

Handbook for Neighborhood Cleanups



CHANGING PLACES

CHANGING LIVES

Dear Neighborhood Cleanup Coordinators:

Thank you for deciding to coordinate a cleanup! Groundwork Providence has helped Providence residents organize cleanups for 20 years, and I hope this will be the most successful year yet. In this registration packet I have included the following information, which I hope will be helpful for planning your cleanup:

- Notes on litter and the history of the cleanup
- Do's & Don'ts for the Day of the Cleanup
- Steps for Organizing a great cleanup
- A sample press-release

Please be sure that you know where you want the trash to go before your cleanup. Here are the options:

Private Dumpsters:

If your cleanup is organized by a school, business, or religious organization consider a private dumpster at that institution. This does come at some cost to that institution, please obtain permission.

Curbside Trash Pickup:

For most cleanups, this is the best option. The Department of Public Works has agreed to pickup the cleanup trash for us. We will let them know where & when to pick it up, so be sure you have told us the appropriate place. Line bags along the sidewalk in two rows. Be sure you do not block the walkway. Separate tires from the rest for the trash.

Dumpsters:

The Department of Public Works (DPW) has also agreed to allow organizations to use City dumpsters for larger cleanups. If you think this is an appropriate option, please get permission from business/property owners and select an appropriate place for the dumpster. Parking lots are usually ideal (make sure you get permission for the lot owner!) Then, let us know so we can contact DPW with the dumpster request.

If you have any questions, feel free to call Groundwork Providence staff at 351-6440.

Groundwork Providence
69 Washington Street
Providence, RI 02903
Tel: 351-6440



Notes for the Cleanup Coordinators

What?

Groundwork Providence has helped city-wide organizations clean their communities for 20 years.

Why?

Community groups continue to affirm the importance of litter cleanup and prevention to quality of life. Here are some reasons why.....

- Litter is an environmental hazard. Land-based litter finds its way into the marine environment where it affects the wildlife and water resources.
- Litter can cause injury and even death to wildlife, birds, fish and domestic animals, not to mention children.
- Litter is a health hazard. It spreads disease and breeds rats, roaches, flies and mosquitoes.
- Litter feeds or causes building fires and approximately one in every three forest fires is attributed to trash fires.
- Taxpayers and businesses are hit every year with the cost of removing unsightly and unsanitary litter.

Who?

You and hundreds of Providence residents are planning to participate in cleanups throughout the year. Don't forget to publicize your event and recruit volunteers.

Getting involved in a community cleanup is a great way to help fight litter!!!



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Groundwork Providence

69 Washington St.

Providence, RI 02903

Phone: 351-6440



Do's and Don'ts for Cleanup Coordinators

DO:

- **Publicize your event in the area.** Flyers in local businesses, schools and religious organizations will alert your community of the event. If you have a mailing list, use it!
- **Let other community groups know about the cleanup.** It's a good idea to coordinate with others so that together you can target trouble spots. Having two or three cleanups in one area on one day will really make a big impact. Local businesses are often willing to donate soda, sandwiches, etc.
- **Consider including education in your cleanup.** You can spread the word during your cleanup and help your neighbors know that they can now recycle a wider variety of materials in their blue and green bins. Are many people missing their bins? Arrange to have some extra blue and green bins on hand during the cleanup for people to pick up and take home.
- **Alert the media.** Enclosed is a sample press release. One week before your cleanup, copy the appropriate information and send it to the Providence Journal. We suggest the Metro Edition. They are most likely to publish your information.
Editor: Jack Khorey, 277-7303
Fax: 277-7346
Address: 75 Fountain St. Providence, 02902
- **Have Fun.** Remember, this is a pretty straightforward event that will greatly benefit your community. Don't stress too much.

DON'T:

- **Hurt yourself.** Be sure to wear gloves, and avoid picking up broken glass, sharp and rusty metal, syringes, or anything that looks unsafe. When in doubt, use a broom or shovel. Be sure to supervise the kids!
- **Wear yourself out.** We all want to clean up the most litter possible, but be aware of your limits. Pick a realistic project—or plan to make the cleanup one in a series of work days at a particular site.
- **Forget to thank your volunteers.** Reserve a little time at the end of your cleanup to celebrate. Don't forget to take pictures.

Steps to organizing a Great Cleanup

1. Planning

- Send in your tool request form to Groundwork Providence (GWP).
- Recruit volunteers: welcome people in your area, put up flyers. You may want to team up with other local organizations.
- Pick up your tools from GWP. Please be sure you let us know when you are coming to pick up the tools.
- Place a press release in to your local newspaper: The Providence Journal, Providence en Español, etc.
- Do not plan a cleanup to last longer than a few hours (2-3 hours), people do have other things to accomplish in a day.
- Think about creating regular cleanups: In the spring, summer and fall!
- Offer volunteers incentives such as t-shirts and refreshments.
- Invite community police, local politicians & city departments: Mayor, City Council Members, Chief of Police, Office of Neighborhood Services, and Department of Public Works. City leaders can offer services and help recruit volunteers.
- Invite local business people to participate in cleaning their store fronts before or during the scheduled cleanups. Also ask local merchants if they could sustain the cleaning efforts by putting out trash receptacles during business hours.

2. Day of the Cleanup

- Register all your volunteers with a sign-in sheet.
- Encourage knowledgeable volunteers to separate recyclables as they clean. Allow volunteers to take recyclables home for weekly trash pickup.
- Provide refreshments – often local businesses will donate sodas, snacks, etc.

3. Celebrate!

- Thank your volunteers at the end of the cleanup; take time to let everyone know what a great job they've done.

4. After the Cleanup

- Talk to lead organizers about how they think the cleanup went.
- Take suggested criticism and modify plans for future cleanups.
- Ask leaders if they are interested in planning more seasonal cleanups.
- Create a mailing list from the sign in sheets in order to notify your volunteers about upcoming cleanups.

**SAMPLE RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



**Groundwork Providence Kicks Off Twenty Years of
Annual Neighborhood Clean-Ups**

For twenty years, Providence residents have been proving that every day in April is Earth Day, and what's good for the environment is also good for neighborhood pride! Since 1983, Groundwork Providence (previously Keep Providence Beautiful) has been lending tools and gloves and providing trash bags, to groups who are participating in outdoor cleanups of public spaces.

Throughout the month of April, Groundwork Providence can connect you with both tools and volunteer opportunities at various cleanups throughout the city. But, don't wait! More than 10 neighborhood and community organizations have already signed up to reserve tools for cleanups. Historically over 75 neighborhood and community groups participate in the cleanup. To arrange for tools and materials or for volunteer opportunities call Groundwork Providence at 351-6440.

Groundwork Providence is a private, non-profit organization that works with communities to maintain open space, with businesses to help them become more environmentally friendly, and with individuals to train them for environmental jobs and to be stewards of their neighborhoods. Groundwork providence is a member of the Groundwork USA network.

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