

The Rhode Island Litter Task Force was created in response to a discussion of the May 7<sup>th</sup> Environmental Roundtable meeting. It consists of members of Audubon Society of RI, Buckeye Brook Watershed Association, Clean Water Action, RI Association of Conservation Commissions, RI DEM, RI Food Dealers Association, Sierra Club of RI, Woonasquatucket River Watershed, and others. This group was convened to study the growing litter problem throughout the state and has been meeting monthly to discuss ways of addressing the problem. The three main areas of focus for the Task Force are:

- Revise the law regarding restricted receipt accounts
- Revise the litter and recycling laws
- Develop programs to educate the public concerning the negative impacts of litter.

To date, the Task Force has developed a survey, sent to all municipal police, public works, and administrative departments, regarding current municipal litter ordinances and methods of local enforcement. Information gathered from this survey will help to determine the types of changes needed in the laws and demonstrate the need for these changes. The Task Force plans to use this information to approach legislators and the governor with suggested changes in the laws.

A letter was written and will soon be distributed to some of Rhode Island's key businesses asking them to join the Task Force to discuss litter education and prevention strategies. The Task Force will also be asking local Chambers of Commerce for their involvement as well.

The Task Force is looking into corporate sponsorship and stewardship in an attempt to address the fact that no funds exist for litter education, prevention and clean up. Members of the Task Force hope to meet with corporate officials to discuss ways that business can aid in litter education and prevention.

The Task Force sent a letter to the Executive Director of the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation (RIRRC) inviting her to participate in the discussions. Additionally, RIRRC has been asked by members of the Rhode Island General Assembly to spearhead a new "Eye on Litter" campaign. The Task Force will be working with members of RIRRC to help implement this program.

Some methods of educational campaigns have been discussed. Ideas include state and local highway signs, notices on drivers license and registration renewal forms, posters at all Rhode Island DMV's, reminders on lottery tickets (as well as an innovative idea whereby when a person turns in 10 used lottery tickets, he/she receives a free ticket of the same type), and some replication of the successful "Don't Mess With Texas" program.

The Task Force meets every third Thursday of the month at DEM, in room 425. Additional information on the Rhode Island Litter Task Force can be found on the web at <http://www.state.ri.us/dem/programs/ombuds/litter/index.htm>