



Ocean Beach Fire Revised Pilot Program

Update – August 2014

On May 22, 2014 Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) announced the implementation of the Ocean Beach Fire Revised Pilot Program, and changes to existing rules for fires on the beach. These changes included:

- 12 new fire rings installed (the existing 5 were removed)
- Fires must be extinguished by 9:00 PM
- Fires prohibited on all Spare the Air Days, year-round
- Data collection on compliance with regulations

Program Extended to October 31

Originally, the pilot program was scheduled to end on September 1, 2014. GGNRA has decided to extend the program through October of this year. This will allow for additional data collection, as well as the opportunity for further public outreach and education about the pilot program. With support from San Francisco Supervisor Eric Mar, SF Recreation and Parks Department (SFRPD) have received funds from the City of San Francisco to assist NPS with the pilot program. NPS and SFRPD will work together to determine how to use these funds to the best effect.

Progress Report

NPS has developed a preliminary progress report that includes graphs and notes that describe the data that was collected through July 10, 2014 (Law Enforcement data) and July 17, 2014 (morning litter data). Photos showing the beach and promenade after some nights that had fire activity are also included.

The main trends that are emerging include:

- Glass, alcohol and fires after curfew are the most significant types of violations
- Violations tend to be much higher on the weekends (particularly holidays)
- Fires occurring outside of designated fire rings is relatively high overall, which is of great concern with regards to public safety on the beach
- Materials that were present on the beach most often in the mornings after fires occur are: hot coals, broken glass and wooden pallets
- Fire rings are commonly full of sand, which leads NPS to believe that fires are being extinguished with sand, rather than water. This only insulates the hot coals, keeping them extremely hot until the next morning, which is a safety hazard for the NPS maintenance staff that clean the rings

At the end of October, GGNRA will evaluate the data that was collected and provide an assessment on the pilot program.

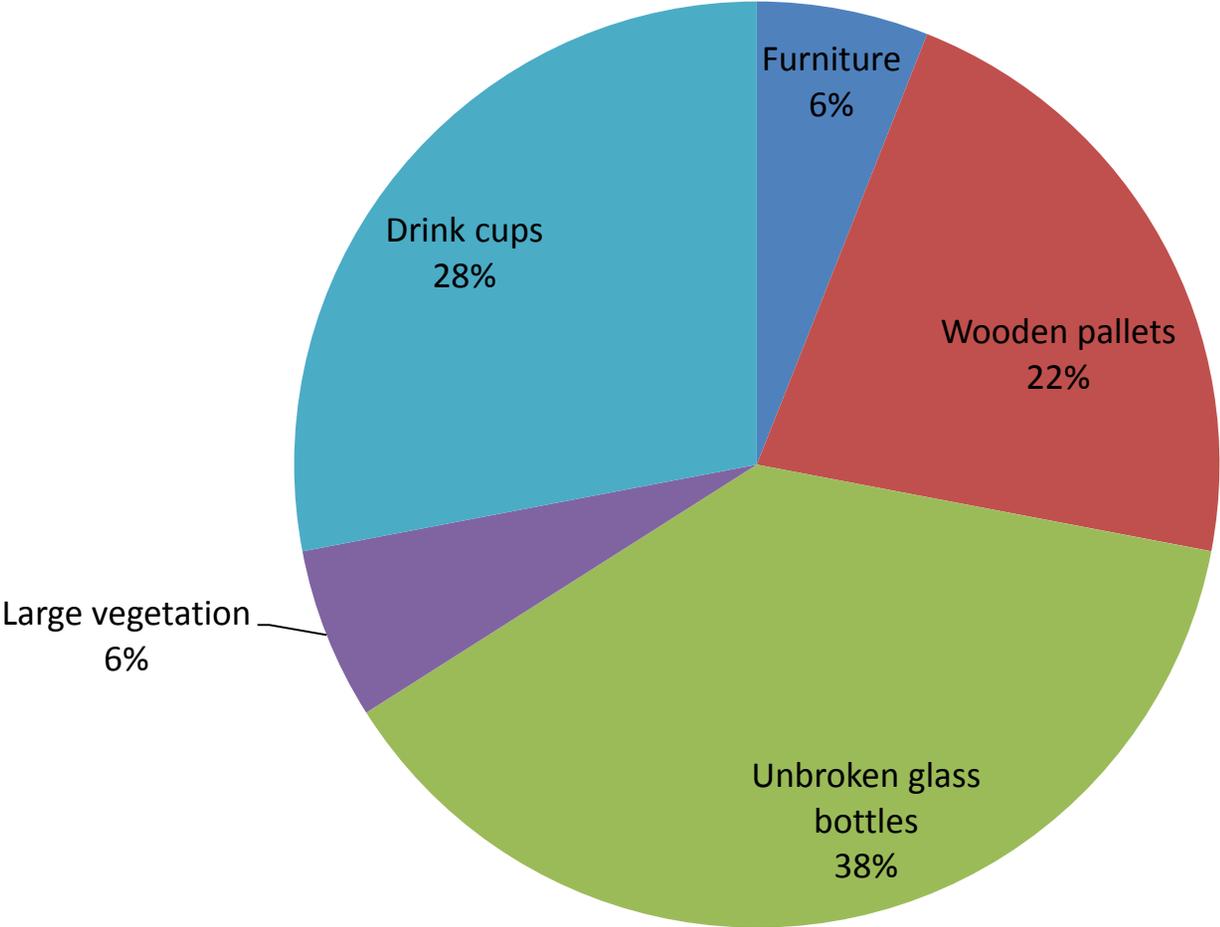
If you have any questions, suggestions, or feedback regarding this program, please contact goga_planning@nps.gov.

