

# 2011 Clean Pittsburgh State of the City Report



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Clean Pittsburgh Commission  
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**Patricia Chavez**, Department of Public Works Traffic Division

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**Joe Divack**, Allegheny CleanWays DumpBusters

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## Introduction

This report contains an overview of waste management, blight and property issues, including litter, illegal dumping, vacant lots and buildings, abandoned cars, graffiti, and recycling in the City of Pittsburgh.

The Clean Pittsburgh Commission's vision for Pittsburgh is to be recognized as one of America's cleanest cities. We see Pittsburgh as a place where images of a dirty steel town are those of our past. Our City's government and its citizens are dedicated to making Pittsburgh a cleaner and greener place.

Highlights from this report include:

- ❖ **20,000+ volunteers** participated in spring and fall Redd Ups;
- ❖ **Over 2,500 tons** of litter and debris from streets, vacant lots, and illegal dumps were removed by citizens, Public Works, and special Redd Up Crews;
- ❖ Recycling programs saved the city over **\$387,000 in landfill costs** and generated **\$869,000 in income**;
- ❖ **More greening programs** reduced blight, revitalized vacant lots, and involved neighborhood residents

*This is the State of Our City, category by category for 2011.*



## Litter

Pittsburgh reached a milestone in 2011, marking the fifth year of two-a-year Redd Ups. Over this span, more than 100,000 volunteers of all ages have participated in 80+ neighborhoods. Over 1,000 tons of litter have been removed from streets. Many communities outside the city now join in on Redd Up weekends making them “must do” events.

Citizens Against Litter coordinates the effort with support of Clean Pittsburgh Commission members and organizations: Allegheny CleanWays, PA Resources Council, Department of Public Works, PennDOT, Pittsburgh Public Schools, University of Pittsburgh-Pitt Make a Difference Day, Duquesne University Evergreen, DumpBusters, Totally Against Litter, Graffiti Watch, U.S. Postal Service and Renew Pittsburgh.

### **2011 Redd Up Events: April 23- 25 and October 21-23**

- ❖ **80+ neighborhoods participated**
- ❖ **20,000 volunteers participated**
- ❖ **150+ tons of litter/recyclables collected in each event**



## Stash the Trash Event



Incredibly, 2011 marked the nineteenth year for the Stash the Trash Program! This program, where students throughout the City of Pittsburgh, take a day twice a year to cleanup and beautify the area around their schools, is still going strong nearly two decades after its introduction. This staying power is thanks to

all the wonderful partners involved including Pittsburgh Public Schools, the City of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh Pirates, the PA Resources Council, and the dedicated students and teachers who participate year in and year out. In 2011 Stash the Trash days were held on April 15th and October 21st with a recognition event held at PNC park on April 28th. Students were able to attend the Pirates Game and take part in a pregame tailgate courtesy of the Pittsburgh Pirates and the CPC!

- ❖ 30 schools participated with more than **3,600 students**
- ❖ Over **500 bags of trash** and **50 bags** of recyclables were collected



## Illegal Dumping

Pittsburgh still has a legacy of illegal dumping left over from days when waste disposal was non-existent or limited. Expanded recycling services, drop-off center operations, and special trash collections by the City have helped to reduce the volume of illegal dumping, but regionally limited options or fees for disposal of tires, lawn debris and remodeling and construction debris continue to contribute to illegal dumping of these items.

In 2009 Allegheny CleanWays conducted and published a survey of illegal dumpsites in the City of Pittsburgh, identifying 280 illegal dump sites. Since the publication of the survey, Allegheny CleanWays has pushed to remove as many of the known dump sites as possible, discovering as many as three times the number of additional sites in the process. Through our DumpBusters program, Tireless Project (our river cleanup program), large event cleanups, and assisted events, we were able to remove a record amount of debris from the empty lots, wooded hillsides, and riverbanks of Pittsburgh in 2011.

- ❖ 2010: 211.14 tons of debris and 1,590 tires were collected
- ❖ **2011: 291.07 tons of debris and 3,724 tires were collected**



## Mayor's Green Up Pittsburgh Program



Mayor Ravenstahl's Green Up Pittsburgh Program works to reduce blight, inspire community pride, and promote environmental values by stabilizing vacant lots. Since the program was introduced in 2007, more than **120 City-owned vacant lots** have been transformed into community green spaces, rain gardens, memorial gardens, urban farms, and green palettes.

