

Safety Guideline for Group Leaders & Volunteers

The following information is provided to help Volunteer Group Leader prepare for a scheduled pick-up litter event under the Adopt-A-Highway Program.

Work Plan

The public highway is a dangerous environment. The (2) two years AAH Agreement is for (2) two miles area to be cleaned (2) two times a year. The plan should include the following:

Review the Work Location

The information of the beginning Mile Post to the ending Mile Post was given at the time the Agreement is signed. A map of the area may be helpful in describing the site to the Volunteer Group. Do remember to mention the hazardous parts of the site.

Have a Plan

How will the Volunteer Group approach the clean-up? How many people will be involved in the task? How many work units can the Volunteer Group be divided? Are there volunteers in the group between the ages of 10-15 years that should be paired with an Adult?

Individual Assignments

Who will pick-up the safety vests, signs and bags at the MDT Maintenance Section? Who will hand out the required safety vest or check to see that everyone is wearing the appropriate amount of fluorescent blaze-orange? Who will bring water and where will it be located? Who will post the warning signs and take them back down after the work is finished? Who will be responsible for bringing a first aid kit? Who will be responsible for getting help if there is an emergency? Which adults will supervise which children under the age of 15 years old? The agreement says **“No participants under the age of 10 are allowed. When participants are 10-15 years of age, the Volunteer Group shall furnish adult supervision equal to one adult per each five participants”**.

Work Days/Hours

Work only between one hour after sunup and one hour before sundown. Do not work if weather conditions cause poor visibility.

Parking Area (s)

This is part of site inspection. The agreement says, “Participants must park private vehicles only in areas designated by the MDT.” Park off the shoulder of the roadway. Minimize parking problems by carpooling.

Clothing

✓ **Safety Vest**

Everyone must wear the MDT safety vest or an alternative 200 square inches of fluorescent blaze-orange (such as a vest or shirt.) MDT will furnish the vests. The vests, signs and bags should be pickup at the MDT Section during business hours. 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

✓ **Proper Foot Wear**

Participants should wear shoes or boots, not sandals or thongs. The Volunteer Group Leader should stress the types of hazards encountered; glass, nails, thistles, and stubble.

✓ **Hats/Gloves**

Hats will prevent sunburn and help the ability to see. Gloves protect from splinters, glass, and other hazards.

✓ **Pants/Shirts**

Wear long sleeve shirts and pants. They help prevent sunburn, insect bites, cuts, scrapes, and abrasions.

Work Signs

✓ **Purpose**

Warning signs (which will slip over permanent delineator posts) are to be put up on either end of the adopted stretch of roadway. Signs alert drivers that people are out there working. The signs are there for the protection of the group.

✓ **Location**

The signs need to be picked up from the MDT Maintenance Section within the area you have adopted. Ask your MDT Area Coordinator for this information.

✓ **Responsibility for Placing and Removing Signs**

Place both signs before anyone starts work. Double check to see that the sign is placed properly before work starts. Remove signs and return them to the proper MDT Maintenance Section when work is finished

Work Methods

✓ **Proper Lifting Technique**

Improper lifting causes back injuries. When lifting, bend at the knees and lift with the legs. If the material is too big, do not try to lift it alone. Do not fill bags too full.

- ✓ **Awareness of Traffic Speeds**
The public highway is a dangerous environment.
- ✓ **Liter Pickup**
Do not pick up trash in roadways, in the median, on bridges, or on overpasses. Also avoid underpasses in areas of heavy traffic.
- ✓ **Face or work toward traffic**
Face the traffic when working to hear and to see what on-coming cars are doing.
- ✓ **Crossing Methods and Locations**
Stay on one side of the road and do not cross back and forth. Watch children carefully and do not let them get into the roadway or cross the road by themselves. Pick locations to cross that are visible to drivers. Plan a way as a group to cross.
- ✓ **Personal Risk**
Emphasize that the highways are a dangerous place to work. The risks include traffic danger, injury while picking up litter, heat exhaustion, and sunburn. Avoid areas that have been sprayed with herbicides. Do not pick up syringes or hypodermic needles. In certain areas, watch for rattlesnakes, noxious weeds, and insects. (Give debris a kick if there is any doubt.) Do not remove dead animals or any suspicious containers that might have hazardous materials in them. Notify MDT about suspicious materials. The agreement says, "The group agrees to indemnify and hold harmless MDT and its employees from all liability, judgment, costs, expenses, and claims of any nature whatsoever to any person or property arising out of the performance or non-performance of their work."
- ✓ **Bag Placement**
MDT will furnish trash bags for liter pickup. MDT employees will pick up the filled trash bags. Bags need to be placed off the shoulder by the delineator is a good place for the bags. (Delineators are markers with a reflective light that are used to mark the edge of the shoulder.) The bags should not be compacted or filled too full. Always close the bag with twisty ties or tie it closed.
- ✓ **Refreshments**
The agreement says, "Each group shall be responsible for maintaining adequate drinking water." Choose a location for water on the same side of the road and near the working group.

- ✓ **Lunch**
The Volunteer Group Leader is to pick a safe location for the volunteers to be gathered when eating.
- ✓ **No Alcohol/Drugs**
The agreement says, " Each group will be responsible for prohibiting participants from either possessing or consuming drugs or alcoholic beverages during the trash pickup or other maintenance/beautification work." Anyone who has been drinking/doing drugs must be sent away from the work site.
- ✓ **First Aid Kit (s) Responsibility and Location**
The agreement says, " Each Volunteer Group shall be responsible for maintaining a first-aid kit." Each Volunteer Group needs to have a person who is trained in first-aid. The Volunteer Group should discuss the following problems: how to prevent—and how to treat—cuts, bruises, breaks, sprains, strains, sunburn, insect bites, and snake bites. The Volunteer Group should discuss symptoms of heat exhaustion/sun stroke and how to prevent it.
- ✓ **Emergency Notification Procedures**
Be prepared for serious injuries. Who is responsible in the Volunteer Group to call for help or take a person for emergency care?