



ADOPT YOUR BEACH

Presented By

Ocean City Surf Club

We are a grass roots 501© (3) organization fueled by volunteers. Although many larger organizations address broad environmental issues, only OCSC focuses solely on protecting and maintaining our beaches in Ocean City. Filling that niche is an important role we take very seriously. The Adopt Your Beach program has evolved from this idea and we would like to propose the possibility of working together to implement it.

The Adopt Your Beach program is not just about litter. It's about the need for clean oceans, shorelines, and waterways. It is about residents working together to create permanent solutions to shoreline and marine debris. Our oceans and waterways have been a dumping ground for man-made debris for thousands of years. The harmful effects of litter are severe: negative economic and aesthetic impacts, harm and risk to human health and safety, injury and death to animals through entanglement and ingestion, and habitat destruction.

Additionally, the Adopt Your Beach program fosters feelings of pride and ownership as local residents begin to care for "their" beach and it gives people of all ages the opportunity to learn about and actively participate in conserving coastal resources.

PROGRAM GOALS

- **Maintain clean litter free beaches in Ocean City**
- **Raise public awareness on clean beach issues**
- **Collect statistical data on debris found**

Our Adopt Your Beach program is a beach clean-up, beach monitoring effort utilizing volunteers to keep the beaches clean and to keep an ongoing record of debris found. Participants collect data on the types of trash they find at the beach and record on the forms provided to them. This data will help us identify any areas of concern and be used for educational purposes. There will be a link on OCSC website to record and track the information.

The data sheets record detailed information regarding types of debris and quantities found. This information will be compiled and sent to Maryland Coastal Bays and the Town of Ocean City. Participants are required to fill out data sheets each beach clean-up and return to OCSC.

We will reach out to local schools, community groups, businesses, hotels and condo associations as well as individuals who want to adopt a section of beach. Each participation group will “adopt” an ocean block area to clean a minimum of 4 times a year between April and November. Ideally the group will also do additional beach clean-ups as the need arises and also schedule a cleanup on Earth Day. This is an opportunity for them to be vested in “their” beach. If the entity is inactive, Adopt Your Beach committee will try to find another sponsor for that access; however, the original adopting entity is first given several opportunities to express that they still want the access and will clean it and submit the forms.

Each group will be assigned an area of the beach, with their contact information being kept on file with the program coordinator. **We will stress they must be sensitive to the dunes as they are a protected area with no individual allowed on the dunes without the permission of the Dune Patrol coordinator.** We will coordinate our efforts with the dune clean-up group taking care of the dunes when needed.

The Adopt Your Beach committee will be responsible for working with interested groups to determine specific sections of the beach to be adopted.

ADOPT YOUR BEACH GROUP:

Each Adopt Your Beach group will be monitored as to date selection and follow through. OCSC will coordinate with Public Works to have the trash bags picked up the day of the clean-up.

Each Adopt Your Beach group must adhere to all existing ordinances and not deviate from any standing rules and regulations. No special exceptions will be allowed. OCSC will appoint a committee to oversee the entire process.

Each organization will be given a certificate to display, showing they have adopted a beach, location of beach and the year they are a participant.

Application, adoption forms, environmental information sheets and beach reporting forms to be used for the program will be on OCSC website and given to any group expressing an interest in participating.

Most important, we hope this extra effort, desire and imagination will take hold and our beach and therefore our ocean will be cleaner for it. We believe this is an innovative and worthwhile program to bring together our community, visitors and local government.