In 2008, the program was expanded to have a greater impact Citywide. The expanded program physically prepares vacant lots for reuse, including future development, greenways, parks, and storm water management. Through the program, healthy greenspace is now replacing demolition sites, where a once blighted and condemned structure stood. In addition to **post-demolition greening**, the City continues to create **community-stewarded gardens**, and is providing resources to large-scale **community-wide greening strategies** and plans.

Green Up Pittsburgh provides responsible stewardship, reduces future maintenance costs, blight and liabilities, and increases public safety, neighborhood involvement, and the potential for traditional development.

Passive Green Space

*Before*



*After*





## Vacant Lots

The City of Pittsburgh currently owns 2,500 vacant lots. The City's Redd Up crew works to maintain the lots, along with other abandoned lots within the City. In 2011, crews cleared 182 lots and removed almost 2,000 tons of debris. They also boarded up 780 abandoned and dilapidated properties.

## Abandoned Buildings

The Mayor's Office, the Bureau of Building Inspection and the Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG) have been doing outreach to community groups to prioritize condemnations in their neighborhoods for preservation and demolition. This outreach has helped BBI to utilize its limited funds to better target neighborhood demolition priorities and public safety hazards.

- ❖ In 2011, **650 buildings were demolished**

## Mayor Ravenstahl's 311 Response Line

Mayor Ravenstahl's 311 Response Line addresses non-emergency questions, comments and concerns.



Residents are able to access the line simply by dialing **3-1-1**, or **412-255-2621** from outside the city. Residents may also complete the online web form: [city.pittsburgh.pa.us/mayor/html/311\\_request\\_form.html](http://city.pittsburgh.pa.us/mayor/html/311_request_form.html)

- ❖ In 2011, Mayor Ravenstahl's 311 Response Line processed **43,673 service requests**. The 311 Response Line took a total of **61,591 calls**, and **9,253 emails and web requests**



# TogetherGreen Pittsburgh Recycling



For the fourth year in a row, recycling tonnage has increased significantly. In 2011 the City recycled over 15,445 tons of curbside material. This continued increase is largely

attributed to the Together Green, single stream recycling program. In January 2008, Environmental Services began single stream recycling collection in half of the City. On November 1, 2008, the City of Pittsburgh expanded the Together Green program to include all residents of the City. The new program allowed residents to recycle magazines, catalogs, paperboard, junk mail, mixed paper, phonebooks, office paper and corrugated cardboard at the curb, in addition to the bottles, cans and newspapers that they have always recycled.

Recycling is mandatory for every resident, business, office and institution in the City of Pittsburgh (City Code 619). The City's Bureau of Environmental Services provides curbside recycling collection for residences, multi-family units and non-profit institutions that complete a service agreement form with the City. The City also provides a recycling drop-off service for residences and small businesses. In 2011, the Recycling Division provided assistance to over 100 special events, keeping over 49,000 pounds of recyclable material from being landfilled. See below the number of tires & tons of yard debris recycled at City Drop-offs during the past two years:

Year	Tons of Yard Debris Recycled	Tons of Tires Recycled	Tons of Material Recycled	Landfill Cost Savings
2010	3,666.45	74.9	14,656.78	\$368,178.31
<b>2011</b>	<b>3,127.51</b>	<b>3.71</b>	<b>15,726.59</b>	<b>\$387,974.97</b>



