

FISCAL YEAR October 1, 2023 - September 30, 2024

ANNUAL REPORT



2024

Allegheny CleanWays

100 Hafner Ave Suite 1111
Etna, PA 15223

A CLEAN, BEAUTIFUL AND SAFE COUNTY FOR EVERYONE

Our Mission

Allegheny CleanWays is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization formed in 2000 to "engage and empower people to eliminate illegal dumping and littering in Allegheny County."



PROGRAMS

Land Cleanups

- DumpBusters engages staff and volunteers in cleaning up illegal dumping
- StepKeepers enables residents to adopt and keep outdoor stairways free of litter and other debris
- Litter Competitions facilitates group litter cleanup through a fun, game-based format
- Litter Kits encourages individual/independent stewardship of neighborhood streets and parks

Riverfront Cleanups

- Tireless Project engages volunteers in cleaning up river shoreline debris using our 28- foot pontoon boat (Rachel Carson), our 36-ft pontoon barge (Plastic Magnet 1) and new (2023) jon boat (K&B)
- GrateKeepers enables residents to adopt and keep storm drains free of litter and other debris
- Streams and Creek Cleanups facilitates the cleanup of smaller bodies of water using kayaks, canoes or wading

Education and Outreach

- Education helps children and adults gain a better understanding of what a watershed is and how every day choices impact the health of the watersheds we live in
- Service Learning engages students in learning educational standards through cleaning up litter, discussion and reflection
- Outreach raises awareness about the problems associated with litter/illegal dumping, the work we do to address it and ways to reduce or prevent it
- Research provides information to the public, other organizations, local governments and other decision makers that encourages policy and/or procedure changes to reduce or eliminate litter/illegal dumping

ACW STAFF

Caily Grube

Executive Director

Michelle Lawler

Development Director

Lyssa Eberhardt

Program Director

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Land Coordinator/Boat Captain

Ben Haliburton

Water Coordinator

Matt Nemeth

Communications Coordinator

Lauren Pearman

Education Coordinator

John Bagley

Cleanup Crew Member

Karolina Karagyoza

Cleanup Crew Member

Kylie McCutcheon

Cleanup Crew Member



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THE YEAR IN REVIEW

by Caily Grube



As we end 2024, I'm filled with optimism about our progress and the path ahead. This year marked a turning point for Allegheny CleanWays, not only in strengthening our operations but also in setting the stage for our upcoming 2025-2028 Strategic Plan. I'm particularly proud of how we've laid a solid foundation for deeper, more preventative work—aiming not only to enhance our cleanup efforts but also to prevent litter and dumpsites from entering our communities in the first place.

This year, we set a challenging goal of surpassing 252 tons of trash removed—building on the previous year's accomplishments that

included a massive, single 70-ton cleanup event at an illegal dumpsite—we didn't have the benefit of a similar outlier event this year. Yet, I'm proud to share that our crew and dedicated volunteers exceeded this ambitious target, removing a total of 254 tons of trash. We also achieved a new record of 4,033 tires removed and clocked 3,280 volunteer hours—1,000 more than 2023!

The environmental challenges we face today are stark, and the ongoing climate crisis only reinforces the importance of our attentive work. As I prepared for my first year in this role, I was struck by one sobering statistic: 90% of the plastic found in the ocean comes from rivers.

This pollution not only contaminates our waterways, but also contributes to rising ocean temperatures and extreme weather events. Our weekly community cleanups help volunteers connect the dots, enhancing their understanding of litter's far-reaching environmental and social impacts as well as the importance of sustainable choices, not only for individuals, but also for communities and corporate producers.

There is a scene you may be familiar with at an ACW cleanup. Hundreds of tires have been dumped into a ravine. The task of removing them seem insurmountable as an individual. But as a collective, we can form a “daisy chain”, each carry small piece of the load until the tires are removed from the hill and sent to a tire recycler.

While our 2024 results are impressive, fostering this environmental consciousness and encouragement is one of the most powerful outcomes of our work. It is through collective action that we will build a sustainable future. And while there is much more work to be done, I am confident that our ACW community is part of the solution in Allegheny County.

Thank you for being part of this work.



Caily Grube
Executive Director
Allegheny CleanWays



STATISTICS

3,280

Volunteer Hours

407,422

Pounds of Trash Collected

1,590

People Reached Through
Education and Outreach

4,033

Tires Collected



2024 HIGHLIGHTS



2024 triTRASHlon

Twenty triTRASHletes biked 37 miles along the GAP trail and removed 3,972 pounds of manufactured waste from a wooded illegal dumpsite and the Youghiogheny River!



Welcome Ton-Ton!

We are now the proud owners of a brand-new dump truck with a two-ton capacity, fittingly named Ton-Ton! This heavy-duty truck will be a key asset as we continue to fight litter and illegal dumping.



Alta Via Pizzeria Benefit Dinner

We hosted a benefit dinner at Alta Via Pizzeria, where supporters learned more about our work over delicious pizza. Local writer Virginia Montanez spoke about our impact, and thanks to everyone's generosity, we raised essential funds to support our ongoing mission.



2024 Litter League

Neighborhoods across Pittsburgh and county municipalities came together to compete in our 2024 Litter League! Teams worked tirelessly to clean up their communities, picking up a total of 56,206 lbs of trash! Congratulations to our 2024 winners: the 412 Redder Uppers!

Acknowledgements

Community Partners



AmeriCorps
Amizade
Big Burrito
Black Radish
Borough of Braddock
Borough of Wilkesburg
City of Clairton
City of McKeesport
City of Pittsburgh Department of Public Works
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Student Conservation Association
Three Rivers Waterkeeper
Tri-Community Anglers Association
United by Blue
University of Pittsburgh Day of Service
Watersheds of South Pittsburgh





Acknowledgements

Foundation, Community and Corporate Funders

AEO Foundation
Allegheny County Health Department
American Water Charitable Foundation
Arconic Foundation
BNY/Mellon Community Impact
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United By Blue
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy: BHE GT&S
Watershed Mini Grant Program
Xylem

If your organization supported our work in our 2024 fiscal year, but you don't see them listed above, contact our Development Director Michelle Lawler at michelle@alleghenycleanways.org

