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San Diego. America's Finest City...Or is it?

San Diego County's Largest Volunteer Event Expands across the Border

San Diego, CA – Did you know that last year in San Diego County, volunteers removed 331,282 pounds of trash from local beaches, bays, and open space areas through I Love A Clean San Diego and San Diego Coastkeeper's cleanups? That's 166 tons of cigarette butts, food wrappers, plastic bags, bottle caps, and countless other items which would otherwise trash our coastline. No one would argue that San Diego is a beautiful city to live in but without the help of these dedicated organizations and volunteers "America's Finest City" may not live up to its name.

As the summer season winds to a close, it's time for more San Diegans to join the cause and help restore local beaches and inland waterways back to health before the rains flush tons of debris to the coast. I Love A Clean San Diego and San Diego Coastkeeper, in partnership with the California Coastal Commission, are making it fun and easy for everyone to do their part by coordinating the 24th Annual California Coastal Cleanup Day in San Diego County, presented locally by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors through the support of Supervisor Greg Cox & Supervisor Pam Slater-Price. Engage friends, co-workers and family members to attend on Saturday September 20th for the largest cleanup event in the county, the state, the nation, and the world!

"Coastal Cleanup Day is an excellent opportunity to teach residents the importance of proper disposal", states Pauline Martinson, executive director of I Love A Clean San Diego. "A majority of the items, if left alone, will contaminate San Diego's waterways and negatively affect marine health."

This year, volunteering is convenient with over 71 coastal and inland cleanup sites to choose from, including an underwater cleanup site in the San Diego Bay, as well as the only bi-national cleanup site in the state, hosted jointly at Border Field State Park in Imperial Beach & across the border at Playas de Tijuana. This bi-national aspect reminds us all that pollution knows no boundaries.

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Coastal Cleanup Day is paramount in combating the local and worldwide pollution problems facing coastlines as well as many miles upstream. California Coastal Cleanup Day accounts for about 10% of all volunteers participating in the International Coastal Cleanup, a global stand against marine debris, coordinated by the Ocean Conservancy. This event is unique in that it is part of an international study on marine pollution, meant to spread awareness about littering and the harmful effects of marine debris on humans, economies, and of course, the shared marine environment. Each volunteer compiles data on the items collected during the cleanup, and this data is often used to pass important legislation to curb pollution.

“California Coastal Cleanup Day is the state’s premier volunteer event,” said Eben Schwartz, Outreach Manager for the California Coastal Commission. “Coastal Cleanup Day teaches all Californians that our everyday actions have broad implications for the well-being of our oceans and the habitat and wildlife that depend on them.”

The event is sponsored statewide by the California Coastal Commission & Whole Foods Market. In San Diego County, the event is presented by the aforementioned San Diego County Board of Supervisors, with generous support from the Sempra Energy Foundation, Qualcomm, Kashi, and Think Blue – San Diego. Media sponsors for this year’s event include 10News and Azteca America San Diego 15, as well as SOPHIE and Radio Latina. Other local sponsors include Cox Communications, SeaWorld Adventure Park, AMB Solutions, Cykichosting.com, General Dynamics NASSCO, Fitness & Wellness Insurance, Lincoln Military Housing, City of La Mesa, Birch Aquarium, Hornblower Cruises and Events, Valley View Casino, Dog Beach Dog Wash, and the San Diego Natural History Museum.

The coast is part of everyone’s lifestyle in San Diego and its year-round use is reason enough to take the necessary steps to keep it clean. After spending all summer playing in nature’s backyard, let’s all spend a few hours helping to restore it!

For more information and to register for this event in San Diego County, visit www.cleanupday.org.

I Love A Clean San Diego: *Through outreach, community involvement and example, I Love A Clean San Diego leads and educates our community to actively conserve and enhance the environment. As one of San Diego County's oldest and largest environmental education non-profit organizations, ILACSD promotes awareness of environmental issues including resource conservation, waste reduction, recycling, community enhancement, and pollution prevention.*

San Diego Coastkeeper: *San Diego Coastkeeper protects the region’s bays, beaches, watersheds and ocean for the people and wildlife that depend on them. We balance community outreach, education, and advocacy to promote stewardship of clean water and a healthy coastal ecosystem. Dedicated to the belief that we all have a right to clean water, Coastkeeper is the largest professional organization dedicated solely to the monitoring and protection of San Diego’s coastal areas and waterways.*

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