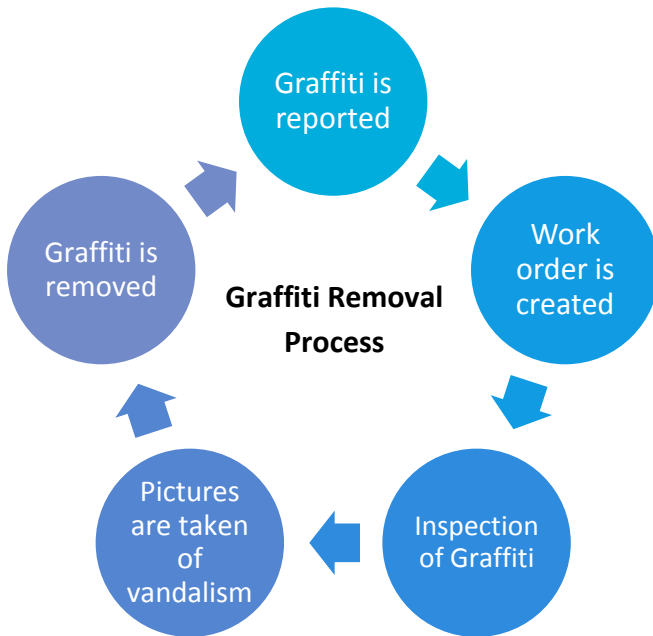
## Graffiti Busters Program

“Graffiti Busters”, the Graffiti Removal Program for the City of Pittsburgh, is managed by the Traffic Division under the City’s Department of Public Works. The Graffiti Busters has been in existence for some 15 years and its function is to remove all graffiti damage from public buildings and places and from private property on a case-by-case basis. When a report is taken about graffiti, it prompts a work order initiating an inspection and evaluation of the damaged property prior to removal of the graffiti. Pictures are taken of the vandalism and sent to the Graffiti Task Force, where an assessment is made by specialized officers, attempting to compare and evaluate damaged property, thus leading to possible arrests of the graffiti offenders. Only after these evaluations are made, the graffiti is removed, either by chemical application or by painting the property that has been perpetrated.

The following is a chart showing graffiti incidents in the City of Pittsburgh over the past 4 years and the costs associated with graffiti removal.

Note: The chart shows a 15 percent decrease in incidents of graffiti in the City, thus indicates a decrease in costs and expenses for graffiti removal in 2011.

Year	# of Graffiti Incidents Cleaned	Obscenities/Possibly Gang Related	Costs
2008	7,597	624/243	\$71,639
2009	7,976	517/291	\$75,213
2010	7,624	590/118	\$72,536
<b>2011</b>	<b>6,481</b>	<b>502/104</b>	<b>\$61,656</b>



To report graffiti on public property call **412-255-2872** or **412-255-2823**.

## Graffiti Watch

Graffiti Watch (GW) is an enthusiastic and dedicated group of community volunteers, formed in June 2007, who have been working together to prevent and remove graffiti from the South Side.

GW has identified graffiti zone action leaders who provide leadership in organizing graffiti prevention and removal activities within each of the **10 action zones** designated by the South Side Community Council. When possible, GW recruits a person on each block who will serve as the graffiti block watch monitor. GW encourages individuals to Adopt-a-Spot, no matter how small, and helps keep it free of graffiti. Contributions cover the cost of paint and supplies.

## Totally Against Graffiti



There are also neighborhood groups and organizations that fight graffiti vandalism by organizing watches, conducting paint-outs, and educating residents about what they can do to combat graffiti vandalism. These groups work in conjunction with the City of Pittsburgh's Graffiti Busters, and the City of Pittsburgh's Graffiti Task Force. One of the most dynamic graffiti removing groups, T.A.G. (Totally Against Graffiti), was formed in the Carrick neighborhood, where many graffiti removal projects were conducted, and volunteers removed hundreds of incidents of graffiti. In 2010, as the result of the efforts of the Leader of the TAG movement, a successful coalition was formed with the Postmaster, in efforts to decrease the amounts of graffiti found throughout the city on federal mailboxes. Strategies were discussed and a plan was put in place for reporting and removing graffiti, thus showing a remarkable decrease in mailboxes graffiti. The project, "Stamp Out Graffiti" was formed. Since this inception, over 170 mailboxes with graffiti were painted or repaired. This phase was conducted in 5 neighborhoods within the city. USPS and their efforts have significantly decreased graffiti on boxes in these neighborhoods. Currently, T.A.G., Clean Pittsburgh Commission, and the USPS are in planning a Phase II, graffiti blitz, on mailboxes in additional neighborhoods within the city of Pittsburgh.

Under the leadership of Service Manager Charles McCreadie, Postmaster Joseph Meimann, Russ Graswick, and previous Postmaster Rocco D' Angelo, the USPS has committed to helping to remove blight from all mailboxes throughout the City of Pittsburgh.

## Abandoned Vehicles



The state law enacted in 2007 gives the city authorization to rid Pittsburgh streets of abandoned vehicles on public and in some instances, private property. The focus on abandoned cars began prior to 2006 when Mayor Murphy called attention to the problem during Operation Cleansweep. At that time there were an estimated 7,000 illegal cars parked on our streets. Mayor O'Connor requested the enactment of a law to address the issue in 2006 and since that time, continued efforts under Mayor Ravenstahl and utilization of the 3-1-1 complaint system, has seen the elimination of backlog and reduction of these vehicles from our streets.