Ocean Beach Fires – Morning Data Collection

Percentage of Types of Debris/Litter When Present

May 28, 2014 – July 17, 2014

n = 18

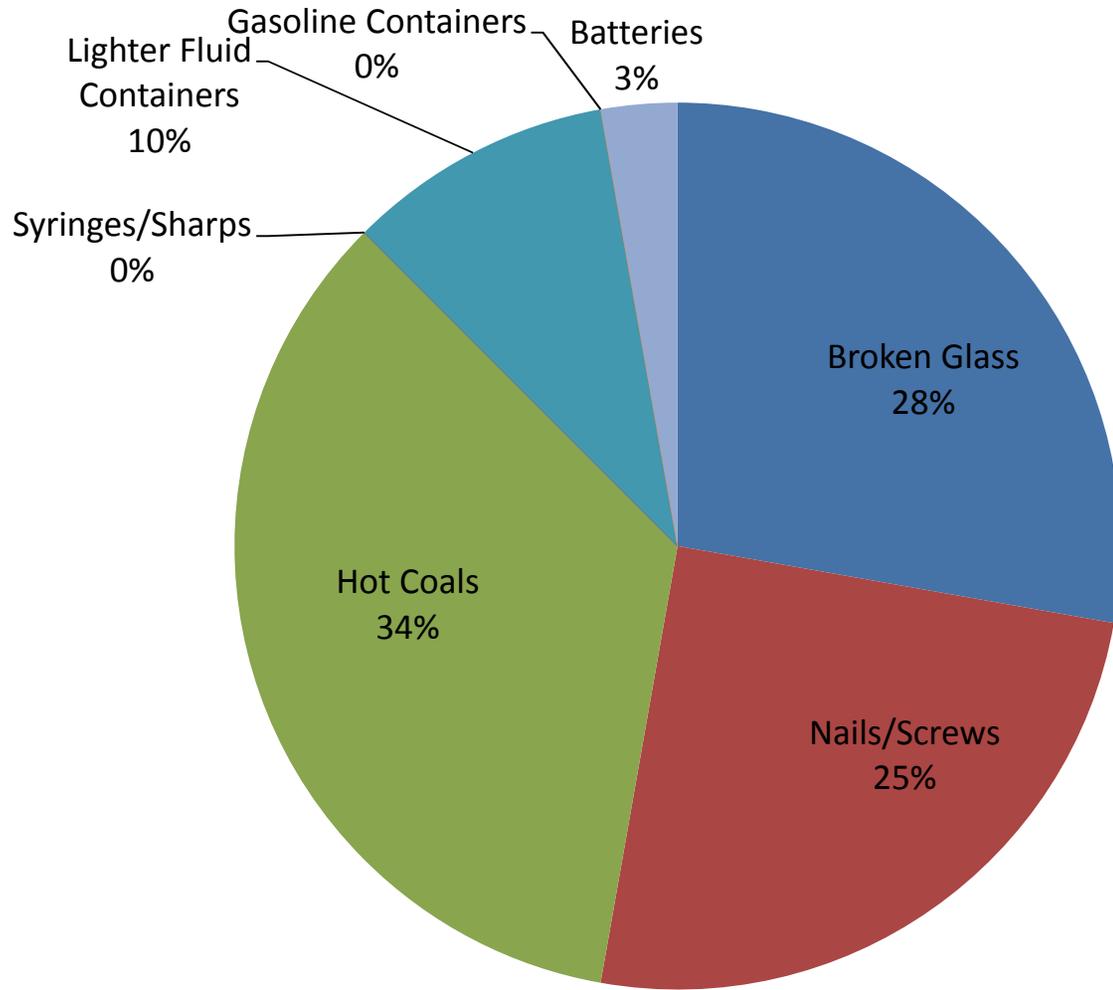


Ocean Beach Fires – Morning Data Collection

Percentage of Types of Hazardous Materials When Present

