

## East County Citizens' Alliance (Melanie Wilson)

My organization, East County Citizens' Alliance, and our partners have cleaned up trash along roughly four miles of SR-14 in Washougal and Camas for three years under the state's Adopt-a-Highway program. Together our volunteers have picked up tens of thousands of pounds of trash, so we have an excellent idea of what's out there. Highway trash falls into roughly four categories: fast food trash and beverage cans that drivers and passengers throw out their windows; contractor or construction trash that comes off the backs of trucks; commercial trash such as plastic sheeting, cardboard, Styrofoam and tags that come from rigs hauling lumber and other goods; and car parts such as mufflers, tire tread and hubcaps. We are particularly concerned about the thousands of plastic lumber tags we pick up (Washougal is home to two lumber treatment companies). Despite our best efforts, we've had no success pressuring these companies to change their process to minimize the shedding of tags -- they simply say they're following common practice in the state. Our view is that companies both large and small should be required to stop polluting our landscape. In a sense, it's as simple as that. A more comprehensive litter tax may be helpful. However, that still puts the onus on the civic groups, WSDOT and Ecology to clean up the mess businesses leave behind. I'd like to see these local haulers required to "lend" employees to ongoing volunteer cleanup efforts. The way to really understand the impact of commercial trash is to see it up close.















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