Under the current law, police are required to investigate complaints of abandoned cars within five days and remove cars within ten days. If the registration and inspection stickers have been expired longer than 90 days, the car must be removed. If the car meets the 90-day requirement and is also in a hazardous position, it will be towed immediately. In Pittsburgh, each of the six zones has an officer assigned to address complaints for abandoned cars and make determinations on the legality of removing them. These officers also handle complaints of cars abandoned on private property with the additional requirement that the property owner must 'sign off', or take responsibility for the tow. Abandoned vehicles continue to be reported and removed within a one week turnaround period. During 2011, the City towed 1,018 abandoned vehicles from our streets and properties.

Year	Street Tows	Private Property Tows	City Property Tows	Total Tows
2010	842	100	14	956
<b>2011</b>	<b>857</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1,018</b>

## Mayor Ravenstahl's Taking Care of Business Districts Program



In 2008, Mayor Ravenstahl launched his Taking Care of Business Districts Program. The Program is part of the Mayor's plan to clean and revitalize our City's 50 major

neighborhood business districts through clean sweeps, streetscape improvements and long-term strategies to renew neighborhood lifelines.

Mayor Ravenstahl continues to lead business district sweeps. During these sweeps, City public works and safety crews 'swept' the area to clean up storefronts. Working from a list of action items delivered by 311 callers and businesses, the TCOB crews work to cite properties, remove graffiti, paint road lines and respond to on-the-spot concerns from citizens.

Through the program, the City has been able to offer streetscape items to business districts, such as trash and recycling receptacles, street trees, street banners, bike racks, increased streetlight wattage, and way-finding signs.



## Love Your Block



Love Your Block is one of Mayor Ravenstahl's servePGH initiatives that aim to address our City's greatest challenges by engaging volunteers. Mayor Ravenstahl launched servePGH in March 2011 to engage

Pittsburgh's citizens in service and answer President Obama's national call to volunteerism. Love Your Block aims to revitalize our City -- block by block! Here's how it works: Nonprofit organizations from across Pittsburgh are invited to propose projects to transform their blocks with a small grant and the support of key City Departments. Competitive projects will be selected, after which City agencies will engage with awarded group members and listen to their block improvement requests. They will then proceed to carry out the requested services, as feasible. With grant money, the selected groups purchase equipment and supplies, engage their neighbors, and roll up their sleeves to carry out their own brand of block beautification and repair.

If you would like to be notified when applications are released for the next Love Your Block program, please call 412-255-4765 or email [servepgh@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:servepgh@pittsburghpa.gov).



## Redd Up Zone

Redd Up Zone is one of Mayor Ravenstahl's servePGH initiatives that aim to address our City's greatest challenges by engaging volunteers. Mayor Ravenstahl launched servePGH in March 2011 to engage Pittsburgh's citizens in service and answer President Obama's national call to volunteerism. Redd Up Zone



provides opportunities and support for volunteers to combat blight and beautify their neighborhood in partnership with the City of Pittsburgh. Through this program, businesses and organizations recruit volunteers to "adopt" a designated area, a 'Redd Up Zone,' and coordinate year-round cleanup efforts to enhance the appearance, safety, and cleanliness of Pittsburgh's streets. In recognition of their efforts, the City of Pittsburgh provides street signage that publicly acknowledges their commitment to keeping Pittsburgh litter-free, along with litter removal and extensive cleanup materials for adopting groups to borrow for each cleanup. You can apply online at [reddupzone.pittsburghpa.gov](http://reddupzone.pittsburghpa.gov).

If you have any questions, or would like more information please call 412-255-2280 or email

[servepgh@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:servepgh@pittsburghpa.gov)

## Current Clean Pittsburgh Stewards

A network of Clean Pittsburgh Stewards in all of Pittsburgh's 90 neighborhoods organize, plan, recruit and help execute Redd Ups and other litter prevention efforts. Stewards are the backbone of the Redd Up program – the link between City Departments, the Commission and citizens.

