# Clean Pittsburgh Commission 2012 Annual Report





Issued by:
Clean Pittsburgh
Commission
March 21, 2013

### Clean Pittsburgh Commission Members

Kevin Acklin, Renew Pittsburgh

Patricia Chavez, City Department of Public Works

Luci-Jo DiMaggio, Duquesne University

Joe Divack, Allegheny CleanWays DumpBusters

Cheryl Doubt, City Bureau of Police

Candice Gonzalez, Office of Mayor Luke Ravenstahl

**Jeff Koch**, City Department of Public Works

Mark Mariani, City Bureau of Building Inspection

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### Introduction

This 2012 annual report provides an overview of waste management, blight and property issues, including litter, illegal dumping, vacant lots and buildings, abandoned cars, and graffiti in the City of Pittsburgh. It also includes proactive initiatives, programs and activities to address these challenges and enhance the overall quality of life in our City.

The Clean Pittsburgh Commission's vision for the City of Pittsburgh is to be recognized as one of America's cleanest and cared for cities. We see Pittsburgh as the recognized "most livable city" in its third economic renaissance and continuing to attract the world's attention in spite of emerging from our smoky steel town of the past. Our City government and our citizens are dedicated and committed to be a part of making Pittsburgh cleaner, greener and more environmentally safe for people to live, work, study and visit.

Report highlights include:

- 20,000+ volunteers participated in 2012 Spring and Fall Redd Ups;
- Several hundred tons of litter were removed from streets, lots and illegal dumps by City Department of Public Works and special Redd Up crews;
- Recycling programs saved the City \$393,270 in landfill costs and earned the City \$479,613; and
- More greening programs were initiated to reduce unsightly blight, revitalize vacant lots, and involve neighborhood residents and volunteers.



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### Litter

An energized network of Clean Pittsburgh Commission Stewards, supported by thousands of resident and student volunteers of all ages, drives twice-a-year Redd Ups that keep lots of litter off Pittsburgh neighborhood streets. Stewards select the areas to be cleaned in their neighborhoods, recruit volunteers, oversee the events, distribute gloves and bags and provide breakfasts and lunches. Many communities outside of Pittsburgh also join in, expanding participation to hundreds of groups in Western Pennsylvania.

Citizens Against Litter has been coordinating the Spring and Fall Redd Ups events since 2007 with the support of Clean Pittsburgh Commission member organizations and others: Office of the Mayor, City Department of Public Works, Allegheny CleanWays, PA Resources Council, PennDOT, public, private and parochial schools, University of Pittsburgh (Pitt Day of Caring and Make a Difference Day), Duquesne University Evergreen, Pittsburgh Cares, Totally Against Litter, Graffiti Watch and Renew Pittsburgh.

2012 Redd Ups: Spring - April 20, 21, 22 Fall - October 19, 20, 21

- 85 + Pittsburgh neighborhoods participated
- 40,000 volunteers participated
- 300+ tons of litter/recyclables collected

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### Stash the Trash



We all know the importants of teaching students how they can make Pittsburgh a clean, beautiful city and also make a difference in their community. For the past 20 years, schools throughout the City have done this through participating in the "Stash the Trash Day," a biannual clean-up event facilitated by the Clean Pittsburgh Commission, when students pick up litter around

their schools. This program helps students understand the positive impacts of being stewards to the environment and their communities.

In the Spring of 2012, 22 schools and over 1,800 students participated in the April 20 Stash the Trash day clean-up. These students collected over 250 bags of trash and 25 bags of recyclables from their communities. In appreciation for the students' hard work, the Pittsburgh Pirates treated them to gameday tickets to a baseball game at PNC Park.

In an effort to develop the Stash the Trash program, in the Fall of 2012 the City of Pittsburgh and the Clean Pittsburgh Commission restructured the program from biannual cleanup days to Mayor Luke Ravenstahl's year-round Redd Up Zone initiative.

The initiative provides for schools or school groups to adopt their schoolyard and/or streets around their school and pledge to keep them clean by hosting a number of scheduled clean-ups. Since the transition, 9 schools have signed up for a Redd Up Zone at their school



### Illegal Dumping

Pittsburgh has a lingering legacy of illegal dumping that carried over from the past when such discarded waste was not as keenly addressed as it is now. Expanded recycling services, drop-off center operations, and special trash collections by the City Department of Public Works have helped to reduce the volume of illegal dumping. But, regionally limited options and/or fees for the disposal of tires, lawn debris, and remodeling/construction debris do not completely deter illegal dumping.