May 28, 2014 – July 17, 2014

n = 18

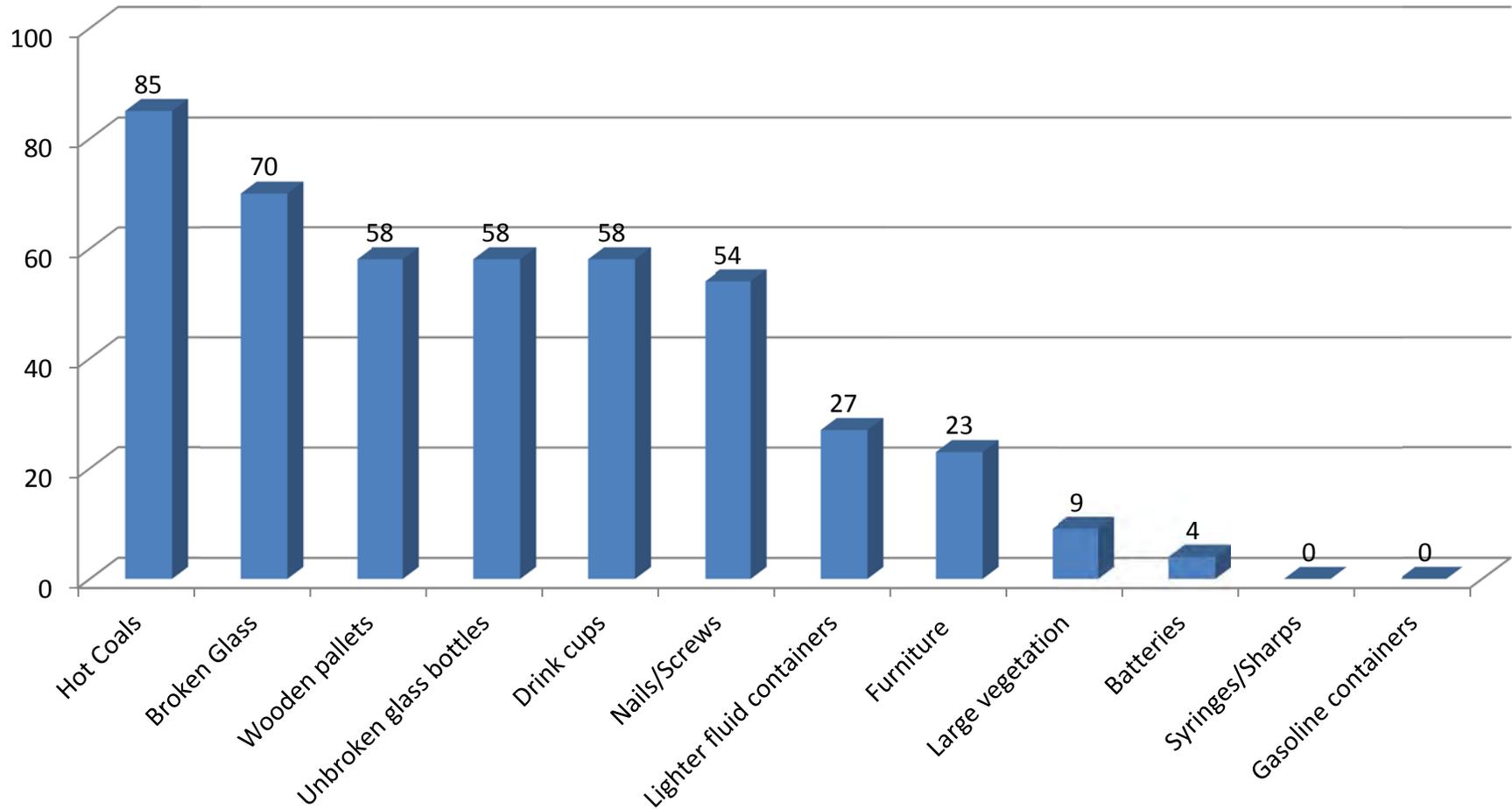


Ocean Beach Fires – Morning Data Collection

Percentage of Times Items were Present

May 28, 2014 – July 17, 2014

n = 18



Debris Data Notes and Observations

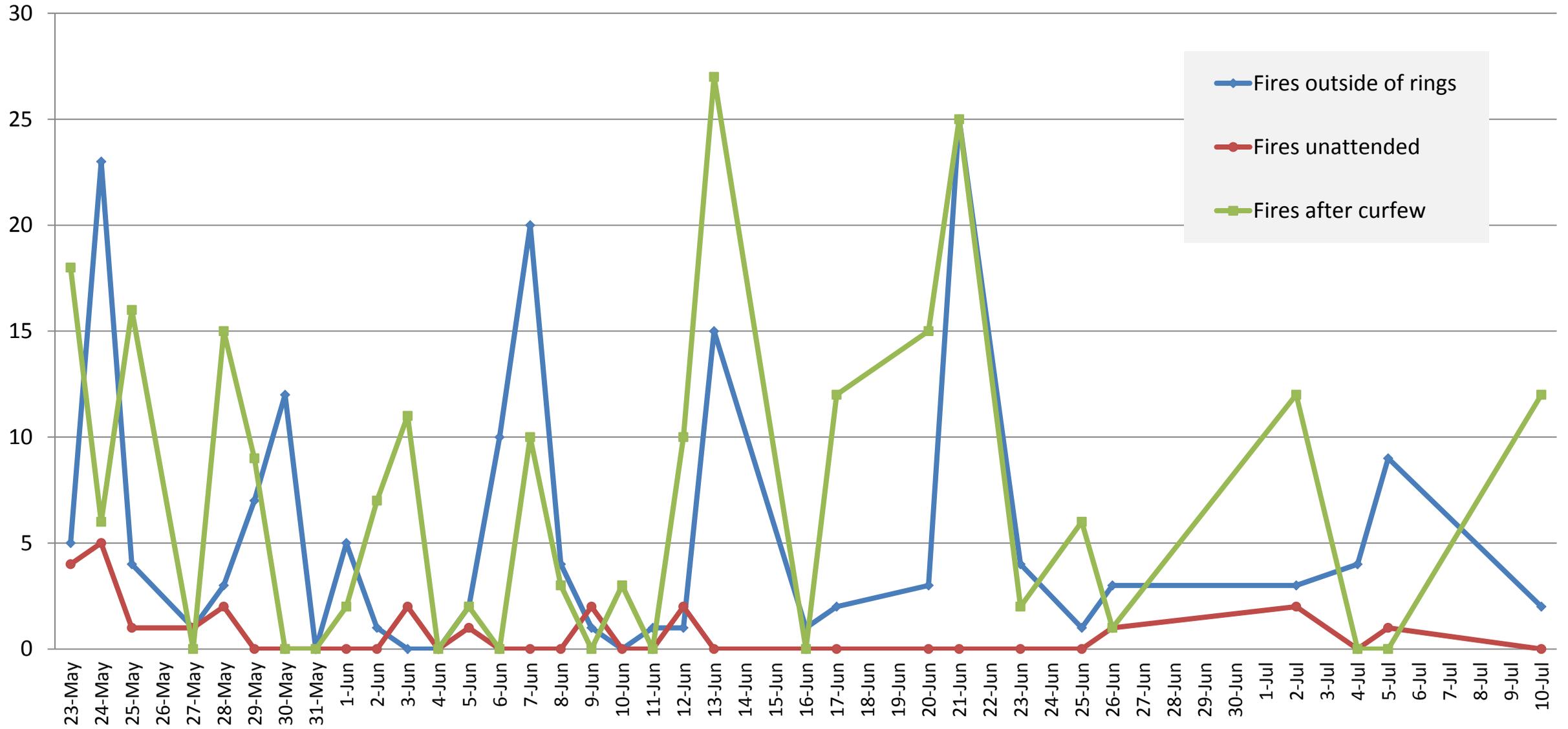
- All data was collected between the hours of 7AM and 10AM; for a total of 26 days between May 28 and July 17, 2014
- The amount of debris was documented that was present surrounding each fire ring
- The types of materials most often present were: hot coals, broken glass, and wooden pallets

