

Procedural Overview – S.O.S. (Save Our Shores) Program

Overview of Program

The City of Galveston passed the Leave No Trace ordinance (No.19-017) on February 28, 2019. This ordinance states:

(1) Items of personal property - includes, but is not limited to items such as canopies, shade structures, tents, umbrellas, chairs, towels, equipment, games, and coolers.

(2) Unattended - refers to an item or items of personal property that are not supervised or looked after by a person.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to leave an item of personal property unattended on the public beaches or within the public beach access areas between the hours of sunset and sunrise on the following day, except as otherwise permitted.

(c) Any item of personal property left on the public beach or within public beach access areas in violation of this section shall be deemed discarded by the owner, and may be removed, destroyed, or otherwise disposed of, accordingly by the City of Galveston, the Park Board of Trustees, or their designees.

(d) In the confiscation and disposal of any such item under this Section, the City shall not be subject to any responsibility or liability to persons or damages to property caused by the confiscation or subsequent disposal of unattended items of personal property.

(e) Exemptions. The provisions of this Section shall not apply to personal property such as equipment and materials for use in the following circumstances when authorized by the City of Galveston, Galveston County, or a State or Federal government agency:

- (1) Coastal and beach projects, such as beach nourishment.
- (2) Academic and/or scientific research.
- (3) Life safety, disaster recovery, emergency management or response.

The purpose of this program is to not only keep our beaches clean of beach gear debris but also to allow for clear access to the dune lines for sea turtle nesting as well as keeping nesting bird populations from becoming impacted by items that have been left behind.

Important Dates:

- Spring Break – S.O.S. overnight crews will be deployed*
- Memorial Day – S.O.S. overnight crews will resume operations
- Labor Day – S.O.S. overnight crews will cease operations

**Day crews will monitor items left on the beach overnight between the periods of Spring Break and Memorial Day. If numbers increase prior to Memorial Day, the Operations Manager may choose to deploy S.O.S. overnight crews sooner*

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S.O.S. Annual Staff Operations

Informational Outreach Pre-Program

In January of each year, Office Coordinator will:

- Review signage inventory and order, as needed, additional signage for beach front deployment
- Work with CVB Marketing department to update printed communication pieces, as needed
- Review inventory of printed materials and order, as needed in January

In February of each year, Office Coordinator will:

- Send CVB approved communication pieces to the HOT Accountant for distribution to all registered short term rental partners by March 1st.
 - Similar messaging will be provided to the HOT Accountant in May, July and September in anticipation of major holidays
- Reach out to the City of Galveston Public Information Officer to request mass messaging about the program to be distributed thru the City's "Nextdoor" app the first week of March
- Send communication pieces to the Secretary for the West Galveston Island Property Owners Association (WGIPOA)
- Arrange for COO to speak with WGIPOA at their February or March meetings
- Request Galveston Daily News run an information piece informing residents and visitors of the ordinance guidelines and start and end dates

Signage Deployment

In March of each year, Coastal Zone Management Crews will place temporary real estate signs along beach front on both the east end and west end of the island

130 metal City ordinance signs stay up year-round and are placed on bollards at beach access points and walkovers

Crew: Hours and Resources

S.O.S. crews :

- Consist of supervisor and 2 technicians (contract labor if available)
- Operate 6 days per week
 - Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri 1:00 AM to 7:00 AM
 - Sat & Sun 12:00 AM to 7:00 AM
- Utilize the following equipment: 1 crew truck and 1 trailer

Collection of Unattended Personal Property

- Staff will start at Beach Access Point 6 removing unattended beach gear and will continue operations down to San Luis Pass, bypassing Galveston Island State Park and Jamaica Beach
- Staff will continue to Stewart Beach and clean the stretch between Stewart Beach and East Beach
- Every item collected is photographed and the location and items are logged by supervisor to be recorded by Office Coordinator

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Disposal of Items Collected

- Fabric canopy is removed from the metal posts and each are disposed of separately
- Misc. beach gear will be disposed of accordingly (recycle or trash)

Communication with the Public

The Coastal Zone Management Officer Coordinator receives most call (usually transferred from the City of Galveston)

Coastal Zone Management and S.O.S. Crews will carry S.O.S. cards that state the ordinance as well as the direct phone number to the Coastal Zone Management Office Coordinator.

Each call is logged showing date, rental location/company, and comments about the nature of the call.

Every caller will be given the same message: their items were removed from the beach per the city ordinance no. 19-017, no items shall be left unattended overnight on the beach. Items that are found unattended will be removed and disposed of.

Absolutely no items can be collected after removal.