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Spring 2011

The 2011 American State Litter Scorecard: New Rankings for an Increasingly Environmentally Concerned Population

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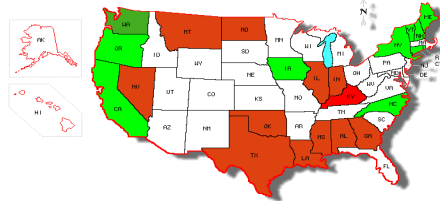
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The American State Litter Scorecard 2011: *New Rankings for an Increasingly Environmentally Concerned Population*



2011 AMERICAN STATE LITTER SCORECARD

- 5th to WORST State
- WORST States
- 5th to BEST State
- BEST States



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by **STEVE SPACEK**

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ABSTRACT

By popular demand--a NEW, up-to-date State Litter "Scorecard" is now released for the 2011 ASPA Baltimore event--measuring each state's overall environmental quality through public property/spaces debris removal efforts. The "card" uses tried-and-true, hard-to-publicly obtain objective and subjective measures, leading to a total overall score for each measured jurisdiction. Readers can thus gain a realistic "picture" of "what's going on" within one or all of the 50 states.

Littering/dumping remains harmful, serious American environmental crimes, creating dangers to public health and safety, and contributing to the deaths of over 800 Americans in debris-attributed motor vehicle accidents. The first, original 2008 Scorecard was cited by major U.S. newspapers, magazines and journals, (i.e. The Boston Globe; Travel and Leisure; The 2009 National Cooperative Highway Research Program's "Reducing Litter on Roadsides" Journal) and has been a valuable tool in enabling improved debris/litter abatement practices in states and regions.

Washington was deemed the overall top BEST state, followed by California, Iowa, Maine, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, Oregon, New Hampshire, North Carolina and New York. Kentucky led the bottom --the ultimate WORST of the 50 United States, followed by Louisiana, Mississippi, Nevada, Alabama, Indiana, Georgia, Illinois, Oklahoma, Montana, North Dakota and Texas as poor performers.

Regretfully, some states still do not collect important comparative litter data measures, nor yet to have made REAL differences in improving environmental conditions to protect citizenry health and welfare. This paper is yet another call to action to help remedy these unattended-to issues—and, to save lives.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Littering and dumping¹ are rampant ecological problems creating danger to public health, safety and welfare throughout the fifty United States.² Litter³, found predominately along or near the location of roadsides, may be a determinant of urban area crime rates.⁴ Roadside litter features prominently in its “ugliness” that damages scenic environments, breeds disease-causing insects and rodents, and serious injuries and deaths to animals and humans. In 2008, more than 800 Americans died nationwide as a result of vehicular collisions involving debris and/or movable, non-fixed objects along thoroughfares.⁵

Consequences of Littering/Dumping Among States

The consequences of littering are a substantial problem--a significant social cost for many states.⁶ The fact that governmental neglect is an influencer behind why some persons choose to litter is important.⁷ “Unenthusiastic” public officials in particular American regions have followed a “path of least resistance” in addressing externalities posing “... health threats,” as cultural and political “...maladies [leave] their ...land conditions [seriously contaminated]...”⁸ Yet, public litter prevention and abatement remains a mandated, increasingly important function of state governments. For decades, a staggering \$500-plus million was spent to combat littering and dumping.⁹ Still, in good and bad economic times, states have accomplished “relatively little,”-- with typically “piecemeal” approaches to litter prevention.¹⁰

Necessity of Litter Research for States

Public spaces and roadside litter prevention is a multiple stakeholder activity for states. However, a number of authorities are lacking in efforts to collect reliable, uniform litter abatement data and true outcome measures for facilitating research comparisons.¹¹ Missing, necessitated jurisdictional data includes the volumes of waste collected by mileage and location; operating budget funding sources and expenditures; number of eradication performance standard surveys conducted; number of persons cited and prosecuted for infractions; citizen surveys on abatement performance evaluations. As the “green” movement is gradually finding acceptance by Americans, policymakers, public administrators, organizations and citizens alike are increasingly interested in effectual outcomes.¹²

Current State Physical and Legal Source Reduction Activities

Physical and legal practices for source reductions¹³ in the 50 United States include litter abatements, behavior-controlling slogans, environmental group efforts, waste recycling- beverage deposit programs and taxation provisions, complemented with prescribed litter laws, enforcement efforts and court prosecutions.

Litter eradication provides a legislatively authorized, non-regulatory source reduction “solution.”¹⁴ Identified activities include cleanups of interstate and state roadways, beaches, rivers, streams, trails, greenways and other public spaces by mandated correctional crews or community service, hired contractors, work furloughs, juveniles, volunteers and non-profit organizations.¹⁵ States may limit the number of eradications per year and can define specific standards constituting a cleanup. Most states have an Adopt-A-Highway/Road program in existence.¹⁶ As of March 2011, 37 states had unique, recognized statewide slogans used in media campaigns to boost environmental awareness in resisting littering behavior. At present, 12 states mandate jurisdiction-wide comprehensive recycling for reducing

disposed trash volumes, providing energy cost savings to commercial interests;¹⁷ ten states provide litter-reducing beverage deposit container legislation; five jurisdictions levy litter taxes on "...certain goods which contribute to solid waste...to finance litter control, solid waste and recycling activities."¹⁸

Statutes, enforcement efforts and court prosecutions are part of a "comprehensive response to environmental violators" used to help curtail littering.¹⁹ Anti-litter provisions laws exist in all member states, and are regarded as prime public safety mechanisms; less so for aesthetics.²⁰ The necessity of state law enforcement officers to witness illegal acts to write citations has allowed almost non-enforcement in some [states], "...[leaving them] with seriously contaminated [lands]."²¹ Those cited face court prosecutions, becoming a more routine atmosphere in local and state courtrooms. Civil and criminal fines remain the "...common strategy [states] use to control [illegal] environmental behaviors."²² Most wrongdoers settle out of court, with little to no incarceration of offenders.²³

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

The 2008 American State Litter Scorecard²⁴ was the first research attempt to rank states on litter eradication in advancing overall jurisdictional environmental quality, using existing, hard-to-find yet suitable data sources. Until that year, no researcher had attempted to rank the 50 states on public space/roadside litter eradication in advancing overall jurisdictional environmental quality. Hence, an original scorecard was fashioned from existing, hard-to-find yet suitable data sources to help resolve this dilemma.

