

Online Litter Index Guide

Completing the Basic and Advanced Forms

Overview

There are two different Litter Indices, the Basic and the Advanced. A community gathers specific information about litter in their community and enters it into an online assessment tool. The tool then provides a summary of litter in that community.

Instructions for using the two online litter indices are described below.

1. **Basic Litter Index** – Rank the degree of litter in a particular area on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being the least littered and 4 being the most littered. This ranking, with details about the location and road type surveyed, will be entered into the litter assessment tool. Based on your region of the state, the road type, and the ranking, the online litter assessment tool will use the data from the statewide survey to provide a quantitative characterization of the litter in your area.
2. **Advanced Litter Index** – This approach provides a more precise picture of litter in your community and thus allows better targeting of litter prevention and abatement efforts. In this approach, the number and type of litter items found within a designated area are counted.

For detailed instructions on completing the field surveys, read the Field Manual for Conducting a Visual Litter Survey at <http://www.litteritcostsyoud.org>. This Manual and the forms included, provides the tools needed to perform the survey to gather the data for the Advanced Litter Index. The data can then be entered into the online assessment tool which will then provide a site specific description of the litter in the area.

1. The Basic Form

Follow these step-by-step instructions in order to complete the Basic Form:

- 1) Go to <http://www.LitterItCostsYou.org> and click on Community and Government→Assessment Tools
- 2) Select “Complete the Online Litter Index”
- 3) Scroll down the page until you see the User Name box.
- 4) Enter the User Name and Password you were assigned when you registered for the Online Index and click “Login”. If you have not yet registered, select “Create a User Account”.
- 5) Enter the zip code for the community surveyed and click “Go”.
- 6) You will now see the Basic Form with the zip code displayed that you just entered. To specify a different zip code, click “Select a different zip code”.
- 7) You may enter multiple sub-area entries for each zip code surveyed. Each sub-area is defined as a unique pathway through a given locale. If you wish to enter additional sub-areas, select “Add another sub-area.”
- 8) You are first asked to enter the Date and the Contact Name. The date should be entered as mm/dd/yyyy. The name should auto-populate to the name specified in your account login.
- 9) Next, select the predominant weather conditions over the last several days leading up to the survey. Weather can play an important role in the overall litter conditions for a locale.
- 10) Select the land-use type from the drop-down list.
- 11) Select the locale type in the next drop-down list.
- 12) The next question refers to whether the area was recently mowed or not (e.g. medians, roadsides, etc.). Select Yes, No or Unsure.
- 13) Specify whether or not the road segment surveyed is part of a Keep America Beautiful program. Select Yes, No or Unsure.
- 14) Next, specify whether or not the road segment surveyed is part of an Adopt a Highway Program. Select Yes, No or Unsure.
- 15) Enter the average score for the sub-area surveyed. 1 is not littered at all, 4 is extremely littered.
- 16) Finally, you are asked to specify the area you surveyed. First, select whether the locale was a single point (e.g. an intersection) or a path (e.g. point A to point B). If you select “path”, you’ll be presented with a starting point and ending point. Enter the appropriate GPS coordinates or corresponding street addresses.
- 17) If you do not wish to continue to the Advanced form, click the Submit button.
- 18) You have now completed a survey for a single sub-area. To enter another survey for an additional sub-area in this same zip code, select “Add another sub-area” at the top of the page.

2. The Advanced Form

The Advanced form adds three additional sections. If you wish to convert a Basic form to an Advanced form, click “Show Advanced section”. Then follow these steps:

- 1) Select the primary source of litter for the surveyed locale from the Source of Litter drop-down list.
- 2) Enter the litter count for each type of litter at that locale. Try to be as accurate as possible. If you do not have the resources to perform an accurate count, you may want to consider using the basic form.
- 3) Finally, specify any notable conditions. This might include observations about the primary source of litter (e.g. “Area is litter-free except next to dumpster”) or general comments about the locale.

For detailed instructions on conducting a field survey using the advanced method, consult the Field Manual for Conducting a Visual Litter Survey at <http://www.litteritcostsyoud.org>.

Send comments and questions to:

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