



**STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**ENVIRONMENTAL DIVISION  
BEAUTIFICATION OFFICE**  
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505 DEADERICK STREET  
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(615) 741-2877

**BUTCH ELEY**  
DEPUTY GOVERNOR &  
COMMISSIONER OF TRANSPORTATION

**BILL LEE**  
GOVERNOR

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Beth Emmons, Director  
Community Relations Division  
  
Regional Community Relations Officers  
  
File

Through: Susannah Kniazewycz, Director  
Environmental Division

From : Michael McClanahan, Transportation Manager  
Highway Beautification Office

Date: 4/14/2023

Subject: Litter Abatement & Prevention Program Summary & Activity Expenses

Roadside litter is a tremendous issue for Tennessee. Increased litter can adversely impact a community's economic development, tourism, environmental quality, and public safety. TDOT's cost of providing statewide litter pickup and prevention education in FY2023 totals \$23,213,438.95, a more than \$4.3 million (23%) increase from July 2020. This is attributed to an increase in funding allotted to TDOT from the Governor's Budget (\$2.3 million), the rising cost of contracted pickup statewide (\$11.4 million), a first-time calculation for the cost of in-house spot pickups conducted by TDOT staff (\$1.1 million), and additional purchased media for the Nobody Trashes Tennessee litter prevention campaign (\$3 million).

Amid the rise in litter-related expenses, TDOT continues to innovate programming and build partnerships to address the litter issue. As part of an October 2022 research underpinning the Nobody Trashes Tennessee litter prevention campaign, a statewide Visible Litter Study determined that litter had been reduced by 12% since the last similar study had been conducted in 2016. Additionally, litter has been reduced by 55% between Visible Litter Studies in 2006 and 2022. Still, more than 88 million pieces of litter remain on Tennessee roadsides at any given time. TDOT is invested in cleanup up roadside litter and changing litter behavior.

Figure 1, below, is a schedule of TDOT's litter-related activities and expenses.

Program	Activity	Amount (July 2020)	Amount (Oct 2022)	% Change
Contracted Pickup	Interstates & State Highways	\$ 8,345,285.28	\$ 9,537,525.00	14%
	Trustee Labor	\$ 73,429.12	\$ 77,207.00	5%
	Dept. of General Services	\$ 287,757.80	\$ 199,310.18	-31%
	County	\$ 814,354.88	\$ 1,202,027.14	48%
	Municipal	\$ 306,706.27	\$ 338,846.28	10%
In-House Pickup	TDOT Maintenance Spot Pickups	\$ -	\$ 1,144,208.00	
Grants & Education	Litter Grant	\$ 5,500,000.00	\$ 5,500,000.00	
	Keep Tennessee Beautiful	\$ 1,321,008.85	\$ 1,639,315.35	24%
	Special Litter Grants	\$ 1,975,354.28	\$ -	
	Clean Memphis	\$ -	\$ 300,000.00	
	Keep the Tennessee River Beautiful	\$ -	\$ 180,000.00	
Special Litter Programs	Adopt-A-Highway	\$ 35,000.00	\$ 35,000.00	
	Litter Hotline	\$ 70,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	-14%
	Nobody Trashes Tennessee	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 3,000,000.00	1400%
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$ 18,928,896.48</b>	<b>\$ 23,213,438.95</b>	<b>23%</b>

Figure1: Litter Activity & Expense Schedule

Program Revenues:

In 1981, the Soft Drink and Malt Beverage Industries took a comprehensive, proactive approach to prevent their containers and blight from becoming eyesores along Tennessee roadways. As good corporate citizens, the industry lobbied to establish a tax on their products to help fund litter prevention in Tennessee. These taxes are contained within TCA § 67-4-402 and TCA § 57-5-201. The law gives TDOT discretion on how to best use the funds to clean up and prevent litter, and matters related to litter, such as recycling or litter in storm water runoff. In 1983, these funds were used to establish TDOT's Litter Grant Program, which supports a variety of programs and activities that help reduce litter on Tennessee roads.