To explain an overall environmental quality outcome for states from litter eradication efforts, and to meet academic principles stipulating the use of noteworthy, accurate, reliable, up-to-date data, objective and subjective factors –each with exclusive yet equal weight--were chosen. Now, as with 2008, the territorial, spatial American state remains the unit of analyses.²⁵ All research data were at the interval or ratio level of measurement and were drawn from a random sample and deemed valid. Principle data source providers utilized include government entities and nationally-recognized resources habitually drawn upon in scholarly research--reputable academicians, trade organizations, think tanks and associations. A majority of indicators focus on physical source reduction activities, since legal source reduction gauge choices were deemed exceedingly time consuming and hard to extract for meeting research budgetary constraints. However, the existence of limited hard data does indeed lend each objective indicator to satisfactorily provide a suitable, unique standing per state. Every subjective indicator, measuring supplementary public-sector evaluations, is added along with objective indicators into a hand-calculated sum total: to collectively demonstrate what is realistically transpiring from each entity's overall public space litter eradication exertion -- with roadway litter a center of attention.

Nine objective determinants examined include *States with Litter Taxation*,²⁶ *States with Container Deposit Rules/Legislation*²⁷; *States with Comprehensive Recycling Rules/Legislation*,²⁸ *States with Litter Prevention Slogans*;²⁹ *Per Person Overall State Environmental Expenditures*,³⁰ *Per Person Daily Waste Disposal by State*,³¹ *States with Highest Chance for Debris-related Fatal Vehicle Collision*,³² *Integrity of State Thoroughfare Maintenance Disbursement Costs*,³³ *State Public Corruption Convictions per Population Proportion*³⁴ (see Table 1). The two subjective determinants scrutinized as supplementary assessment criteria are *Environmental Responsibility Reputation of State Governors*³⁵ and *State Licensed Drivers Knowledge of Littering and other Road Laws*³⁶ (see Table 2).

Table 1: Objective Data

States with Litter Taxation (2011)
States with Container Deposit Rules/Legislation (2011)
States with Comprehensive Recycling Rules/Legislation (2011)
States with Litter Prevention Slogans (2011)
Per Person Overall State Environmental Expenditure (2006)
Per Person Daily Waste Disposal by State (2007)
States with Highest Chance for Debris-related Fatal Vehicle Collision (2008)
Integrity of State Thoroughfare Maintenance Disbursement Costs (2008)
State Public Corruption Convictions per Population Proportion (2008)

Table 2: Subjective Data

Environmental Responsibility Reputation of State Governors (2009)
State Licensed Drivers Knowledge of Littering and other Road Laws (2009)

After the initial 2008 Scorecard presentation, academic, political and media critics noted a potential for regionally-biased results, particularly from the previously- used, objective State Livability Score and subjective State Political Culture Scale score indicators, questioning the author's research objectives. The author admitted experiencing real-world difficulties and complexities of obtaining public performance numbers, and, that acceptance of debatable risks of return in achieving citizen-helpful, ground-breaking research is probable in pursuing any scientific investigation. High percentage correlations were indeed found between the above two indicators and, after consultation with evaluation professionals, those markers were dropped, along with the generalized State Government Performance Grade and overall State Highway/Transportation Performance Score. Taking their places are new, powerful measurements: an objective, Thoroughfare Maintenance Disbursement Costs value and two subjective, Reputation of Governors and Drivers Knowledge of Laws markers. Also, the once- inferred, subjective State Public Corruption Convictions Rate was re-appraised, deemed more objective in nature in its measurement capability than subjective, and moved to that dimensional category.

An analytic scoring rubric with multipoint designations to score state responses for varying levels of chosen objective and subjective factors--each factor having separate yet equal influence--was created. Scoring *States with Litter Taxation* (OB1); *States with Container Deposit Rules/Legislation* (OB2); *States with Comprehensive Recycling Rules/Legislation* (OB3) and *States with Litter Prevention Slogans* (OB4) determinants required splitting up states into those having a mentioned characteristic and those that did not. These determinants have only two values; thus, dichotomous. "States with" will have a score of +5.0; "States without" are assigned a value of 0.0. *Per Person Overall State Environmental Expenditure* (OB5); *Per Person Daily Waste Disposal by State* (OB6); *Integrity of State Thoroughfare Maintenance Disbursement Costs* (OB8); *Environmental Responsibility Reputation of State Governors* (SU1) and *State Licensed Drivers Knowledge of Littering and other Road Laws* (SU2) are positively 0.5 point scaled-scored, in increments of five states, based on the degree of an attribute possessed, from a lowest 0.0 score. Data for *States with Highest Chance for Debris-related Fatal Vehicle Collisions* (OB7) and *State Public Corruption Convictions per Population Proportion* (OB9) are construed in a negative light and thus scored accordingly. Each of the 50 states borne accidents claiming human lives by debris-vehicle collisions, and certainly, governments wish to avoid the embarrassment of incarcerating public servants, so *Fatal Vehicle Collisions* start at a strict, -1.0 base score point scale; *Corruption Convictions* from a less strict, -0.5 assessment.

Scores for each individual objective and subjective factor were then calculated and aggregated for every single state. Hierarchical statuses amongst these jurisdictions were then determined after the completed summative computations. From these computations, the author designated (from top to bottom respectively) a "Best," "Above Average," "Average," "Below Average" and "Worst" states designation for overall public property litter eradication efforts nationwide. Table 3 presents tabular data of individual state scores: indicator and final. Table 4 lists the Scorecard national rankings and status designations for every state. Table 5 provides BEST states results; Table 6, the WORST states. Figure 1 displays a color map of the states and their national statuses. Table 7 provides the BEST and WORST states by their inclusion inside an American region: Northeast, South, Midwest and West.