Neighborhood	Name
Allegheny West	Gloria Rayman, Mary Callison
Allentown	Ken Wolfe, Judy Hackel, Sally Tupi
Arlington	Debra Morgan
Banksville	Lori Marabello, Gregg Johnson, Kim Detrick
Bedford Dwellings	Gail Felton
Beechview	Phyllis DiDiano, Sue Pfeuffer, Bethany Hurwitz
Belmar Gardens	
Beltzhoover	Lorraine Bradford, Nicole Stephens, Walitta Abdullah
Bloomfield	Karla Owens, Terry Ford Aiello
Bon Air	Jan Koczerat, Tony Mosesso
Brighton Heights	Pete Bellisario
Brightwood	Ed Brandt, Ken Hale
Brookline	Keith Knecht
California Kirkbride	Debbie Reed, Tom Corcoran
Carrick	Dawn Harder, Kelly Hogle
CBD-Downtown	Paul Hochendoner
Chartiers	Minnie Brown, Lea-Etta Rhodes, Mitch Pavlovich
Crafton Heights	Theresa Smith, Carl Suter, Annette Studeny
Crawford Roberts	Shelia Petite
Duquesne Heights	Frank Valenta
East Allegheny	Lynn Glorieux
East Carnegie	Lois Kercher
East Hills	Claudia Wells, Monique Shorter

Neighborhood	Name
East Liberty	Katherine Camp, Nathan Wildfire, Loralyn Fabian
Elliott	Gena Turner, Kelly Frey
Esplen	Willie Tresky
Fairywood	Terri Minor
Fineview	Ed Lewis, Bill Weis
Friendship	Rebecca Mizikar
Garfield	Aggie Brose, Kathryn Vargas
Greenfield	Pat Hassett
Hays	Phil Jamison
Hazelwood, Glen Hazel	Jim Richter
Highland Park	Bob Staresinic
Homewood	Jose Diaz
Homewood North	Dawn Webb-Turner
Homewood (south, west)	Kiva A. Fisher-Green
Knoxville	Sharlee Ellison
Larimer	Ora Lee Carroll
Lawrenceville	Lauren Byrne, Becky Thatcher
Lincoln Place	Phil Jamison, Neil Schaming
Lincoln-Larimer	Ebony Scott
Manchester	Maureen Neary, Pat Torrey
Mexican War Streets	John Engle, Kathy Deis
Middle Hill	Michele Cooper, Marlene Jackson, Phylis D. Ghafoor
Morningside	Amy Ervin
Mount Oliver City	Suzanne N. Photos
Mount Washington	Kathryn Hunninen
New Homestead	Phil Jamison
North Point Breeze	Meghan Shaver
Northview Heights	
Oakland	Samuel Su
Oakland (North)	Kathie Scrabis

Neighborhood	Name
Oakwood	Tom Palmosina
Overbrook	Carol Anthony, Carl Smith , Rosemary & Larry Kenny
Perry North	Walt Nalducci
Perry South	Janet Gunter
Polish Hill	Terry Doloughty, Josie Ramsey
Regent Square	Alina Keebler, Mary Ellen Ottie
Ridgemont	Nick Martini, Annette Studney
Schenley Heights	Phyllis Jackson
Shadyside	Boris Weinstein, Richard Rattner, Katy Caliguri
Shraden	Sam Palombini, Debbie Whitfield
South Oakland	David Panasiuk
South Point Breeze	Judy Griffiths
Southside Flats	Sarah Alessio Shea, Catherine Mitchell
Southside Slopes	Paul Lorincy
Spring Garden	Ruth Ann Dailey
Spring Hill	Ben Soltesz
Squirrel Hill North	Bicky Goldzser
Squirrel Hill South	Barbara Grover
St Clair	
Stanton Heights	Dave Janco, Jim Heinrich, Bridget McNamee
Strip District	Becky Rodgers, Candi Cybator
Summer Hill	Heather Samuel, Dave Schuilenburg
Swisshelm Park	John Shields
Troy Hill	Julie Ewing
Upper Hill District	Diane Smith
Uptown (aka Bluff)	Luci-Jo DiMaggio
West End Village	Lisa Costa, Eric Worthing
Westwood	Theresa Smith, Annette Studeny
Windgap	Minnie Brown, Lea-Etta Rhodes, Mitch Pavlovich

## Closing

The Clean Pittsburgh Commission identified existing and new priorities in 2012 to monitor, prevent and Redd Up litter, eliminate blight and illegal dumping, promote greater awareness of the litter problem, recruit new sources to add volunteers and pursue more resultful litter enforcement policies.