As a result, four years ago 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 its DumpBusters program, Tireless Project (river clean-up program), large event clean-ups, and assisted events, they were able to remove a record amount of debris from the empty lots, wooded hillsides and riverbanks of Pittsburgh in 2012. Following is a summary of debris and tires they removed in the last 3 years:

❖ 2010: 211.14 tons of debris and 1,590 tires

2011: 248.55 tons of debris and 2,343 tires

❖ 2012: 195.20 tons of debris and 2,847 tires

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### Mayor's Green Up Pittsburgh Program



Mayor Ravenstahl's Green Up Pittsburgh Program works to reduce blight, inspire pride and promote environmental values by stabilizing vacant lots. Since the program was introduced six years ago, over **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 has replaced demolition sites and blighted and condemned properties. 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 ongoing responsible stewardship, reduces maintenance costs associated with blight, and promotes public safety and neighborhood involvement.

### **Vacant Lots**



The City of Pittsburgh currently owns **2,500 vacant lots** approved for sale. The City's Redd Up crew works to maintain abandoned lots throughout the City. In doing so, they clean up lots, board up structures and clear tons of debris continuously.

### **Abandoned Buildings**

The Office of the Mayor, the City Bureau of Building Inspection (BBI) and the Pittsburgh Community Reinvestment Group (PCRG) have been reaching out to community groups to prioritize condemnations in neighborhoods for either preservation or demolition. This outreach has helped BBI to maximize their limited resources and better target neighborhood public safety hazards and demolition priorities. In 2012, the City demolished 582 buildings.

### Mayor's 311 Response Center

Mayor Luke Ravenstahl's 311 Response Center addresses non-emergency questions, comments and concerns. Residents are able to access the center by dialing **3-1-1** in the City of Pittsburgh, or **(412) 255-2621** beyond



the City. Residents may also complete and submit a 311 report web form at the City's website at: http://pittsburghpa.gov/311/form.

In 2012, Mayor Ravenstahl's 311 Response Center processed **39,291 service requests**, answered **73,028 telephone calls** and responded to **7,991 emails and web requests**.

### TogetherGreen Pittsburgh Recycling



For the fifth consecutive year, curbside recycling tonnage in the City of Pittsburgh has increased. In 2012, the City recycled over 15,713 tons of curbside recycle materials that resulted in \$479,613 in recycling revenue income to the City. This continued increase is largely attributed to the simplicity of the TogetherGreen single-stream recycling program. Residents can recycle magazines, catalogs, paperboard, junk mail, mixed paper, phonebooks, office paper, newspaper and

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bottles and cans in the same blue bag or recycling bin. No separation is needed. In addition, the City collects corrugated cardboard at the curbside for recycling.

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 all residences, multi-family units and non-profit institutions for which a service agreement form has been completed and submitted to the City. The City also provides recycling drop-off service for residences and small businesses.

In 2012, the Recycling Division provided assistance to over 120 special events, keeping recyclable materials from being landfilled and helping to educate the public about recycling.

Following is a summary of the yard debris and tires tonnage that was collected at City drop-off locations and recycled during the past two years:

2011	2012
3,127	2,810
3.71	18.99
15,726	15,941
\$387,974	\$393,270
	3,127 3.71 15,726

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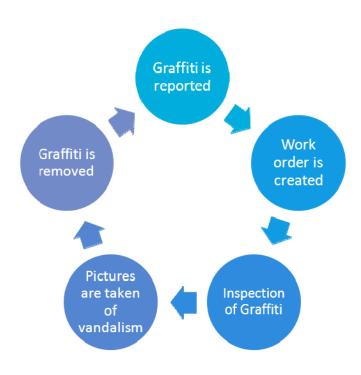
### **Graffiti Busters Program**

"Graffiti Busters" is the City of Pittsburgh's graffiti removal program. It is managed by the Traffic Division of the Department of Public Works. Graffiti Busters was instituted 15 years ago with the function of removing graffiti damage from public buildings and places as reported and from private property on a case-by-case basis. When graffiti is reported, it starts a work order that initiates an on-site inspection and evaluation of the damaged property. Pictures are taken of the vandalism and sent to the Graffiti Task Force. Specialized officers assess the graffiti and evaluate the damaged property. This may lead to arrests of the graffiti offender(s). At the completion of a thorough evaluation, the graffiti is removed with cleaning chemicals or by painting the damaged property.