This law demonstrates the broad benefits of a public private partnership with both parties working toward a common statewide goal of a cleaner, greener Tennessee. Actual tax revenue reported to the Tennessee Department of Revenue for FY2022 totaled \$7,807,259.98.

Bottle Tax	\$5,550,321.70
<u>Malt Beverage Tax</u>	<u>\$2,256,938.28</u>
Total	\$7,807,259.98

Activities Summary:

Contracted Pickup:

- Interstate & State Highways (\$9,537,525.00) – TDOT expense for litter control on Interstates and State Highways resulting from the annual bid letting process. For FY23, a \$2.3 million increase was allotted to TDOT for increased pickup service in urban counties, through the State budget.

- Trustee Labor (\$77,207.00) – Expense associated with litter control conducted by jail labor on State Highways.
- Department of General Services (\$199,310.10) – TDOT expense for litter control on Interstates and State Highways resulting from procurement methods led by the Department of General Services.
- County Maintenance (\$1,202,027.14) – TDOT’s statewide expense for litter control, using maintenance contracts with county governments.
- Municipal Maintenance (\$338,846.28) – TDOT’s statewide expense for litter control, using maintenance contracts with city governments.

#### In-House Pickup:

- TDOT Maintenance Spot Pickup (\$1,144,208.00) – TDOT Maintenance Operations staff conduct spot-cleanups on areas where bulk items are present, or areas which have received a complaint from the public. This expense is derived from daily work reports of regional and district staff, and accounts for staff hourly rate and benefits, equipment and mobilization costs, and disposal fees to conduct the spot pickups.

#### Grants & Education:

- Litter Grant (\$5,500,00.00) – TDOT annually awards grant funds to all 95 Tennessee county governments to subsidize local litter pickup operations and prevention education.
- Keep Tennessee Beautiful (\$1,639,315.35) – TDOT awards a 3-year contract to the University of Memphis to house and support this adjunct service, which connects a network of Tennessee affiliates to Keep America Beautiful programming and grant opportunities. The service delivers on the Governor’s priority to provide education to the public about the adverse community impacts and growing costs of litter. In FY22, the service partnered with the Tennessee Association of Chiefs of Police to offer litter and covered load law enforcement grants to municipal police departments.
- Clean Memphis: (\$300,000.00) – TDOT awarded a 2-year contract to conduct neighborhood-based cleanups in the City of Memphis and surrounding Shelby County. The group also piloted a 4-part community classroom about the circular economy, water reduction/diversion, stormwater, and litter abatement. Lessons from the pilot program are to be shared with TDOT for replication in other communities, after the conclusion of the grant.
- Keep the Tennessee River Beautiful: (\$180,000) – TDOT awarded a 2-year contract to conduct a series of shoreline and water-based cleanups throughout the Tennessee River watershed. Additionally, a network of SeaBin litter skimming devices were purchased and installed at marinas, Tennessee State Parks, and other locations throughout the river valley.

#### Special Litter Programs:

- Adopt-A-Highway: (\$35,000.00) – This all-free, all-volunteer program allows for the public to keep 2 mile stretches of TDOT rights-of-way tidy, while receiving roadside recognition signage.

Costs to TDOT include pickup supplies, transport and disposal fees, staff time, program marketing materials, and signage.

- Litter Hotline (\$60,000.00) – In conjunction with TCA § 54-1-401, TDOT is required to maintain a toll-free hotline for residents to report acts of littering. Litterbugs receive an educational mailer and Nobody Trashes Tennessee promotional products.
- Nobody Trashes Tennessee (\$3,000,000.00)– The Nobody Trashes Tennessee litter prevention campaign launched in June 2017, to spread awareness and correct litter behaviors. Annually, the campaign purchases media and partners with sports team and universities statewide to display public service announcements and creative images. Each November, the campaign challenges partners to conduct “No Trash November” cleanups, with the goal of removing thousands of pounds of litter from Tennessee roadsides.

