

OHIO'S LITTER LAWS

FROM a scattering of cigarette butts on the sidewalk to a pile of old appliances in a weed-choked lot, litter is a blemish on the landscape. It drags down a community's image and is dismally contagious – nothing invites people to litter like a place that is already littered.

Most of us have contributed to the problem at one time or another, but fortunately, it is just as easy to be part of the solution:

KEEP small disposable bags handy – in the car, with your luggage, among your camping or picnic gear. Use these to stash trash and recyclables until you find a trash or recycling bin.

SECURE outdoor trash and recycling bins to keep wind and animals from spreading your discards around the neighborhood.

SET a civic-minded tone by refusing to litter, and occasionally pick up and properly discard some of the litter you come across every day.

KNOW the law. You can litter without knowing it. The loose receipt that falls from your grasp – or the empty box that blows from the bed of your truck – is litter. Whether you intended it or not, it contributes to the degradation of your surroundings, and Ohio's litter laws make no exceptions for accidents.

· Littering & illegal dumping - Ohio Revised Code 3767.32

Leaving any trash or discarded items on any public or private land or waterway is a third-degree misdemeanor in Ohio, good for a fine up to \$500 and 60 days in jail. The law also prohibits putting trash in someone else's trash receptacle without permission from the owner or a civil authority, unless the receptacle is intended for public use or the trash was generated on the property where the receptacle is located.

· Polluting state lands or waters - Ohio Revised Code 1531.29

The penalty for littering can be more severe when litter ends up on state land, or in any ditch, stream, river, lake, pond, or other watercourse, which is part of a larger surface or groundwater system. Pollution violations are third-degree misdemeanors on the first offense, but subsequent offenses within a year are first-degree misdemeanors with fines up to \$1,000 and as much as six months' jail time. The penalties apply if the litter is close enough to a body of water to be pulled in during flooding.

· Open dumping or burning - Ohio Revised Code 3734.03

Illegal dumping or burning of trash can also be prosecuted as an unclassified felony. Those convicted face fines between \$10,000 and \$25,000, two to four years incarceration or both a fine and imprisonment.

· Littering from a motor vehicle - Ohio Revised Code 4511.82

Littering from a motor vehicle is a minor misdemeanor – and can result in fines up to \$100. The driver of a motor vehicle can be cited if a passenger litters. The driver can also be cited if litter simply falls or blows from the vehicle.

· Unsecured load - Ohio Revised Code 4513.31

The tarp law: You must make sure anything you haul in a motor vehicle stays aboard during transit. Failure to do so is a minor misdemeanor the first time, a fourth-degree misdemeanor (good for a \$250 fine and up to 30 days in jail) the second time within a year, and a third-degree misdemeanor each time after that.

· Abandoned motor vehicles - Ohio Revised Code 4513.64

Leaving a junked motor vehicle on private property without the consent of the owner for more than 72 hours is a minor misdemeanor.

· Abandoned appliances - Ohio Revised Code 3767.29

A minor misdemeanor, the law refers to any airtight or semi-airtight container left in a place accessible to children. Penalty can be avoided by removing latches, hinges or other hardware that could trap someone inside.

· Littering from a boat - Ohio Revised Code 1547.49

Written specifically to address situations in which the officer feels the law against polluting state lands or waters is too harsh, such as when people litter from a boat or fail to retrieve litter that blows from their craft. Violations are a minor misdemeanor.

· Throwing refuse, oil, or filth into lakes, streams, or drains - Ohio Revised Code 3767.14

Littering public waterways is a first-degree misdemeanor for even the first offense when coal refuse, petroleum and petroleum products or waste from cheese making is dumped into the water.

· Depositing dead animals & offal on land or water - Ohio Revised Code 3767.16

Dumping the contents of an outdoor toilet, dead animals, or the remains of dead animals after slaughter any place other than an approved facility is a minor misdemeanor in Ohio.

· Against defiling springs or wells - Ohio Revised Code 3767.18

It is a minor misdemeanor to leave a dead animal or other putrid filth near a well or body of water with malicious intent.