Table 3: Individual Indicators, Indicator Scores and Final Results: The 2011 American State Litter Scorecard

State	OB1	OB2	OB3	OB4	OB5	OB6	OB7	OB8	OB9	SU1	SU2	Final
AL	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+0.5	+1.0	-2.5	+3.5	-4.5	+0.5	+2.0	+5.5
AK	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+4.5	+2.5	-1.0	+1.5	-4.5	0.0	+3.5	+11.5
AZ	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+1.5	+0.5	-3.0	+3.0	-2.0	+3.5	+1.5	+10.0
AR	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+1.0	+1.5	-5.0	+4.0	-3.0	+3.0	+2.0	+8.5
CA	0.0	+5.0	+5.0	+5.0	+4.0	+2.0	-2.0	+0.5	-1.0	+4.5	0.0	+23.0
CO	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+0.5	0.0	-5.5	+2.0	-1.5	+4.5	+3.0	+8.0
CT	0.0	+5.0	+5.0	0.0	+3.0	+4.5	-1.0	+1.5	-3.0	+4.0	+0.5	+19.5
DE	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+5.0	+1.5	0.0	-4.0	+2.0	-4.0	+1.5	+1.5	+8.5
FL	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+5.0	+4.5	+4.0	-3.0	0.0	-4.0	+2.5	+0.5	+14.5
GA	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+0.5	+0.5	-2.5	+4.0	-1.5	+0.5	0.0	+6.5
HI	0.0	+5.0	0.0	0.0	+4.5	+4.0	-3.5	+0.5	-3.5	+2.5	0.0	+9.5
ID	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+3.0	+2.5	-5.0	+2.0	-2.5	+0.5	+4.5	+10.0
IL	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+2.5	+1.0	-3.0	+0.5	-3.5	+2.0	+2.0	+6.5
IA	0.0	+5.0	0.0	+5.0	+2.5	+4.0	-4.5	+2.5	-0.5	+2.5	+3.5	+20.0
IN	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	+3.5	+1.5	-4.0	+4.0	-1.5	0.0	+2.5	+6.0
KS	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+1.5	+2.0	-5.5	+3.0	-1.0	+2.5	+4.0	+11.5
KY	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	+1.5	+1.0	-3.5	+3.5	-4.5	+1.0	+1.0	0.0
LA	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+2.0	+2.0	-5.5	+1.5	-5.0	0.0	+1.0	+1.0
ME	0.0	+5.0	+5.0	0.0	+3.5	+3.0	-1.5	+1.0	-1.5	+4.5	+1.5	+20.5
MD	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+5.0	+1.0	+4.0	-2.0	+0.5	-2.5	+4.0	+0.5	+15.5
MA	0.0	+5.0	0.0	+5.0	+1.0	+4.5	-1.0	0.0	-3.0	+3.0	+0.5	+15.0
MI	0.0	+5.0	0.0	0.0	+3.0	0.0	-3.0	+1.0	-2.0	+3.5	+2.5	+10.0
MN	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+2.0	+4.5	-4.5	+1.0	-0.5	+3.0	+3.5	+14.0
MS	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+2.5	+2.5	-5.5	+4.0	-4.5	0.0	+1.0	+5.0
MO	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+4.0	+3.5	-4.0	+3.5	-2.5	+1.0	+3.0	+13.5

OB1: States with Litter Taxation (2011)

OB2: States with Container Deposit Rules/Legislation (2011)

OB3: States with Comprehensive Recycling Rules/Legislation (2011)

OB4: States with Litter Prevention Slogans (2011)

OB5: Per Person Overall State Environmental Expenditure (2006)

OB6: Per Person Daily Waste Disposal by State (2007)

OB7: States with Highest Chance for Debris-related Fatal Vehicle Collision (2008)

OB8: Integrity of State Thoroughfare Maintenance Disbursement Costs (2008)

OB9: State Public Corruption Convictions per Population Proportion (2008)

SU1: Environmental Responsibility Reputation of State Governors (2009)

SU2: State Licensed Drivers Knowledge of Littering and other Road Laws (2009)

State	OB1	OB2	OB3	OB4	OB5	OB6	OB7	OB8	OB9	SU1	SU2	Final
MT	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+3.0	-5.5	+4.0	-4.5	+1.5	+4.0	+7.5
NE	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+4.0	+2.0	-4.5	+3.5	-0.5	+2.0	+4.0	+15.5
NV	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	+4.0	+2.0	-5.0	+2.5	-1.5	+1.0	+2.0	+5.0
NH	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+5.0	+3.5	-1.5	+0.5	-0.5	+3.5	+1.5	+17.0
NJ	+5.0	0.0	+5.0	0.0	+2.5	+4.0	-1.5	0.0	-4.0	+4.0	0.0	+15.0
NM	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	0.0	+0.5	-4.5	+2.5	-1.0	+4.0	+2.5	+9.0
NY	0.0	+5.0	0.0	+5.0	+3.0	+4.5	-1.0	0.0	-3.0	+3.0	0.0	+16.5
NC	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+3.0	+3.5	-3.5	+4.5	-2.0	+3.5	+2.5	+16.5
ND	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+2.0	+2.0	-5.0	+4.5	-5.0	+0.5	+3.5	+7.5
OH	+5.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+0.5	+2.5	-2.5	+2.0	-4.0	+2.0	+1.5	+12.0
OK	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+0.5	+1.5	-4.0	+3.0	-3.0	+0.5	+3.0	+6.5
OR	0.0	+5.0	+5.0	0.0	+3.5	+0.5	-5.0	+1.5	-0.5	+4.5	+3.5	+18.0
PA	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+5.0	+3.5	+1.0	-3.5	+1.0	-4.0	+3.0	+1.0	+12.0
RI	+5.0	0.0	+5.0	+5.0	+4.5	+1.5	-1.0	0.0	-2.5	+1.0	+0.5	+19.0
SC	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+1.0	+1.0	-2.0	+4.5	-1.5	+2.0	+0.5	+10.5
SD	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+3.5	-2.5	+4.5	-4.0	+1.0	+4.0	+11.5
TN	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+2.0	+3.0	-3.0	+3.0	-3.5	+2.0	+1.0	+9.5
TX	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+1.0	+3.5	-4.5	+3.0	-2.5	0.0	+2.0	+7.5
UT	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+2.5	+2.5	-2.5	+2.0	-1.0	+2.5	+4.0	+15.0
VT	0.0	+5.0	0.0	0.0	+4.0	+4.5	-1.5	+1.5	-2.0	+4.0	+3.0	+18.5
VA	+5.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+1.5	0.0	-2.0	+2.5	-3.5	+1.5	+2.5	+12.5
WA	+5.0	0.0	+5.0	+5.0	+2.0	+3.0	-1.5	+1.0	-1.0	+4.5	+3.0	+26.0
WV	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	+4.5	+3.0	-2.0	+4.5	-3.5	+1.5	+2.0	+10.0
WI	0.0	0.0	+5.0	0.0	+3.5	+0.5	-3.5	+2.5	-2.0	+3.0	+4.5	+13.5
WY	0.0	0.0	0.0	+5.0	+5.0	+1.5	-4.0	+3.5	-2.5	+1.5	+3.5	+13.5

