

Conservation News



Environmental News and Information from the City of Melbourne
Public Works & Utilities Department ~ Environmental Community Outreach Division

Web area gives valuable stormwater information



Melbourne's rapid population growth and our subsequent change in land use have created a need for effective stormwater management. A clean water supply is critical for our drinking, our agriculture, our industry and our recreation.

Over the years, contaminat-

ed stormwater has contributed to a steady deterioration of the Indian River Lagoon and threatens the quality of other bodies of water in our area.

Residents, business owners and builders are encouraged to visit the stormwater management section of the City's web site. To go directly to

this comprehensive section, navigate to www.melbourneflorida.org/stormwater.

Once there you will find extensive useful information including why stormwater runoff is a problem, stormwater ordinances, builder education, a homeowner's guide, and more.

Marine plastics harmful to oceans and animals

Excerpts from an article by Maia McGuire, University of Florida Sea Grant Extension Agent

Many of us are accustomed to finding plastics on local beaches, such as bottles and straws, or simply plastic pieces. Unfortunately, plastics don't biodegrade. As they age and weather, plastics simply break apart into smaller and smaller pieces.

Beaches around the world are littered with plastic debris. According to the University of Florida Sea Grant Program, even the most remote islands, uninhabited by human beings, are becoming inundated with non-biodegradable plastics.

Researchers from the Marine Science Department at the University of Hawaii analyzed plastic debris from nine remote locations throughout the Hawaiian Archipelago. A total of 22, 20-liter buckets

of sand scooped from the surface of the remote beach were



Plastic pellets found on beach.

collected from nine sites. These samples were sieved for pieces that were between one and 15 millimeters in size. Of the sample collected, 72 percent was plastic.

Plastics are showing up more and more in marine food chains — even in the digestive tracts of zooplankton, and in the stomachs of baby sea turtles that have washed back to shore within a few days or weeks of hatching.

We can all do our part to try and reduce the amount of plastic entering our oceans or other water bodies. Following are a few simple suggestions:

- Recycle as much as possible. Melbourne's, like most

curbside recycling programs, accept plastic bottles. Plastic shopping bags can be recycled at many grocery stores. Monofilament fishing line can be recycled at many tackle shops and fishing locations around Florida. You can find locations in Brevard County by visiting www.fishinglinerecycling.com.

- Choose to buy glass rather than plastic containers when possible. Glass and much of our beach sand have the same chemical composition, so ground up glass is essentially the same thing as silica-based beach sand.
- Do not release balloons into the air. They will come down somewhere, and may be washed into rivers, lakes, or the ocean where they can be mistaken for jellyfish by animals such as leatherback sea turtles and ocean sunfish, which feed on jellyfish almost exclusively.



City of Melbourne
Public Works & Utilities
Dept./
Environmental Community
Outreach Division
2885 Harper Road
Melbourne, FL 32904
Phone: (321) 953-6302
Fax: (321) 674-5765
E-Mail: utilitiesconserve@melbourneflorida.org

