

Keep Port St. Lucie Beautiful



Florida Litter Law Litter Hotline 772-871-7000

This entire Chapter (403) and other Florida statutes can be found online at the following internet address:

<http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/>

403.413 Florida Litter Law.--

(1) SHORT TITLE.--This section may be cited as the "Florida Litter Law."

(2) DEFINITIONS.--As used in this section:

(a) "Litter" means any garbage; rubbish; trash; refuse; can; bottle; box; container; paper; tobacco product; tire; appliance; mechanical equipment or part; building or construction material; tool; machinery; wood; motor vehicle or motor vehicle part; vessel; aircraft; farm machinery or equipment; sludge from a waste treatment facility, water supply treatment plant, or air pollution control facility; or substance in any form resulting from domestic, industrial, commercial, mining, agricultural, or governmental operations.

(b) "Person" means any individual, firm, sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, or unincorporated association.

(c) "Law enforcement officer" means any officer of the Florida Highway Patrol, a county sheriff's department, a municipal law enforcement department, a law enforcement department of any other political subdivision, the department, or the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. In addition, and solely for the purposes of this section, "law enforcement officer" means any employee of a county or municipal park or recreation department designated by the department head as a litter enforcement officer.

(d) "Aircraft" means a motor vehicle or other vehicle that is used or designed to fly but does not include a parachute or any other device used primarily as safety equipment.

(e) "Commercial purpose" means for the purpose of economic gain.

(f) "Commercial vehicle" means a vehicle that is owned or used by a business, corporation, association, partnership, or sole proprietorship or any other entity conducting business for a commercial purpose.

(g) "Dump" means to dump, throw, discard, place, deposit, or dispose of.

(h) "Motor vehicle" means an automobile, motorcycle, truck, trailer, semitrailer, truck tractor, or semitrailer combination or any other vehicle that is powered by a motor.

(i) "Vessel" means a boat, barge, or airboat or any other vehicle used for transportation on water.

(3) RESPONSIBILITY OF LOCAL GOVERNING BODY OF A COUNTY OR MUNICIPALITY.--The local governing body of a county or a municipality shall determine the training and qualifications of any employee of the county or municipality or any employee of the county or municipal park or recreation department designated to enforce the provisions of this section if the designated employee is not a regular law enforcement officer.

(4) DUMPING LITTER PROHIBITED.--Unless otherwise authorized by law or permit, it is unlawful for any person to dump litter in any manner or amount:

(a) In or on any public highway, road, street, alley, or thoroughfare, including any portion of the right-of-way thereof, or any other public lands, except in containers or areas lawfully provided therefor. When any litter is thrown or discarded from a motor vehicle, the operator or owner of the motor vehicle, or both, shall be deemed in violation of this section;

(b) In or on any freshwater lake, river, canal, or stream or tidal or coastal water of the state, including canals. When any litter is thrown or discarded from a boat, the operator or owner of the boat, or both, shall be deemed in violation of this section; or

(c) In or on any private property, unless prior consent of the owner has been given and unless such litter will not cause a public nuisance or be in violation of any other state or local law, rule, or regulation.

(5) DUMPING RAW HUMAN WASTE PROHIBITED.--Unless otherwise authorized by law or permit, it is unlawful for any person to dump raw human waste from any train, aircraft, motor vehicle, or vessel upon the public or private lands or waters of the state.

(6) PENALTIES; ENFORCEMENT.--

(a) Any person who dumps litter in violation of subsection (4) in an amount not exceeding 15 pounds in weight or 27 cubic feet in volume and not for commercial purposes is guilty of a noncriminal infraction, punishable by a civil penalty of \$50. In addition, the court may require the violator to pick up litter or perform other labor commensurate with the offense committed.

(b) Any person who dumps litter in violation of subsection (4) in an amount exceeding 15 pounds in weight or 27 cubic feet in volume, but not exceeding 500 pounds in weight or 100 cubic feet in volume and not for commercial purposes is guilty of a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083. In addition, the court shall require the violator to pick up litter or perform other community service commensurate with the offense committed. Further, if the violation involves the use of a motor vehicle, upon a finding of guilt, whether or not adjudication is withheld or whether imposition of sentence is withheld, deferred, or suspended, the court shall forward a record of the finding to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, which shall record a penalty of three points on the violator's driver's license pursuant to the point system established by s. 322.27.

(c) Any person who dumps litter in violation of subsection (4) in an amount exceeding 500 pounds in weight or 100 cubic feet in volume or in any quantity for commercial purposes, or dumps litter which is a hazardous waste as defined in s. 403.703, is guilty of a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083. In addition, the court may order the violator to:

1. Remove or render harmless the litter that he or she dumped in violation of this section;
2. Repair or restore property damaged by, or pay damages for any damage arising out of, his or her dumping litter in violation of this section; or
3. Perform public service relating to the removal of litter dumped in violation of this section or to the restoration of an area polluted by litter dumped in violation of this section.

(d) A court may enjoin a violation of this section.

(e) A motor vehicle, vessel, aircraft, container, crane, winch, or machine used to dump litter that exceeds 500 pounds in weight or 100 cubic feet in volume is declared contraband and is subject to forfeiture in the same manner as provided in ss. 932.703 and 932.704.

(f) If a person sustains damages arising out of a violation of this section that is punishable as a felony, a court, in a civil action for such damages, shall order the person to pay the injured party threefold the actual damages or \$200, whichever amount is greater. In addition, the court shall order the person to pay the injured party's court costs and attorney's fees. A final judgment rendered in a criminal proceeding against a defendant under this section estops the defendant from asserting any issue in a subsequent civil action under this paragraph which he or she would be estopped from asserting if such

judgment were rendered in the civil action unless the criminal judgment was based upon a plea of no contest or nolo contendere.

(g) For the purposes of this section, if a person dumps litter or raw human waste from a commercial vehicle, that person is presumed to have dumped the litter or raw human waste for commercial purposes.

(h) In the criminal trial of a person charged with violating this section, the state does not have the burden of proving that the person did not have the right or authority to dump the litter or raw human waste or that litter or raw human waste dumped on private property causes a public nuisance. The defendant has the burden of proving that he or she had authority to dump the litter or raw human waste and that the litter or raw human waste dumped does not cause a public nuisance.

(i) It shall be the duty of all law enforcement officers to enforce the provisions of this section.

(j) Any person who violates the provisions of subsection (5) is guilty of a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083; provided, however, that any person who dumps more than 500 pounds or more than 100 cubic feet of raw human waste, or who dumps any quantity of such waste for commercial purposes, is guilty of a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in paragraph (c).

(7) ENFORCEMENT BY CERTAIN COUNTY OR MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES.--Employees of counties or municipalities whose duty it is to ensure code compliance or to enforce codes and ordinances may be designated by the governing body of the county or the municipality to enforce the provisions of this section. Designation of such employees shall not provide the employees with the authority to bear arms or to make arrests.

(8) ENFORCEMENT OF OTHER REGULATIONS.--This section does not limit the authority of any state or local agency to enforce other laws, rules, or ordinances relating to litter or solid waste management.

History.--ss. 1, 2, 3, 4, 4A, ch. 71-239; s. 1, ch. 75-266; s. 1, ch. 77-82; s. 1, ch. 78-202; s. 7, ch. 80-382; s. 1, ch. 82-63; s. 1, ch. 88-79; s. 56, ch. 88-130; s. 12, ch. 89-175; s. 14, ch. 89-268; s. 1, ch. 90-76; ss. 16, 17, ch. 91-286; s. 378, ch. 94-356; s. 1, ch. 95-165; s. 11, ch. 97-103; s. 205, ch. 99-245.