The following chart shows graffiti incidents in the City of Pittsburgh over the past 5 years with associated costs of removing the graffiti:

Year	Number of Graffiti	Obscenities/Possibly	\$ Costs
	Incidents Cleaned	Gang-Related	
2008	7,597	624/243	71,639
2009	7,976	517/291	75,213
2010	7,624	590/118	72,536
2011	6,481	502/104	61,656
2012	7,016	498/ 97	67,156

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### **Graffiti Removal Process**

To report graffiti on public property in the City of Pittsburgh, please call:

(412) 255-2872 or (412) 255-2823

### **Totally Against Graffiti**



Neighborhood organizations and groups throughout the City of Pittsburgh 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 Graffiti Busters and the City Graffiti Task Force.

One of the most dynamic graffiti removing groups, TAG (Totally Against Graffiti), was formed in the Carrick neighborhood, where volunteers removed hundreds of graffiti tags. In 2010, TAG formed a successful coalition with the U.S. Postmaster to decrease the number of graffiti tags in Pittsburgh and on federal mailboxes. Strategies were discussed and a "Stamp Out Graffiti" plan was formed to report and remove graffiti. This resulted in a continuing decrease in mailbox graffiti.

Since then, under this plan and with the assistance of USPS nearly 200 mailboxes tagged with graffiti were painted or repaired throughout City neighborhoods. TAG, Clean Pittsburgh Commission, and USPS are planning a mailbox graffiti blitz in additional Pittsburgh neighborhoods.

### South Side Graffiti Watch

Formed in June 2007, the South Side Community Council Graffiti Watch (GW) is an enthusiastic and dedicated group of community volunteers, 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. Donations are welcome and cover the cost of paint and cleaning supplies. Contact Graffiti Watch at <a href="mailto:graffitiwatch@gmail.com">graffitiwatch@gmail.com</a> at **(412) 496-2272.** 

### **Abandoned Vehicles**



The focus on abandoned cars actually began prior to 2006 when Mayor Tom Murphy called attention to the problem during Operation Cleansweep. At that time, there were an estimated 7,000 illegal cars parked on our streets. Subsequently, then Mayor Bob

O'Connor requested the enactment of a law to address the issue in 2006.

The state law enacted in 2007 gives the City the authorization to rid Pittsburgh streets of abandoned vehicles on public and, in some instances, private property.

Since that time, Mayor Luke Ravenstahl has continued addressing the abandoned vehicles problem, utilizing his 311

Response Center. As a result, the backlog has been eliminated and the number of abandoned vehicles on our streets has been greatly reduced.

Under the current law, police are required to investigate complaints of abandoned cars within 5 days and remove cars within 10 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 location, it will be towed immediately.

Each of the City of Pittsburgh's six police 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 towing charge.

Abandoned vehicles continue to be reported and removed as required. During 2012, the City towed 862 abandoned vehicles from our streets and properties as described in more detail in the following table.

Year	Street Tows	Private Property Tows	City Property Tows	Total Tows
2011	857	154	7	1,018
2012	753	101	8	862

## Mayor's Taking Care of Business Districts Program



In 2008, as part of his green initiatives, Mayor Ravenstahl first launched his Taking Care of Business Districts (TCOB) Program. TCOB is part of the

Mayor's plan to keep our City clean and revitalize our 50 major neighborhood business districts. Through clean sweeps, streetscape improvements and long-term strategies, the Office of the Mayor and the City Department of Public Works boost neighborhood daytime and nighttime business district economies.



City crews sweep and clean our business storefronts, neighborhood streets and surrounding areas. They also respond to 311 Response Center clean-up complaints and requests on an ongoing basis. The TCOB

team works to cite property owners for violations, remove graffiti, and paint roadway traffic signs and lines. The program has provided streetscape enhancements to business districts, including trash/recycling and cigarette ash receptacles, street trees, street banners, bike racks, increased streetlight wattage, and way-finding signage.