OB1: States with Litter Taxation (2011)

OB2: States with Container Deposit Rules/Legislation (2011)

OB3: States with Comprehensive Recycling Rules/Legislation (2011)

OB4: States with Litter Prevention Slogans (2011)

OB5: Per Person Overall State Environmental Expenditure (2006)

OB6: Per Person Daily Waste Disposal by State (2007)

OB7: States with Highest Chance for Debris-related Fatal Vehicle Collision (2008)

OB8: Integrity of State Thoroughfare Maintenance Disbursement Costs (2008)

OB9: State Public Corruption Convictions per Population Proportion (2008)

SU1: Environmental Responsibility Reputation of State Governors (2009)

SU2: State Licensed Drivers Knowledge of Littering and other Road Laws (2009)

Table 4: National Rankings and Status Designations for The 2011 American State Litter Scorecard

<u>State</u>	<u>Rating</u>
<i>1 Washington</i>	<i>BEST</i>
2 California	BEST
3 Iowa	BEST
3 Maine	BEST
5 Connecticut	BEST
6 Rhode Island	BEST
7 Vermont	BEST
8 Oregon	BEST
9 New Hampshire	BEST
10 North Carolina	BEST
10 New York	BEST
12 Maryland	ABOVE AVERAGE
12 Nebraska	ABOVE AVERAGE
14 Massachusetts	ABOVE AVERAGE
14 New Jersey	ABOVE AVERAGE
14 Utah	ABOVE AVERAGE
17 Florida	ABOVE AVERAGE
18 Minnesota	ABOVE AVERAGE
19 Missouri	ABOVE AVERAGE
19 Wisconsin	ABOVE AVERAGE
19 Wyoming	ABOVE AVERAGE
22 Virginia	AVERAGE
23 Ohio	AVERAGE
23 Pennsylvania	AVERAGE
25 Alaska	AVERAGE
25 Kansas	AVERAGE
25 South Dakota	AVERAGE
28 South Carolina	AVERAGE
29 Arizona	BELOW AVERAGE
29 Idaho	BELOW AVERAGE
29 Michigan	BELOW AVERAGE
29 West Virginia	BELOW AVERAGE
33 Hawaii	BELOW AVERAGE
33 Tennessee	BELOW AVERAGE
35 New Mexico	BELOW AVERAGE
36 Arkansas	BELOW AVERAGE
36 Delaware	BELOW AVERAGE
38 Colorado	BELOW AVERAGE
39 Montana	WORST
39 North Dakota	WORST
39 Texas	WORST
42 Georgia	WORST
42 Illinois	WORST
42 Oklahoma	WORST
45 Indiana	WORST
46 Alabama	WORST
47 Nevada	WORST
47 Mississippi	WORST
49 Louisiana	WORST
<i>50 Kentucky</i>	<i>WORST</i>

Table 5: BEST States of The 2011 American State Litter Scorecard

1 Washington	<i>BEST</i>
2 California	BEST
3 Iowa	BEST
3 Maine	BEST
5 Connecticut	BEST
6 Rhode Island	BEST
7 Vermont	BEST
8 Oregon	BEST
9 New Hampshire	BEST
10 New York	BEST
10 North Carolina	BEST

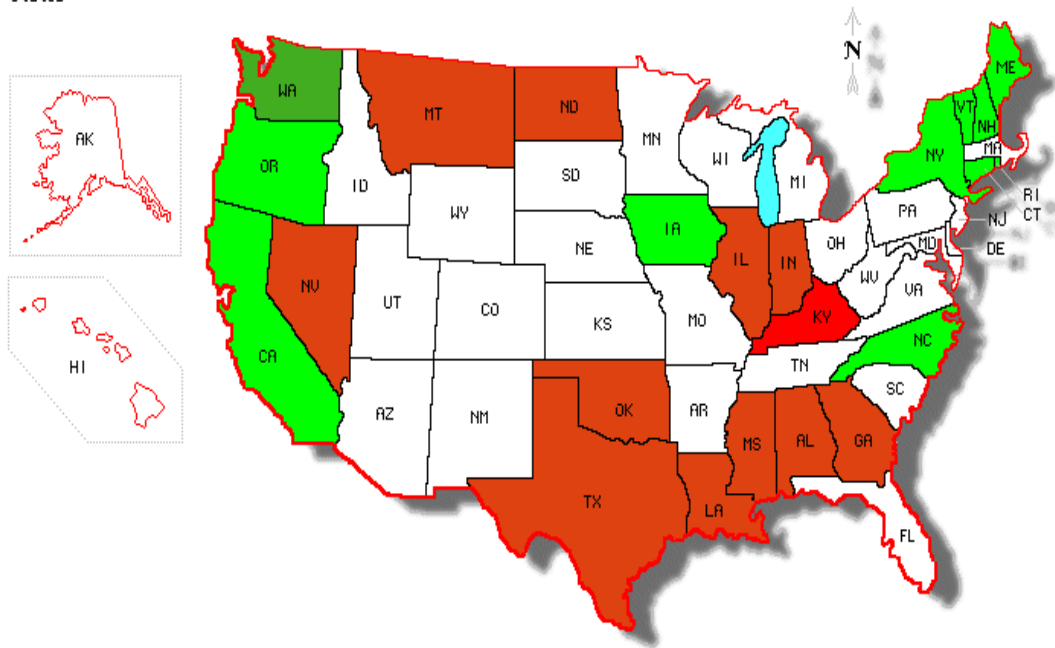
Table 6: WORST States of The 2011 American State Litter Scorecard

1 Kentucky	<i>WORST</i>
2 Louisiana	WORST
3 Mississippi	WORST
3 Nevada	WORST
5 Alabama	WORST
6 Indiana	WORST
7 Georgia	WORST
7 Illinois	WORST
7 Oklahoma	WORST
10 Montana	WORST
10 North Dakota	WORST
10 Texas	WORST

Figure 1: BEST, WORST State Results of The 2011 American State Litter Scorecard

2011 AMERICAN STATE LITTER SCORECARD

- - KY: #1 WORST State
- - WORST States
- - WA: #1 BEST State
- - BEST States



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Table 7: BEST, WORST State Results, by Region, of The 2011 American State Litter Scorecard

