



Tips for a successful neighborhood cleanup

Be Prepared

- Talk to as many neighbors as possible and find out what the neighborhood can do to help
- Develop a team effort, divide the neighborhood and identify and assist those who need help in the clean up effort.
- Let people know far enough in advance to plan for the cleanup. Ask for volunteers with pick-up trucks, and volunteers to load and unload.
- Plan well ahead (several meetings) – get your clean up request in early.
- Get volunteers early. Get lots of volunteers. Help out neighbors who can't do it themselves.

Supplies

- Be sure to have a heavy garbage can and scoop shovel to “clean up” after “the cleanup.”
- Traffic cones are helpful to delineate the driving path. A tent canopy is nice in case of rain.
- Don't forget to bring brooms, rakes, pitchforks, snow shovels, dustpans, and gloves.

Day of the Event

- Have a neighborhood garage sale or a free “recycle/reuse” pile at the site to help recycle usable items.
- Control how many people try to unload at the same time.
- Clearly mark dumpsters as “yard debris,” etc. Also make access available from each side.
- Provide a sign to help those arriving at the site where to go to unload.
- Keep the hours short: four to five hours.
- Get lots of help to unload vehicles arriving at the site.

Traffic

- Think through the traffic flow BEFORE you begin
- Have traffic patterns set up and a few volunteers to be “traffic monitors.”
- Make one driveway designated “exit” only.
- Plan access and exit paths for rapid and efficient vehicle movement.
- Envision traffic flow that has 20 vehicles/trucks lined up.
- Be firm about the rules. Enforce hazardous waste restrictions.
- Make sure that the cleanup is held in an area large enough for the trucks to turn around. A school parking lot is perfect!

Volunteers

- Have cheery, friendly people to staff the entrance.
- We recommend at least two volunteers per shift. These volunteers should be able to assist elderly/handicapped participants.
- Have enough people for shifts.
- Have many hands to help unload individual car or trucks.
- Get volunteers to help at the site and provide pickup for those who don't have a vehicle.
- Have volunteers go house to house with a truck to do pickups.

- Get names, home phone numbers, and addresses of volunteers. Provide a check off sheet that volunteers can sign or check so that you can send thank you notes after your event.
- Send a reminder to volunteers one week in advance of the clean up, and do a phone reminder one day ahead of the event.
- Get volunteers for all day, two to three hours each, and have crew for final clean up.
- Make sure you have plenty of water for you and the volunteers.
- Discuss procedures with helpers one-half hour before the scheduled time.
- Have someone oversee loading of dumpsters at all times to assure a compacted load and to keep those items not acceptable, such as tires and household hazardous materials out of the drop boxes.

Advertising

- Coordinate early with Longview's Solid Waste & Recycling Division Manager, 360-442-5222.
- Advertise, explain, and make sure you have enough volunteers to run your event.
- Hand out a copy of the event flyer to each home in your neighborhood.
- Schedule and publicize your event well in advance. Get the word out – plan dates to go with spring pruning or fall clean up.
- Do a reminder at least two weeks beforehand (leaflet via mail or hand-delivered). Include a list of acceptable items (furniture, almost anything except chemicals, etc.).
- If you have a neighborhood newsletter, get it out about a week ahead of your event.
- Post signs, in strategic, legal areas in the neighborhood the day of the event.
- Remind neighborhood participants that there is no early dumping, and be clear about what items are and are not acceptable.
- List locations and schedules for hazardous waste disposal and yard debris disposal.
- Ask neighbors to help other neighbors, especially those that may not have transportation or physically incapable to participate.

Day of the event

- Have a neighborhood garage sale or a free “recycle/reuse” pile at the site to help recycle usable items for others to look at and consider taking for themselves.
- Control how many people try to unload at the same time.
- Clearly mark dumpsters as “yard debris,” etc. Also make access available from each side.
- Provide a sign to help those arriving at the site with their debris where to go to unload.
- Get lots of help to unload vehicles arriving at the site.
- **EVENT COORDINATOR:** Make sure that all volunteers that arrive at the event sign in and out and record the number of hours they were at the event.
- **EVENT COORDINATOR:** Make sure that the Liability Waiver form and a completed sign-in sheet, with the total number of hours calculated, and are turned into the City within a few days after the completion of the event.
- **EVENT COORDINATOR:** Please make sure that after the event is over, you fill out and turn in the “Post-event” survey. This will give us an opportunity to consider changes based on suggestions you may have after your event is over so the program is better for future events.

Comments from other Neighborhood Cleanup Volunteers

- The first cleanup (at least for us) was the biggest. It seems that everyone takes advantage of this first opportunity to get rid of stuff! Have a good plan ready and lots of helpers. Choose your site carefully, provide lots of room, ensure good traffic patterns, and be prepared for noise.
- Get organized to help each other. Reach out to disabled and elderly who are not able to transport debris.

- Place useful items like BBQ's, tables, rakes, bikes, etc. to the side so neighbors can take advantage of good free stuff. What's left over can go to a garage sale or in the drop box if no one wants them.
- Our neighborhood collected canned food for a charity, so we also needed boxes for the donated food.
- Considering partnering with another neighborhood for your first clean up.
- Be prepared: have lots of volunteers! Raise some money for your neighborhood association while you are at it. Sell soda, water, etc. Have lots of people to direct traffic and help offload.
- Enlist lots of help in shifts, and provide food and drinks for volunteers. Host a BBQ for neighborhood volunteers at the end of the day.
- Have fun! Consider serving doughnuts and coffee in the morning and barbecue in the afternoon. Offer homemade cookies to anyone who takes advantage of the free dumping.