



TOWN OF HIGHLAND BEACH

Department of Public Works

3616 S. Ocean Boulevard, Highland Beach, FL 33487

The below list encompasses some of the risks associated with wildlife and dog waste stations which are typically reserved to county parks or designated areas that would not be harmful or impactful to the environment.

- **Ingestion risk to sea turtles:** Plastic bags resemble jellyfish; species like Loggerhead sea turtle and green sea turtle may ingest fragments → blockage, malnutrition, or death.
- **Entanglement hazard:** Loose or windblown bags can entangle hatchlings or adults, impairing movement and increasing predation risk.
- **Light pollution conflict:** Stations often require visibility (reflective surfaces, occasional lighting), which can disorient nesting females and hatchlings that rely on natural light cues.
- **Attracts predators/scavengers:** Odor from waste bags can draw raccoons, birds, and other predators that also prey on nests and hatchlings.
- **Microplastic contamination:** Degrading bags contribute microplastics to sand and nearshore water, affecting invertebrates and the broader food web.
- **Storm dispersal:** Beachfront infrastructure is vulnerable to storms; bags and waste can be widely dispersed into marine habitat.
- **Sanitation runoff:** Concentrated waste can leach bacteria/nutrients into sand and surf zone, degrading water quality in nesting areas.

- **Behavioral disturbance:** Increased human/dog activity around stations elevates disturbance to nesting females (abandonment risk).
- **Maintenance burden:** Requires frequent servicing; overflow or poor upkeep increases litter and wildlife interaction risks.
- **Regulatory constraints:** Many nesting beaches have restrictions under frameworks like the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission guidelines for marine turtle protection, limiting structures and attractants on the beach.