Additional Resources:

TDOT Litter Grant Website	<a href="https://www.tn.gov/tdot/littergrant">https://www.tn.gov/tdot/littergrant</a>
Nobody Trashes Tennessee Website	<a href="https://nobodytrashestennessee.com/">https://nobodytrashestennessee.com/</a>
Adopt-A-Highway Website	<a href="https://www.tn.gov/tdot/adoptahighway">https://www.tn.gov/tdot/adoptahighway</a>
TDOT Maintenance Request Online Form	<a href="https://www.tn.gov/tdot/maintenance/maintenance-request.html">https://www.tn.gov/tdot/maintenance/maintenance-request.html</a>
Tennessee Litter Hotline Online Form	<a href="https://www.tn.gov/tdot/litterhotline">https://www.tn.gov/tdot/litterhotline</a>
TDOT Maintenance Operations Contact	Timothy Colvett Maintenance Contracts Manager <a href="mailto:Timothy.Colvett@tn.gov">Timothy.Colvett@tn.gov</a> (615) 253-2899
TDOT Highway Beautification Contact	Mike McClanahan Transportation Manager <a href="mailto:Michael.McClanahan@tn.gov">Michael.McClanahan@tn.gov</a> (615) 741-2877

# TDOT LITTER PROGRAMS

OCTOBER 2022

## REVENUES



**\$7.8 million** (est.) from FY22 malt beverage & soft drink tax collections

## CONTRACTED PICKUP

<b>\$9.1 million</b>	Interstate & state highway contracts
<b>\$77,000</b>	Trustee labor
<b>\$199,000</b>	Dept. of General Services contracts
<b>\$1.2 million</b>	County contracts
<b>\$338,000</b>	Municipal contracts

## LITTER BY THE NUMBERS

<b>\$23.2 million</b>	Amount TDOT spends annually on litter pickup & prevention education
<b>↑ 23%</b>	Increase in the amount spent by TDOT annually since July 2020
<b>\$1.1 million</b>	Cost of in-house spot pickup of roadside litter by TDOT staff
<b>100 million</b>	Pieces of litter on Tennessee roadways at any given time
<b>↓ 43%</b>	Reduction of statewide roadside litter since 2006

## GRANTS & EDUCATION

<b>\$5.5 million</b>	County Litter Grants
<b>\$1.6 million</b>	Granted to Keep Tennessee Beautiful
<b>\$1.9 million</b>	Granted for special community-based litter projects

## SPECIAL LITTER PROGRAMS

<b>\$35,000</b>	Administration of statewide Adopt-A-Highway program
<b>\$60,000</b>	Administration of statewide Litter Hotline
<b>\$3 million</b>	Nobody Trashes Tennessee campaign paid media

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY

**NOBODY TRASHES TENNESSEE**  
TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



KEEP TENNESSEE Beautiful  
KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE

**LITTER HOTLINE**  
1-877-8LITTER

**TN** TDOT  
Department of Transportation

For more information, contact the TDOT Highway Beautification Office at (615) 741-0803, or [Michael.McClanahan@tn.gov](mailto:Michael.McClanahan@tn.gov).

# TDOT's LITTER PROGRAMS

OCTOBER 2022

## Revenues



**\$7.8M** (est.) from FY22 malt beverage & soft drink tax collections

## Contracted Pickup

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<b>\$1.2M</b>	County contracts
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**\$1.1M**

**100M**

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Increase in the amount spent by TDOT annually since July 2020

Cost of in-house spot pickup of roadside litter by TDOT staff

Pieces of litter on Tennessee roadways at any given time

Reduction of statewide roadside litter since 2006

## Grants & Education

**\$5.5M** County Litter Grants

**\$1.6M** Granted to Keep Tennessee Beautiful

**\$480K** Granted for special community-based litter projects



## Special Litter Programs

**\$35K** Administration of statewide Adopt-A-Highway program

**\$60K** Administration of statewide Litter Hotline

**\$3M** Nobody Trashes Tennessee campaign paid media



**TN**

**TDOT**  
Department of  
Transportation

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# TDOT LITTER PROGRAMS

OCTOBER 2022

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