Notes from Data Collectors

wire coat hangers, manufactured wood, cardboard
Lots of trash between pits 7-9. Fire ring 12 was occupied and within compliance.
Fire Ring #12 is missing; confirmed from Chuck's previous observation 7/24. Fire ring #10 was in use. Windmaster at SW 16 is ruined. Fire rings were cleaned recently, first 4 were relatively sand-free; two groups of people feeding birds on beach and promenade; at least 3 illegal fires around where Fire ring 12 should have been; illegal fires around SW 16-20 had large nails, metal hangers, metal brackets and unbroken glass bottles in them
horse dung, metal wires, 5 large wood beams used as seating
Metal skewers, metal coat hangers, metal springs, chair
creosote logs, coat hangers, cardboard, plastic utensils
BBQ metal skewers, plastic cutlery, plastic bottles, hula hoop, clothing
wire coat hangers, sharp metal grate, buried coals, various trash, starter sticks, burned telephone poles
hot coals, wooden dowels and skewers, unlit fire base at ring 6, many fires smoldering
Glow sticks, wire coat hangers, charcoal briquettes, scary metal brackets with nails, gunpowder-type party poppers. Most fire rings using clean, purchased firewood. People still burying coals in sand instead of putting out with water. Ton of trash along promenade.
coals buried in sand in all pits, skewers, fireworks, a lot fo store bought charcoal, best litter day yet, worst sand day yet
concrete chunks, styrofoam, fireworks, 5 foot metal rod, charcoal briquettes, most rings were in compliance though all were full of sand with buried coals
Fireworks (used) found at SW 15. Cleanest day yet-not much litter in or around fire rings. Big trash pile/illegal fire in snowy plover protection area.
wood skewers, cigarette butts, clothes hangers, and smoldering fire in Ring 7
pretty clean; it was foggy last night

