



Volunteer Safety Tips



For Individuals

DO:

- Think safety and wear gloves; thick-soled, closed-toe shoes; long pants and long-sleeved shirts.
- Wear safety vests or bright colors if along a roadway. (Press-on neon colored fluorescent tape on back of volunteers' shirts works well too).
- Wear sunscreen and bug repellent.
- Drink plenty of fluids and keep "quick energy foods" on hand.
- Be aware of your surroundings and the potential hazards associated with them, such as traffic, hazardous tree branches, poison ivy, wasps/bees, and snakes.
- Use the "buddy system" by working in teams of two or three to maximize safety.
- Keep pre-moistened towelettes on hand and wash hands with antibacterial soap after the cleanup.
- Take an occasional break.

DON'T:

- Don't pick up hazardous materials such as hypodermic needles, sharp objects, old car batteries, condoms, animal carcasses or other unidentified, questionable objects.
- Don't overstuff bags.
- Don't attempt to move large objects such as rusted car shells, old household appliances or swing-sets; report these to your Public Works department for removal – call your local fire or police department to report illegal dumping and for instructions on how to proceed.
- Don't allow pets at events. They may distract participants or even detract from the cleanup.
- Don't overdo it physically.
- Don't pick up glass. If possible, sweep into a bag or only pickup if you have thick gloves to protect against injury.
- Don't forget to have fun and take pictures to show off your work!

For Group Leaders

DO:

- Know emergency procedures, such as the location of the nearest emergency facility and how to quickly call the police or an ambulance.
- Have a first-aid kit and cellular phone on hand.
- Be aware of all known allergies of volunteers before participation.
- Provide adequate adult supervision if you involve youth groups. One adult can usually supervise nine participants between the ages of 10-17.
- Regroup every hour to make sure all participants are accounted for, safe and enjoying the cleanup if going into a heavily wooded or large area.
- Consider using walkie-talkies as a communication device between groups.
- Arrange a "Thank You" party for all of the volunteers after the cleanup.

DON'T:

- Don't schedule cleanups during peak visitation or traffic hours.
- Don't conduct cleanups during inclement weather.
- Don't conduct cleanups near or around construction sites.
- Don't allow small children to participate in cleanups near traffic corridors.