NORTHEAST REGION	SOUTH REGION	MIDWEST REGION	WEST REGION
<u>Best</u>	<u>Best</u>	<u>Best</u>	<u>Best</u>
3 Maine 5 Connecticut 6 Rhode Island 7 Vermont 9 New Hampshire 10 New York	4 North Carolina	3 Iowa	1 Washington 2 California 8 Oregon
<u>Worst</u>	<u>Worst</u>	<u>Worst</u>	<u>Worst</u>
NONE	50 Kentucky 49 Louisiana 48 Mississippi 47 Alabama 42 Georgia 42 Oklahoma 39 Texas	45 Indiana 42 Illinois 39 North Dakota	47 Nevada 39 Montana

RESULTS

Common Characteristics of BEST States

The BEST states of the 2011 American State Litter Scorecard are listed in Tables 4 and 5 and Figure 1. Only two of these states had Litter Taxation, and all but two had above average Per Person Overall State Environmental Expenditures. A majority of BEST states had Comprehensive Recycling Rules/Legislation and Litter Prevention Slogans and, below average Per Person Daily Waste Disposals and Debris-related Fatal Vehicle Collision Chances. Six of the BEST states are in the Northeast; three in the West and Midwest; only one BEST state in both the South and the Midwest.

Common Characteristics of WORST States

The WORST states are listed in Tables 4 and 6 and Figure 1. The 12 states deemed as WORST had no enacted Litter Taxation, Container Deposit Rules/Legislation nor Comprehensive Recycling Rules/Legislation. A majority of WORST states have below average Environmental Responsibility Reputations of their Governors and, below average Knowledge of Littering and other Road Laws by their Licensed Drivers, and, at -or- above average Per Person Daily Waste Disposals; above average Thoroughfare Maintenance Disbursement Costs; above average Debris-related Fatal Vehicle Collision Chances and Public Servant Corruption Convictions per Population Proportion. Seven of the WORST states are in the South; three in the Midwest; two are in the West; none are found in the Northeast.

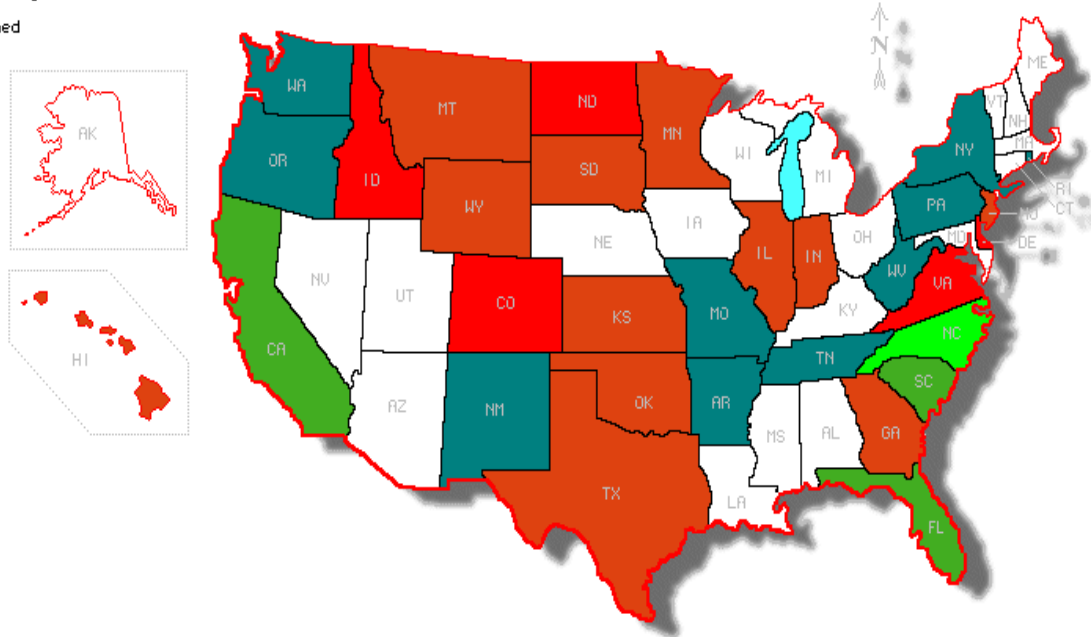
Changes in National Status Designations

Since creation of the 2008 Scorecard, some states have improved, declined or held onto their national litter removals/public spaces cleanliness designations. A total of 14 states improved their standings, while 17 saw a downward trend and 19 states experienced no status alteration. The biggest three-year improvements were made by Sunbelt states North Carolina, California and Florida. Colorado, Delaware, Idaho, North Dakota and Virginia were the five states (all above the 36th Parallel) subjected to the greatest national status designation declines (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Changes in National Status Designations between 2008 and 2010 American State Litter Scorecards

Changes in National Status Designations, 2008 to 2010 Scorecard.

- - Biggest Decliners
- - Declined
- - Biggest Gainer
- - Next Big Gainers
- - Gained



CONCLUSION

The budget shortfall crisis affecting all fifty American States possibly will hamper short-term litter abatement efforts. Yet, well before their current fiscal dilemmas, some chose to engage in historically poor removal performances, providing their populous with unpleasant ecological conditions, year in and year out. Also, previous research and eyewitness observations by the author have found some states east of the Mississippi performing double-standard abatement practices based upon population concentrations of the proximate landscape.³⁷

Polls taken the last 20-plus years still indicate a majority of Americans believe the public sector “[is] not working enough to protect the environment, and that economic growth should be sacrificed to do so.”³⁸ Littering remains a danger to public health, safety and welfare throughout the United States, and roadside litter abatement is a subset of all litter prevention in public spaces and waterways. Public litter prevention and abatement remains a mandated function of American state governance. Yet, numerous jurisdictions remain “in the rear” in the effort to provide uniform, categorical, litter abatement data for scientific analysis, including social aspects from loss of tourism and reduced economic development. Perhaps this scorecard might somehow provide initiative to state CEO’s, agency heads and citizenry in eliminating temporary or often longtime inattentiveness. As the author has stated before in his previous research, this revelation should not be deemed as a definitive causation marker. Rather, one should see this examination as still another contributing inquiry into a poorly probed matter.

Notes

¹ *Littering* is the human throwing of trash in small or moderate portions onto the surface of public or private property. *Dumping* is littering on a larger, more voluminous scale (i.e. throwing a 33-gallon bag of garbage onto a roadway or into a stream).

² The District of Columbia and Territories/Possessions are not states and thus not included in this presentation.

