

APPENDIX G

List of Decomposition Rates

A fun but illuminating list of decomposition rates of stuff people pick up during Cleanup Day. Enlarge this and put on poster board for use at the Site Captain meeting, the day of Cleanup meeting site, and/or at post celebration. Or use figures in your press releases and reports.

How Long Does it Take to Decompose?

Glass bottle:	1 million years
Monofilament fishing line:	600 years
Plastic beverage bottles:	450 years
Disposable diapers:	450 years
Aluminum can:	80-200 years
Boot sole:	50-80 years
Styrofoam cup:	50 years
Tin can:	50 years
Leather:	50 years
Nylon fabric:	30-40 years
Plastic film cannister:	20-30 years
Plastic bag:	10-20 years
Cigarette filter:	1-5 years
Wool sock:	1-5 years
Plywood:	1-3 years
Waxed milk carton:	3 months
Apple core:	2 months
Newspaper:	6 weeks
Orange or banana peel:	2-5 weeks
Paper towel:	2-4 weeks

The above information was taken from the Pocket Guide to Marine Debris from the Ocean Conservancy.