Ocean Beach Fires – Law Enforcement Data for Fire Violations

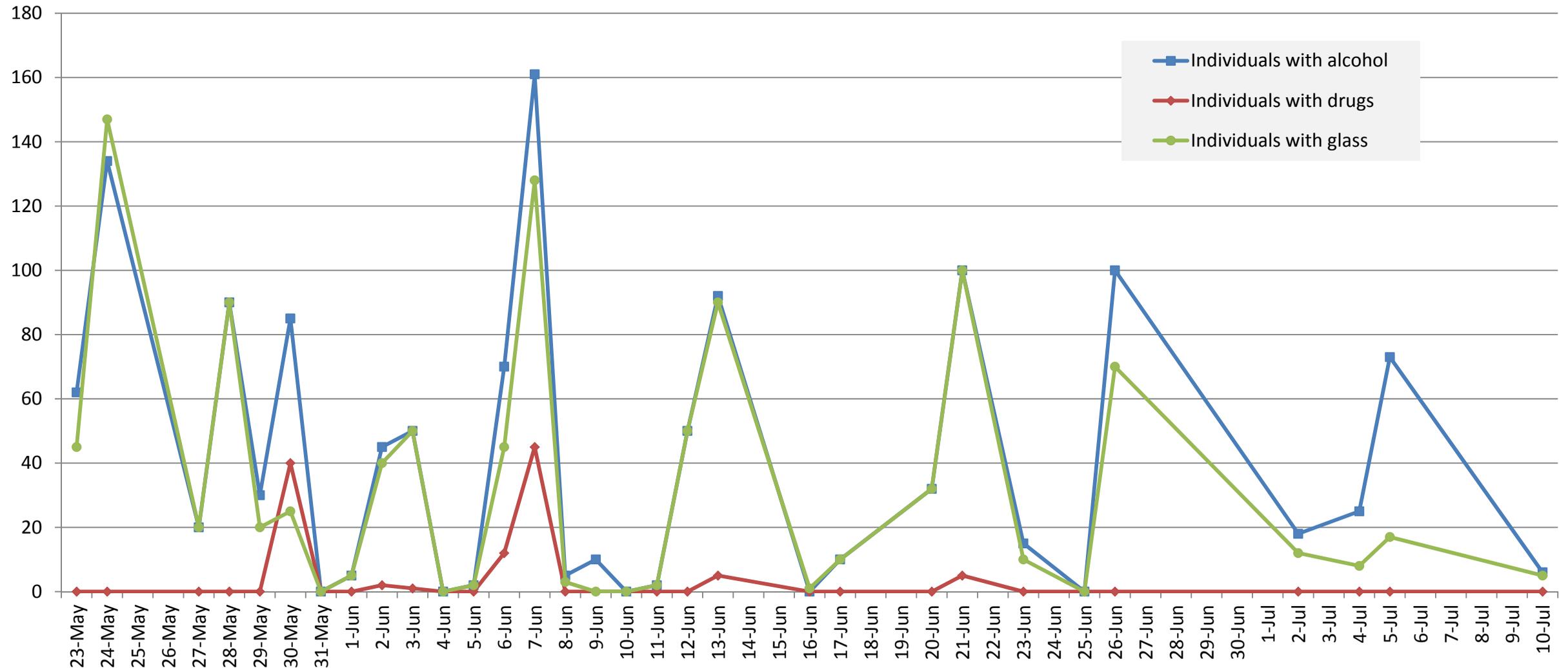
May 23 – July 10, 2014



* Data was not collected on every date within this range, only on dates where a point is shown on the line. Data was collected on 31 out of the 48 days.

Ocean Beach Fires – Law Enforcement Data for Alcohol, Drug & Glass Violations

May 23 – July 10, 2014



*On May 25, the Sunday before Memorial Day, there were an estimated 500 glass and alcohol violations in the area of the fire rings. This estimate was made because there were too many individuals on the beach to make direct contact with each of them safely. This data point was not included in the graph so that the graph would be more representative of the typical trends encountered near the fire rings.

Notes Regarding Data

- Averages:
 - fires outside of rings = 5
 - fires after curfew = 7
 - alcohol violations = 56
 - glass violations = 48
 - drug violations = 19
- There were 66 violations for burning of inappropriate materials
- In the alcohol, glass, and drug violation graph the alcohol and glass lines are almost completely aligned; making it difficult to decipher between the blue and green lines at times.
- Generally, the peaks of all violations occur on Friday and Saturday nights
- The highest number of alcohol and glass violations occurred on Sunday, May 25, the night before the Memorial Day holiday
- Because alcohol and glass are not allowed on Ocean Beach, these numbers would ideally all be zero

Ranger's Notes

Visitors burning pallets, treated wood, and old wooden desk. Three fires on the beach inside the snowy plover protection area.

Larger garbage cans & recycling bins needed between stairwells 15-20

Groups using lighter fluid to start fires.

Odor of marijuana present in one group, but nothing visible. Every group was in violation not only with alcohol, glass containers, but also treated wood, lighter fluid, bringing pits with coals, and minors in possession of alcohol.

Too many violations to safely & effectively write tickets. 12 juvenile recent high school graduates about to burn a 10-15 foot wide pile of homework with 8 bottles of lighter fluid on a windy night with high fire danger. They were along the base of the seawall and directly across from Golden Gate Park not in a fire ring. Potentially extremely dangerous.

Flashmob of est. 200 people arrived at OCBE around 21:30 hrs. Group had intended to start large fire but were aborted.

large gathering of juveniles not associated with specific fire ring. Intoxicated with alcohol/glass, returning to vehicles in the parking lot.

Smaller groups all using legal fire rings.

10-20 people per fire ring despite the weather. Mostly cooking & roasting marshmallows.

Most rings are full of sand. A paper-burning post-graduation occurred. 1 ticket issued for burning in nondesignated area with high winds.

Numerous groups of underage drinkers left before being contacted. Lots of trash, glass, pallets, etc. Too many people/violations to safely write citations. Enforcement done by telling groups to leave or get citations.

Fire rings filled with sand. Very low compliance rate; even those within fire rings usually have 1-2 violations.

People don't put out fires until you make them. Two officers are the minimum needed. NPS website accurately reflects rules but non-NPS sites are hit-or-miss.



May 25, 2014
Overflowing trash can at Stairwell 20



June 2, 2014

Overflowing trash can near fire rings



June 5, 2014

Inappropriate material burned



June 23, 2014

Fire ring full of broken glass and other trash



June 27, 2014
Large trash heap on beach near fire rings



July 2, 2014

Bucket of hot coals and nails removed
from a fire ring

August 5, 2014

Overflowing trash can at Stairwell 16