³ See Alan Bisbort, "Garbage In, Garbage out: America's Love Affair with Litter," [*Westchester County (New York) Weekly*, October 11, 2001, 9]; "City Image is Trashed by Apathy," (*Corpus Christi CallerTimes*, August 20, 2000) [online] www.caller2.com/2000/; Martin Dodge, "Modification of Littering Behavior: An Exploratory Study," (Logan, UT: Utah State University, 1972, 3); E. Geller, J. Witmer, M. Tusso, "Environmental Interventions for Litter Control," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 62, (1977): 344-351; Kentucky, *The Impact of Litter* (Frankfort, KY: Legislative Research Commission, Research Report # 127, 1975, 1-2); William Shireman, David McFadden, David Newdorf and Diane Noga, *Can and Bottle Bills: The CALPIRG-ELS Study Group Report* (Stanford, CA: The California Public Interest Group and Trustees of Leland Stanford, Jr. University, 1981, v, 25).

⁴ See R. Liggett, A. Loukaitou-Sideris, and H. Iseki, "Bus Stop-Environment Connection: Do Characteristics of the Built Environment Correlate with Bus Stop Crime?" *Transportation Research Record*, No. 1760, Transportation Research Board of the National Academies, (2001): 20-27; Gerry Forbes, *Reducing Litter on Roadsides: NCHRP 39, A Synthesis of Highway Practice* (Washington, DC: Transportation Research Board, 2009); 4.

⁵ *2008 National Traffic Safety Facts: A Compilation of Motor Vehicle Crash Data From The Fatality Analysis Reporting System and the General Estimates System* (Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2009), 146-147 [online] <http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pubs/811170.pdf>

⁶ Gerry Forbes, *Reducing Litter on Roadsides*, 4.

⁷ See S. Spacek, "Do Mess with it: A Sociopolitical Study of Littering and The Role of Southern and Nearby States" (San Marcos, TX: Texas State University, 2004, 22-23) [online] <http://ecommons.txstate.edu/arp/27>

⁸ Robert Bullard, *Dumping in Dixie: Race, Class and Environmental Quality 3rd ed.* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000, 97); Robert Bullard and Beverly Wright, "Blacks and the Environment," *Humboldt Journal of Social Relations* 14 (Summer 1987): 165-184; Augustus Cochran, *Democracy Heading South: National Politics in the Shadow of Dixie.* (Lawrence KS: University Press of Kansas, 2001, 226); John Ockels, *Local Control of Illegal Dumping.* (Pottsboro, TX: Little Mineral Press, 2003, 11); Joel Epstein and Theodore Hammett, *Law Enforcement Response to Environmental Crime, J28:23:L41* (Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, 1995, xi).

⁹ Daniel Henning, *Environmental Policy and Administration* (New York City: American Elsevier, 1974, 105).

¹⁰ Gerry Forbes, *Reducing Litter on Roadsides*, 1-2.

¹¹ See a New York City case study on litter abatement measures with national ramifications:

Gregg Van Ryzin, Stephen Immerwahr and Stan Altman, "Measuring Street Cleanliness: A Comparison of New York City's Scorecard and Results from a Citizen Survey," *Public Administration Review* (March/April 2008): 295-296.

¹² Gerry Forbes, *Reducing Litter on Roadsides*, 5.

¹³ *Source Reduction* is a waste prevention effort--an endeavor in diminishing the amount of litter or garbage generated or thrown away by both people and mechanical waste producers. The article "Solid Waste" by Pollution Issues [online] <http://www.pollutionissues.com/re-sy/solid-waste.html> provides more informative detail.

¹⁴ See Alan Bisbort, "Garbage In, Garbage out: America's Love Affair with Litter," 9; Kentucky, *The Impact of Litter*, 31.

¹⁵ Organizations include The Sierra Club; Keep America Beautiful; Environmental Defense Fund.

¹⁶ Maine, Vermont are the only two U.S. states lacking an Adopt-a-Highway program.

¹⁷ Pamela Murphy, ed., *The Garbage Primer: A Handbook for Citizens* (New York City: Lyons and Burford, 1993, 35).

¹⁸ William Shireman, David McFadden, David Newdorf and Diane Noga, *Can and Bottle Bills*, vii-viii; Pamela Murphy, *The Garbage Primer: A Handbook for Citizens*, 35.

¹⁹ Joel Epstein and Theodore Hammett, *Law Enforcement Response to Environmental Crime*, 1.

²⁰ Kentucky, *The Impact of Litter*, 2; John Ockels, *Local Control of Illegal Dumping*, 19.

²¹ Alan Bisbort, "Garbage In, Garbage out: America's Love Affair with Litter," 9; Joel Epstein and Theodore Hammett, *Law Enforcement Response to Environmental Crime*, xi; University of Tennessee, National Center for Environmental Decision Making Research. "Review Laws," in *Decision Maker's Guide to Controlling Litter and Illegal Dumping* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee, 2000) [online] www.ncedr.org/guides/litter/step41.htm

²² Francis McAndrew, *Environmental Psychology* (Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing, 1993, 272).

²³ Joel Epstein and Theodore Hammett, *Law Enforcement Response to Environmental Crime*, 43.

²⁴ S. Spacek, "The 2008 American State Litter Scorecard" [online] <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/adopt/files/AmericanStateLitterScorecard.pdf>