### **Love Your Block**

Mayor Ravenstahl's Love Your Block program aims to revitalize our City—block by block. Here's how it works. Non-profit organizations, community groups and individuals from across Pittsburgh propose projects to transform neighborhood blocks with a \$1,000 Home Depot gift card and the support of key City Departments. Eligible projects include vacant lot beautification, community gardens, veterans' war memorial revitalization, and more.

Once the projects are selected, community groups engage their neighbors to carry out their block beautification. Each season, the project with the most impressive block transformation is awarded an additional \$2,000 in funding.

Applications for Love Your Block are available in the summer and winter of each year. To date, Love Your Block has funded 40 revitalization projects around the City, creating 127 green spaces and collecting over 8 tons of litter

For more program and online application information, please call (412) 255-2280, e-mail <a href="mailto:servepgh@pittsburghpa.gov">servepgh@pittsburghpa.gov</a> or visit <a href="http://pittsburghpa.gov/loveyourblock/">http://pittsburghpa.gov/loveyourblock/</a>.

### Adopt a "Redd Up Zone"

Mayor Ravenstahl's Redd Up Zone engages volunteers to keep their streets and neighborhoods litter free. Volunteer groups and organizations are asked to adopt a "Redd Up Zone" and commit to year-round clean-ups in a designated area(s).

Volunteers maintain their established zones with quarterly clean-ups over a period of at least two years. Redd Up Zone volunteers receive trash bags, gloves and trash bag removal for every clean-up.

In recognition of the volunteers' hard work and dedication, the City provides Redd Up Zone signage in the designated area(s).

Since its launch, over 70 Redd Up Zones have been established, impacting 53 miles of roadway, removing over 18,000 pounds of litter, and engaging 500 volunteers.

There is still a lot of cleaning up to be done! Anyone can apply to "Adopt a Redd Up Zone" online at www.pittsburghpa.gov.

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### Clean Pittsburgh Stewards

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

### NEIGHBORHOOD NAME

<u>A</u>llegheny West Gloria Rayman, Mary Callison

Allentown Ken Wolfe, Judy Hackel, Sally Tupi

Arlington Debra Morgan

Banksville Lori Marabello

Bedford Dwellings Gail Felton

Beechview Phyllis DiDiano, Sue Pfeuffer, Bethany Hurwitz

Belmar Gardens

Beltzhoover Raymont Connor, Nicole Stephens

Bloomfield Terry Ford Aiello

Bon Air Jan Koczerat, Tony Mosesso

Brighton Heights Pete and Joan Bellasario, Tim Maloney

Brightwood Melissa Gallagher, Ed Brandt, Ken Hale

Brookline Keith Knecht

California Kirkbride Debbie Reed, Tom Corcoran

Carrick Dawn Harder, Missy Rosenfield

CBD-Downtown Paul Hochendoner

Chartiers Minnie Brown, Lea-Etta Rhodes, Mitch Pavlovich

Crafton Heights Theresa Kail-Smith, Jason Dix, Carl Sutter

Crawford Roberts Sheila Petite

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Comm

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East Hills Diane Daniels, Monique Shorter Katherine Camp, Nathan Wildfire, Mikana Maeda East Liberty Elliott Gene Turner, Kelly Frey Willie Tresky Esplen Fairywood Terri Minor Melissa Gallagher, Bill Weis Fineview Friendship Rebecca Mizikar Garfield Aggie Brose, Carolyn Ristau, Keelyn Young Greenfield Pat Hassett Neil Schaming, Phil Jamison Hays Hazelwood Jim Richter **Highland Park Bob Staresinic** Homewood Jose Diaz, Dawn Webb-Turner Knoxville Pat Murphy, Sharlee Ellison Larimer Debra Miller, Carolyn Peeks Lawrenceville Lauren Byrne, Becky Thatcher Lemington-Lincoln **Ebony Scott** Phil Jamison, Neil Schaming Lincoln Place Lower Hill Marlene Jackson Maureen Neary, Pat Torrey Manchester

