

## [Watch for Ecology Youth Corps litter crews along highways](#)

### Local News

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OLYMPIA — Middle- and high-school youths will return to southwest Washington roadsides this week to clean up litter tossed or dropped by motorists. The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology), which operates the litter program, urges motorists to use extra caution when they see the orange "Ecology youth working" signs along state highways. Teens ages 14 to 17 will work this summer along roadsides in Clark, Grays Harbor, Lewis, Pierce, and Thurston counties. "Safety is our No. 1 priority," said Ariona, regional litter administrator and coordinator for the Ecology Youth Corps (EYC). "Every driver needs to stay alert when passing a litter crew. For most crew members, it's their first job. We're proud of their work to help keep our roadways litter-free." Crew members receive \$9.19 an hour — the state's minimum wage — and work 7.5 hours a day Monday through Friday. Crews will operate this year in two sessions — July 1 through July 29 and July 29 through Aug. 21. The Grays Harbor crew works only one session from July 1 through Aug. 9.

In 2012, EYC litter crews cleaned 6,372 miles of roadways, picked up 1,156,782 pounds of litter and recycled 142,825 pounds of materials. In the [Southwest Region](#), crews picked up more than 366,945 pounds of litter. This year, Ecology's Southwest Regional Office will have 10 six-person crews working in four counties and 1 four-person crew working in Grays Harbor County. The popular program attracted 774 applications from young people interested in the 64 EYC summer crew jobs administered by Ecology's Lacey office. In the past, this office has hired 72 teens for the summer season. But for the past five years, the transfer of some state litter account monies to the state's general fund has limited the number of teens hired. Statewide, EYC's summer crews number 299. More than 3,100 teens applied for these positions. EYC is an important part of an overall Ecology-coordinated effort that each year removes more than 3,500 tons of litter and illegally dumped materials statewide. Other participants include county and city litter-cleanup programs and the state departments of Natural Resources, Transportation and Corrections. Littering can draw fines up to \$1,025. Fines for illegal dumping are \$1,000 to \$5,000, plus jail time. The Ecology Youth Corps The Ecology Youth Corps (EYC) is Washington State's largest youth employment program. Through the years EYC has hired over 12,000 youth, and each year we continue to hire over 300 teens statewide to provide an important service to their communities. These youth earn minimum wage while gaining valuable job skills, teamwork experience, and safety awareness. EYC has removed litter and promoted recycling and litter abatement throughout the state of Washington since 1975. Our crews pick up approximately 1,200,000 pounds of litter a year and recycle just under 200,000 pounds of materials. **The 2013 hiring cycle is now open for all regions!** Using the map below click on the county where you want to apply for a job.