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- ²⁵Earl Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research*, 9th ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth-Thompson Learning, 2001, 111, 195, 316).
- ²⁶New Jersey, (Trenton, NJ: Department of the Treasury), Personal Email to Steve Spacek, January 2011; William Shireman, David McFadden, David Newdorf and Diane Noga, *Can and Bottle Bills*, vii-viii.
- ²⁷Container Recycling Institute, "States with Bottle Deposit Rules," 2006; Valarie Hoy, Container Recycling Institute, Personal Email to Steve Spacek, January 2011; Chaz Miller, Personal Email to Steve Spacek, February 2011; William Shireman, David McFadden, David Newdorf and Diane Noga, *Can and Bottle Bills*, vii-viii.
- ²⁸Valarie Hoy, Container Recycling Institute, Personal Email to Steve Spacek, January 2011; Chaz Miller, Personal Email to Steve Spacek, February 2011; Debra Strong, *Recycling in America*, 2nd ed. (Santa Barbara, CA: ABCCLIO, 1997, 96.
- ²⁹State Departments of Transportation, Administration, Agencies, Cabinets, Personal Emails to Steve Spacek, February/March, 2011.
- ³⁰R. Steven Brown, Personal Email to Steve Spacek, January 2011; "State Environmental Budgets and Budget Plans, FY 2005-2008," (Washington, DC: Environmental Council of the States, 2008—used with written permission); U. S. Department of Commerce, U. S. Census Bureau, "Annual Estimates of the Population for the United States: July 1, 2006, July 1, 2007."
- ³¹James Thompson and Ian Trueblood, "US Landfill Volumes" (San Diego, CA: Waste Business Journal, 2011—used with written permission); U. S. Department of Commerce, U. S. Census Bureau, "Annual Estimates of the Population for the United States, July 1, 2007."
- ³²2008 *National Traffic Safety Facts*, 146-147, 152-153; U. S. Department of Commerce, U. S. Census Bureau, "Annual Estimates of the Population for the United States, July 1, 2008."
- ³³David Hartgen, Ravi Karanam, Gregory Fields, Travis Kerscher, Adrian Moore, "19th Annual Report on the Performance of State Highway Systems, 1984-2008" (Los Angeles: The Reason Foundation, September 2010, 17) [online] http://reason.org/files/19th_annual_highway_report.pdf
- ³⁴John Fritze, "North Dakota Tops Analysis of Corruption," (*USA Today*, December 11, 2008) [online] http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2008-12-10-corruptstates_N.htm
- ³⁵"Greenopia Ranks 50 State Governors For Environmental Responsibility," (Santa Barbara, CA: July 2009) [online] <http://www.greenopia.com/USA/news/15439/6-22-2009/Greenopia-Ranks-50-State-Governors-for-Environmental-Responsibility>
- ³⁶GMAC Insurance, "2009 GMAC Insurance National Drivers Test."
- ³⁷The author observes that some states—notably, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut and Michigan—are seemingly performing double-standard litter and debris removal practices based on a site's adjacent population density. Litter removals on lesser-populated rural roadways seem acceptably clean, with few traces of litter. Yet, the presence of eradication labor (or the intentional lack thereof) somehow leads to continuous, unacceptably clean, horrifically littered public spaces, roadways, etc. in heavily urbanized, densely populated locales. These east of the Mississippi states tend to have historically poorer governmental agency oversight, moderated public transparency and weaker ethics laws than most.
- ³⁸Gallup Organization, "Environmental Poll, November 21, 2000," *Government Versus the Environment*, Donald Leal and Roger Meiners, eds. (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2003, 2-3).

Appendix

Examples of Objective and Subjective Litter Data

Objective Litter Data

(SU1) States with Litter Taxation (2011)

State	Score
New Jersey	+5.0
Ohio	+5.0
Rhode Island	+5.0
Virginia	+5.0
Washington	+5.0
All Other States	0.0

Sources: New Jersey Department of Treasury; Shireman, McFadden, Newdorf and Noga.

(SU2) States with Container Deposit Rules/Legislation (2011)

State	Score
California	+5.0
Connecticut	+5.0
Hawaii	+5.0
Iowa	+5.0
Maine	+5.0
Massachusetts	+5.0
Michigan	+5.0
New York	+5.0
Oregon	+5.0
Vermont	+5.0
All Other States	0.0

Sources: Container Recycling Institute; Miller, Chaz; Shireman, McFadden, Newdorf and Noga.

(SU3) States with Comprehensive Recycling Rules/Legislation (2011)

State	Score
California	+5.0
Connecticut	+5.0
Delaware	+5.0
Florida	+5.0
Maine	+5.0
Maryland	+5.0
New Jersey	+5.0
Oregon	+5.0
Pennsylvania	+5.0
Rhode Island	+5.0
Washington	+5.0
Wisconsin	+5.0
All Other States	0.0

Sources: Container Recycling Institute; Miller, Chaz; National Solid as cites in Strong.

(SU4) States with Litter Prevention Slogans (2011)

State	Slogan	Score
Alabama	Don't Drop it on Alabama	+5.0
Alaska	(new) Don't Trash Alaska	+5.0
Arizona	Don't Trash Arizona	+5.0
Arkansas	Keep Arkansas Beautiful	+5.0
California	Don't Trash California	+5.0
Colorado	Spruce Up, Colorado	+5.0
Connecticut	NONE CREATED	0.0
Delaware	Keep Delaware Beautiful... Don't Be A Litterbug	+5.0
Florida	Take Pride in Florida	+5.0
Georgia	Let's Keep Georgia Peachy Clean	+5.0
Hawaii	NONE CREATED	0.0
Idaho	(new) Idaho is Too Great To Litter	+5.0
Illinois	Love the Land of Lincoln— Please Don't Litter	+5.0
Indiana	NONE CREATED	0.0
Iowa	Keep Iowa Beautiful	+5.0
Kansas	Kansas! Don't Spoil It	+5.0
Kentucky	NONE CREATED	0.0
Louisiana	Don't Trash Louisiana	+5.0
Maine	NONE CREATED	0.0
Maryland	Keep Maryland Beautiful	+5.0
Massachusetts	Mass. Highway—Project Clean	+5.0
Michigan	NONE CREATED	0.0
Minnesota	Minnesota: Don't Waste Our State	+5.0
Mississippi	(new)Think Green, Keep Mississippi Clean	+5.0
Missouri	No More Trash	+5.0

Montana	NONE CREATED	0.0
Nebraska	Nebraska: Don't Waste It	+5.0
Nevada	NONE CREATED	0.0
New Hampshire	Litter-Free New Hampshire	+5.0
New Jersey	NONE CREATED	0.0
New Mexico	New Mexico Clean and Beautiful	+5.0
New York	Let's Pick It Up, New York	+5.0
North Carolina	Keep North Carolina Clean, Green and Beautiful	+5.0
North Dakota	Keep North Dakota Clean	+5.0
Ohio	Don't Trash Ohio	+5.0
Oklahoma	Oklahoma, Keep Our Land Grand	+5.0
Oregon	NONE CREATED	0.0
Pennsylvania	Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful	+5.0
Rhode Island	Rhode Island: Catch The Wave, Ride With Pride	+5.0
South Carolina	Keep It Beautiful, South Carolina	+5.0
South Dakota	NONE CREATED	0.0
Tennessee	Keep Tennessee Beautiful	+5.0
Texas	Don't Mess With Texas	+5.0
Utah	Don't Waste Utah	+5.0
Vermont	NONE CREATED	0.0
Virginia	Litter: It's Just Isn't Natural	+5.0
Washington	Washington: Litter and It Will Hurt	+5.0
West Virginia	NONE CREATED	0.0
Wisconsin	NONE CREATED	0.0
Wyoming	(new) Wyoming's View is Up To You—Please Don't Litter	+5.0

Sources: 50 U.S. State Departments of Transportations, Administrations, Agencies, Cabinets.

