



Thanks to the Marco Island Area Association of Realtors for sponsoring the May two hour beach cleanup from South Beach. Volunteers picked up over 120 pounds of trash.

Plastic Straws a Danger to Sea Turtles

By Maria Lamb

On May 11, 2024, the Marco Island Area Association of Realtors along with volunteers from the Marco Island Academy Key Club and Marco residents gathered at South Beach for a beach cleanup. After two hours, volunteers removed up to 120 pounds of trash from the beach and a bucket filled with drinking straws!

During the April beach cleanup, straws led the list and volunteers from the Beach & Coastal Resources Advisory (BACR) are keeping a tally. For the second month, single use drinking straws topped the list as one of the most common items picked up during a beach cleanup.

Who can forget the video of a plastic drinking straw lodged up a sea turtle's nostril that went viral on social media in 2015? It is an image you cannot "un-see" once you've seen it and this sparked the anti-plastic-straw movement worldwide.

In 2015 researchers observed what they initially thought to be a tube worm but discovered that it was a plastic drinking straw.

Did you know that on March 5, 2018,

Marco Island City Council unanimously voted to "prohibit the use of plastic straws by those businesses located directly adjacent to the City beaches?"

Drinking straws that are made from plastic or compostable/corn based are showing up in noticeable quantities during the two-hour beach cleanups. Luckily, many of these straws are being intercepted by volunteers before washing up in the ocean before they cause harm to sea turtles and other marine life.

Save a Sea Turtle - say no to straws!



Marco Island Academy Key Club volunteers keeping Marco's Beach pristine and clean.



Photos by Maria Lamb

Once again, single use drinking straws topped the list as one of the most common items picked up during a beach cleanup at the April and May Beach Cleanup on South Beach.

Sea Turtle Activity Update May 14 - 20, 2024

Beach	Nests		False Crawls		Hatched Nests		
	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	This Year	Last Year	Disoriented
Barefoot	27	31	19	58	0	0	0
Delnor Wiggins	7	9	1	21	0	0	0
Vanderbilt	39	35	37	50	0	0	0
Parkshore	20	10	19	41	0	0	0
City of Naples	32	42	36	50	0	0	0
Keewaydin Is.	52	37	60	86	0	0	0
Sea Oat Island	1	0	1	14	0	0	0
Marco Island	9	6	15	45	0	0	0
Kice and Cape Romano	21	13	25	21	0	0	0
10,000 Islands	21	14	16	23	0	0	0
Collier County Totals	229	197	229	409	0	0	0

To report dead, injured or disoriented sea turtles on Marco call 239-289-9736 or 239-289-9687

Ban from A/1

ratio. And Potassium (K) is always the third number.

According to the Environmental Protection Administration (EPA) "When too many nutrients, mainly nitrogen and phosphorus, enter our waterbodies, they cause excessive algal growth. Excess algae can reduce or deplete dissolved oxygen available to aquatic life and, in many instances, produce toxins that can harm people, animals, and aquatic life."

Marco Island's Fertilizer Ordinance also acknowledges that "overuse and improper application of nitrogen and phosphorous create water quality issues and pollute

our treasured waters. They promote algae blooms and other excessive plant growth."

Do not apply fertilizer to impervious surfaces (means a constructed surface, such as a sidewalk, road, parking lot, or driveway, covered by impenetrable materials such as asphalt, concrete, brick, pavers, stone, or highly compacted soil.)

Fertilizer Spill? Clean it Up! Fertilizer shall not be applied, spilled, or otherwise deposited on any impervious surfaces. Any fertilizer applied, spilled, or deposited, either intentionally or accidentally, on any impervious surface shall be immediately and completely removed.



Per the Fertilizer Ordinance, "Always use Spreader Deflector Shields when fertilizing adjacent to Fertilizer Free Zones or Impervious surfaces and when applying fertilizer near water or sidewalks, driveways, and streets."



Sweep or blow grass clippings from street/sidewalks back into the grassy area. Do not blow grass clippings into storm drains or over the seawalls.

Fertilizer Free Zone – Fertilizer shall NOT be applied within ten (10) feet of any pond, stream, storm drain, watercourse, lake, canal, or wetland as defined by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection or from the top of a seawall.

Always use Spreader Deflector Shields when fertilizing adjacent to fertilizer-free zones or Impervious surfaces and when applying fertilizer near water or sidewalks, driveways, and streets.

Fertilizer may only be applied four times per year, and no more than four pounds of nitrogen may be applied per 1000 square feet per year.

Exemptions: Fertilizer Ordinance shall NOT apply to Athletic Fields that are maintained and used by the public as exempt from fertilizer application regulation under Section 18-64(6)a.

Retail businesses within the City selling fertilizer are requested to post a notice in a conspicuous location near the fertilizer notifying customers of this ordinance.

Code Enforcement Officer Keith Richter provided the following update on Landscaping Companies:

- There are 238 Landscaping Companies that are registered to work on Marco Island. To register, they must be properly licensed by Collier County.
- There are 26 Landscaping companies that have not completed the registration process.
- If a company is found to be working on Marco Island in violation of City Ordinance 8-73(a), a Notice of Violation is issued. The company will have 60 days to complete the registration process and is not allowed to operate on Marco Island until properly registered.
- Code Officers proactively look for landscapers with the proper window sticker on their vehicle.
- The goal for 2024 is 100% compliance for all Landscaping businesses working on Marco Island to be properly registered.