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Carry It - Don't Bury It
Help Keep New Hampshire Beaches Clean

Portsmouth, N.H.- June 29-July 5 is National Clean Beaches Week, which also kicks off New Hampshire's "Carry It-Don't Bury It" campaign. State and private campaign partners want to inform beachgoers to dispose of their cigarette butts properly in designated receptacles, not the sand, this summer. Partners also hope to motivate people to carry out all of their trash instead of leaving it on the beach. N.H. State Parks has a "Carry-in Carry-Out" trash policy in all their parks, including Seacoast beaches.

"Cigarette butts and other types of litter on our beaches are a huge problem. It's important to keep in mind that the beach is not an ashtray or a garbage can," said Catherine Coletti, NHCP Communications Coordinator. Nearly all cigarette filters are made of cellulose acetate, a form of plastic, and they can take many years to degrade.

This summer New Hampshire State Park staff will place 20 cigarette butt disposal stations on Hampton State Beach, four at Hampton Beach State RV Park, four at Wallis Sands State Beach, four at Odiorne Point State Park, three at Kingston State Park (lake in Kingston New Hampshire), and three at Rye Harbor. Staff will maintain the stations on a weekly basis. The stations were purchased with the help of the Beach Inspection Program at NHDES.

The disposal stations are the first step in a multi-phase effort to increase awareness of the problem of cigarette butts on the beach. The hope is to motivate people to put butts in the new disposal stations. Project partners will use cleanup events to highlight the issue, post new signage about where to safely dispose butts, set up a website and air announcements on local community radio and TV. In addition, informational kiosks on some state beaches will encourage beachgoers to carry out their cigarette butts.

In 2005, cigarette butts were the most common debris item collected at New Hampshire beach cleanups, according to the Blue Ocean Society, which runs several cleanup programs on our coastal beaches throughout the year with NHCP funding support. In addition, a startling 52,000 cigarette butts were collected from 24 sites along the coast and Great Bay on International Coastal Cleanup Day in September, 2005.

In addition to beach cleanups and 150 New Hampshire Parks State Park summer staff, New Hampshire State Park's sand sifters help address the problem by filtering sand and catching cigarette butts and other trash before redepositing the sand. One sand sifter operates on Hampton Beach and a second sand sifter, partially funded by NHCP, arrived on the scene in 2004, and is dedicated solely to state-owned beaches in Rye.

Even with all of these efforts, there is no way to address the problem of cigarette butts and other trash on our beaches without beachgoers helping out. Please carry it, don't bury it!

To participate in a coastal cleanup or learn more about the Adopt-A-Beach Program, contact the Blue Ocean Society for Marine Conservation at (603) 431-0260 or info@blueoceansociety.org. For more information and cleanup dates, visit <http://www.blueoceansociety.org/cleanup.htm>.