NOTE: Adopt-a-Highway is a national litter abatement PROGRAM—considered NOT a unique, state-specific SLOGAN.

(SU8) Integrity of State Thoroughfare Maintenance Disbursement Costs (2008)

State	Score
New Jersey (a)	0.0
Massachusetts	0.0
New York	0.0
Florida	0.0
Rhode Island	0.0
Maryland	+0.5
New Hampshire	+0.5
California	+0.5
Hawaii	+0.5
Illinois	+0.5
Washington	+1.0
Pennsylvania	+1.0
Minnesota	+1.0
Michigan	+1.0
Maine	+1.0
Connecticut	+1.5
Vermont	+1.5
Alaska	+1.5
Louisiana	+1.5
Oregon	+1.5
Colorado	+2.0
Utah	+2.0
Idaho	+2.0
Ohio	+2.0
Delaware	+2.0
Virginia	+2.5
Nevada	+2.5
Iowa	+2.5
New Mexico	+2.5
Wisconsin	+2.5
Arizona	+3.0
Tennessee	+3.0
Texas	+3.0
Oklahoma	+3.0
Kansas	+3.0
Nebraska	+3.5
Wyoming	+3.5
Alabama	+3.5
Missouri	+3.5
Kentucky	+3.5
Georgia	+4.0
Indiana	+4.0
Mississippi	+4.0

Arkansas	+4.0
Montana	+4.0
South Dakota	+4.5
North Carolina	+4.5
South Carolina	+4.5
West Virginia	+4.5
North Dakota (b)	+4.5

(a): **Highest Cost, Least Integrity**

(b) **Lowest Cost, Most Integrity**

(SU9) State Public Corruption Convictions per Population Proportion (2008)

State	Convictions Per 100,000 Population	Score
North Dakota	8.3	-5.0
Louisiana	7.7	-5.0
Alaska	7.5	-4.5
Mississippi	7.3	-4.5
Montana	6.2	-4.5
Kentucky	5.7	-4.5
Alabama	5.4	-4.5
Delaware (a1)	5.1	-4.0
South Dakota (a1)	5.1	-4.0
New Jersey (a2)	4.8	-4.0
Ohio (a2)	4.8	-4.0
Florida (a3)	4.5	-4.0
Pennsylvania (a3)	4.5	-4.0
West Virginia	4.1	-3.5
Hawaii (a4)	4.0	-3.5
Tennessee (a4)	4.0	-3.5
Illinois (a5)	3.9	-3.5
Virginia (a5)	3.9	-3.5
New York	3.6	-3.0
Connecticut	3.2	-3.0
Oklahoma	3.0	-3.0
Massachusetts	2.9	-3.0
Arkansas	2.8	-3.0
Missouri (a6)	2.7	-2.5
Wyoming (a6)	2.7	-2.5
Maryland	2.6	-2.5
Idaho (a7)	2.5	-2.5
Rhode Island (a7)	2.5	-2.5
Texas	2.4	-2.5
Arizona	2.2	-2.0
Michigan (b1)	2.1	-2.0
Vermont (b1)	2.1	-2.0
Wisconsin (b1)	2.1	-2.0
North Carolina	2.0	-2.0
Indiana (a8)	1.9	-1.5
Maine (a8)	1.9	-1.5
Nevada	1.8	-1.5
Georgia (a9)	1.7	-1.5
South Carolina (a9)	1.7	-1.5
Colorado	1.6	-1.5
California (b2)	1.5	-1.0
New Mexico (b2)	1.5	-1.0
Washington (b2)	1.5	-1.0

Kansas (a10)	1.4	-1.0
Utah (a10)	1.4	-1.0
Minnesota	1.3	-0.5
Iowa	1.2	-0.5
New Hampshire	1.1	-0.5
Oregon	1.0	-0.5
Nebraska	0.7	-0.5

(a1...a10) States with Tie scores

(b1...b2) States with Triple Tie Scores

Note: Tied/Triple Tie States all receive same score if outside increments of five (i.e. IN/ME, MO/WY; DE/SD)

Subjective Litter Data

(OB1) Environmental Responsibility Reputation of State Governors (2009)

State	Governor	Score
Louisiana	Jindal	0.0
Indiana	Daniels	0.0
Alaska	Palin	0.0
Mississippi	Barbour	0.0
Texas	Perry	0.0
Alabama	Riley	+0.5
Idaho	Otter	+0.5
Oklahoma	Henry	+0.5
North Dakota	Hoeven	+0.5
Georgia	Perdue	+0.5
South Dakota	Rounds	+1.0
Rhode Island	Carciari	+1.0
Nevada	Gibbons	+1.0
Kentucky	Beshear	+1.0
Missouri	Nixon	+1.0
West Virginia	Manchin	+1.5
Delaware	Markell	+1.5
Montana	Schweizer	+1.5
Wyoming	Feudentahl	+1.5
Virginia	Kaine	+1.5
South Carolina	Sanford	+2.0
Nebraska	Heinienman	+2.0
Illinois	Quinn	+2.0
Tennessee	Breseden	+2.0
Ohio	Strickland	+2.0
Kansas	Sebelius	+2.5
Iowa	Culver	+2.5
Hawaii	Lingle	+2.5
Florida	Crist	+2.5
Utah	Huntsman	+2.5
Pennsylvania	Rendell	+3.0
Minnesota	Pawlenty	+3.0
Arkansas	Beebe	+3.0
New York	Paterson	+3.0
Wisconsin	Doyle	+3.0
New Hampshire	Lynch	+3.5
Michigan	Granholt	+3.5
North Carolina	Perdue	+3.5
Arizona	Brewer	+3.5
Massachusetts	Patrick	+3.5
Connecticut	Rell	+4.0
New Jersey	Corzine	+4.0
Vermont	Douglas	+4.0
New Mexico	Richardson	+4.0

Maryland	O'Malley	+4.0
Maine	Balducci	+4.5
Washington	Gregoire	+4.5
Oregon	Kulongowski	+4.5
California	Schwartznegger	+4.5
Colorado	Ritter	+4.5

Source: Greenopia.