### 2012 Priorities

- ❖ Maintain frequent communications with Neighborhood Clean Pittsburgh Stewards;
- ❖ Update and maintain the CPC web site;
- ❖ Support Neighborhood Redd Ups in the spring and fall with Citizens Against Litter;
- ❖ Sponsor one open meeting called Community Conversation for stewards and others; Sponsor the Meet N' Greet Mixer and "Bob Awards" Volunteer Recognition Event;
- ❖ Sponsor "Stash the Trash" in the spring and fall with PA Resources Council and Pittsburgh Public Schools;
- ❖ Support programs to eliminate illegal dumping with Allegheny CleanWays and DumpBusters;
- ❖ Support citywide anti-litter programs with Graffiti Busters, the expanding Stamp Out Mail Box Graffiti with the Postal Service, Graffiti Watch on the South Side , and Totally Against Graffiti in Carrick;
- ❖ Support recycling programs like "Let's Tackle Recycling" with PA Resources Council;
- ❖ Find support for the CPC Zero Tolerance Litter Enforcement Policy;
- ❖ Support the Mayor's Redd Zone Adoption Program to recruit more volunteers from among corporations, businesses and service groups;
- ❖ Reach out to more Pittsburgh colleges to recruit volunteers to join Pitt and Duquesne students for Redd Ups;
- ❖ Greater utilization of Pittsburgh Cares services to recruit volunteers;
- ❖ Continue to pursue funding resources for CPC programs.

## 2012 Upcoming Events

- ❖ March 22nd – Stewards Meet N’ Greet Mixer  
*Schenley Ice Rink*
- ❖ April 20th – Stash the Trash  
*Multiple Locations*
- ❖ April 21st & 22nd – Spring Redd Up Weekend  
*Multiple Locations*
- ❖ Hard To Recycle Collection Events – April 21<sup>st</sup>, May 12<sup>th</sup>,  
June 23<sup>rd</sup>, September 29<sup>th</sup>  
*Various locations – more info at prc.org*
- ❖ April 25<sup>th</sup> – Stash the Trash Recognition Event  
*PNC Park*
- ❖ April 27<sup>th</sup> – Paper Shredding Event  
*Market Square*
- ❖ April 28<sup>th</sup> – Pharmaceutical Collection Event  
*Various Locations*
- ❖ Household Chemical Collections Events – May 5<sup>th</sup>, May  
19<sup>th</sup>, July 14<sup>th</sup>, September 15<sup>th</sup>, October 13<sup>th</sup>  
*Various locations – more info at prc.org*
- ❖ August – Reuse Fest  
*South Side Works*
- ❖ September 6th –Community Conversation  
*CCI Center, South Side*
- ❖ October – Fall Redd Up Weekend  
*Multiple Locations – Date to be determined*

## Clean and Green Partner Resources



### **City of Pittsburgh**

Contact: Patty Chavez

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[patty.chavez@city.pittsburgh.pa.us](mailto:patty.chavez@city.pittsburgh.pa.us)

[www.pittsburghpa.gov](http://www.pittsburghpa.gov)



### **Allegheny CleanWays**

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Phone: 412-381-1301

[myrnan@alleghenycleanways.org](mailto:myrnan@alleghenycleanways.org)

[www.alleghenycleanways.org](http://www.alleghenycleanways.org)



### **Citizens Against Litter**

Contact: Boris Weinstein

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[boris.weinstein@verizon.net](mailto:boris.weinstein@verizon.net)

[www.citizensagainstlitter.org](http://www.citizensagainstlitter.org)



### **Pennsylvania Resources Council, Inc.**

Contact: Dave Mazza

64 S. 14<sup>th</sup> Street

Pittsburgh, PA 15203

Phone: 412-488-7490, x209

[davem@ccicenter.org](mailto:davem@ccicenter.org)

[www.prc.org](http://www.prc.org)



## 2012 Clean Pittsburgh Sponsors

*The CPC acknowledges these sponsors for their support in 2012 of events and activities including the Meet n' Greet Mixer, spring and fall Redd Ups and Stash the Trash and the fall Community Conversation:*

- ❖ City Council President Darlene Harris
- ❖ City Councilwoman Theresa Kail-Smith
  - ❖ City Councilman Bruce Kraus
- ❖ City Councilman Corey O'Connor
  - ❖ City Councilman Bill Peduto
    - ❖ Kevin Acklin
  - ❖ Citizens Against Litter
    - ❖ Giant Eagle
    - ❖ pair Networks
  - ❖ Waste Management



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