Mexican War Streets Kathy Deis, John Eagle

**NEIGHBORHOOD** 

**Duquesne Heights** 

East Allegheny

East Carnegie

<u>NAME</u>

Frank Valenta

Lynn Glorieux

Lois Kercher

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<u>NAME</u>
Natura Haymon, Marlene Jackson, Phylis Ghafoor, Michele Cooper
Amy Ervin
Kathryn Hunninen
Suzanne Photos, Lynn Staab
Phil Jamison, Neil Schaming
Meghan Shaver
Barbara Talerico, Arthur James
Ginny Giles
Tara Sherry-Torres
Kathie Scrabis
Pat Freiss
Carl Smith, Carol Anthony
Walt Nalducci
Janet Gunter
Valerie Testa, Alexis Miller
Mary Ellen Ottie
Nick Martini
Phyllis Jackson, Laura Zurowski
Boris Weinstein, Richard Rattner, Tori Mistick
Sam Palombini, Debbie Whitfield
David Panasiuk
Judy Griffiths

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### <u>NEIGHBORHOOD</u> <u>NAME</u>

South Side Flats Sarah Alessio Shea, Catherine Mitchell

Southside Slopes Paul Lorincy, Brian Oswald

Spring Garden Ruth Ann Dailey

Spring Hill Ben Soltesz

Squirrel Hill Michael Jehn, Barbara Grover

St. Clair Lynn Staab

Stanton Heights Jim Heinrich, Bridget McNamee

Strip District Candi Cybator

Summer Hill Heather Samuel, Dave Schullenberg

Swisshelm Park John Shields

Troy Hill April Weber, Julie Ewing

Upper Hill District Diane Smith

Uptown Jeanne McNutt, Siena Kane,

Luci-Jo DiMaggio

West End Village Eric Worthing, Lisa Costa

Westwood Theresa Kail-Smith

Windgap Minnie Brown, Lea-Etta Brown,

Mitch Paylovich

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### Clean and Green Partner Resources



**City of Pittsburgh** 

**Dept. of Public Works Traffic Division** 

Contact: Patty Chavez Phone: (412) 255-2872 Fax: (412) 255-2753

patty.chavez@pittsburghpa.gov

www.pittsburghpa.gov



**Allegheny CleanWays** 

Contact: Myrna Newman 33 Terminal Way Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Phone: (412) 381-1301 Fax: (412) 488-7716

myrnan@alleghenycleanways.org

www.alleghenycleanways.org



**Citizens Against Litter** 

Contact: Boris Weinstein 5403 Ellsworth Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15232 Phone: (412) 688-9120 Fax: (412) 622-0167

boris.weinstein@verizon.net 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

Fax: (412) 488-7492 davem@ccicenter.org

www.prc.org

### Closing

The Clean Pittsburgh Commission identified ongoing and new priorities in 2013. Overall, it will monitor, educate, prevent and Redd Up litter, eliminate blight and illegal dumping, promote recycling, promote greater awareness of the litter problem, recruit new sources to add volunteers and pursue more effective litter enforcement policies.

### 2013 Priorities

- Maintain frequent communications with Clean Pittsburgh Stewards
- Update and maintain the CPC's Strategic Plan for the next few years
- Support Citizens Against Litter Neighborhood Spring/Fall Redd Ups
- Sponsor the Meet n' Greet Mixer and Bob Awards Event
- Create a Fall workshop event for stewards and volunteers
- Support programs to eliminate illegal dumping with Allegheny CleanWays
- Support the Mayor's Adopt a Redd Up Zone program to recruit business, college/university and service group volunteers, and children around their schools
- Pursue support for the CPC Zero Tolerance Litter Enforcement Policy
- Continue to pursue funding for CPC programs

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### 2013 Upcoming Events

- March 21 Stewards Meet n' Greet Mixer and Bob Awards
  - Schenley Ice Rink
- ❖ April 21-22 Spring Redd Up Weekend
  - Multiple Locations
- October Fall Community Conversation
  - o CCI Center, South Side
- October Fall Redd Up Weekend
  - dates/locations to be determined
- For dates and information on household chemical, pharmaceutical, and hard-to-recycle collections visit www.zerowastepgh.org or call (412) 488-7490.

Printed by the Office of Mayor Luke Ravenstahl