROABLUE.ORG

CLEAN-UP SAFETY

VOLUNTEER BRIEFING



**Thank you for volunteering to help protect our oceans!
For your safety and that of others,
please read the following information.**

**If you have questions or concerns,
speak to your coordinator before
taking part. They can provide advice,
equipment and help.**

SYRINGES & SHARP ITEMS

**Used syringes are potentially dangerous
and it is important to prepare for their
removal. Syringes and other potentially
harmful objects should only be removed
and handled by trained volunteers or
coordinators.**



- Complete and hand in the Volunteer Registration Form. **You must be registered to participate.** Declare relevant medical conditions and discuss any limitations with your coordinator.
- **Volunteers under 18 must be accompanied** by their parent or guardian at all times.
- **Some debris may be hazardous** (e.g. building materials, asbestos, chemicals). Do not handle these or anything you're unsure of — inform your coordinator.
- **Do not handle syringes.** Report any found to your coordinator.
- **Clean-up areas can be dangerous** (e.g. beaches, roadsides, cliffs, riverbanks) and may hide risks (e.g. big surf, strong currents, rogue waves, snakes, spiders). Use caution and avoid unsafe areas.

1. Syringes must be put in Sharps Containers, not in bags or buckets (bring the sharps container to the syringe location)
2. Wearing gloves carefully pick up the object using tongs and place the sharp end point-first into the container.
3. Replace the lid securely on the container before moving.
4. Wash hands with soap and water or use an antiseptic wipe.
5. At the conclusion of the event, take the Sharps Container to your local hospital, council or health care centre.
6. At no time should needles or syringes be touched with bare hands. No attempt should be made to cover, break or bend the needle.

In the event of a Needle Stick Injury

- Stay calm. The risk of infection by HIV or hepatitis from a needle in the environment (as opposed to a medical setting) is extremely low.
- Wash the area with soap and running water (if not available use an alcohol-based hand rinse) and apply antiseptic and a band-aid.
- Seek medical assistance as soon as possible from your local doctor or hospital.

THE RIGHT GEAR

- **Wear enclosed shoes, gloves and protective gear** (hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, long sleeves).
- **Stay hydrated** and wash your hands after the clean-up and before eating.



**AUSTRALIAN
MARINE DEBRIS INITIATIVE®**

