

# Surfriders celebrate five years of keeping resort's beach clean

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(March 5, 2010) Though the five-year campaign by the Ocean City chapter of the Surfriders Foundation has done much to clean up the resort's beaches and ocean, city officials did not feel that two new initiatives from the organization would be the best way to continue the trend.

"We've done so well, the five-year plan's probably not long enough," said Terry Steimer, chairman of the Please Leave Only Your Footprints campaign that is entering its final year.

The campaign centers around different ways to encourage people using the beach to leave only their footprints behind when they leave, taking all their trash and other items

with them. The initiative has gained much publicity and helped eliminate trash from the beach, Steimer told the Ocean City Council Monday.

In the first four years, the Surfriders have stenciled their motto on the beach trash cans and trash trucks, erected signs at every street end, secured advertising on banner planes and an advertising boat, shared the message on the government access channel, created radio and television ads promoting the message and sold cigarette butt trash cans to local restaurants.

"The idea is to try and keep the trash off the beach so it won't be blown into the ocean," Steimer said.

Last year, the organization also asked local hotels to put "Please Leave Only Your Footprints" signs at the check-in areas, and this year

Clear Channel Radio will run public service announcements on its radio stations for free.

"We're passionate about the beach at Ocean City Surfriders," Steimer said.

Others in the community also help keep the beach clean, he said, telling the story of one woman who walks along the beach every morning to pick up trash. He especially thanked the city employees for their dedicated work in cleaning the beach every day.

Steimer asked the council to support two new initiatives designed to further educate the public about the beach environment and how to keep it free of debris. The city already puts cigarette butt disposal cans on the Boardwalk, and he wanted to add a sticker to each telling people to "Hold On To Your Butt."

"I think we can do better than this," Councilman Jim Hall said. "We can find a better message than that."

The council asked Steimer to see if the local high school students could come up with a different slogan for the butt cans, perhaps through a contest.

Steimer's second suggestion, to create an "environmental beach" for two blocks at the north end of town by eliminating the beach trash cans and requiring visitors to carry their trash out with them, received little support.

"I don't really know if the public is ready for that," Councilwoman Margaret Pillas said.

Most council members were concerned that people would just dump their trash on the sand if they could not see a trash can to put it in.