

Rustle's the Leaf's Neighborhood Clean-Up!

Helping the environment includes cleaning up places where trash and junk are thrown by careless people. Here are 10 Steps to help kids and parents to make parks, lots and other places cleaner, safer and more fun:

1. Find a Place to Clean Up. Almost every neighborhood has a park, school yard, vacant lot or athletic field that gets littered. Find a place where there's enough accumulation of trash to keep 10-15 people busy cleaning for 2 hours or so.

2. Contact Town or County Governmental Organizations to Get Approvals and Assistance. Most local governments will be thrilled to help you plan and stage your clean up. They will often provide tools (rakes, shovels, spades) and schedule a trash pick-up at the location at the end of your clean-up time. Also, they can let you know whether the area you intend to clean up is public or private property. (If it's private property, the local government will handle the clean-up problem directly with the property owner.) Here are some suggested local government departments that may be of assistance: Parks & Recreation, Department of Public Works, City Planning Department. Depending on your community, there may be other civic organizations as well. It's also a great idea to contact a local Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts headquarters to get information—and maybe even some assistance!

3. Organize Your Clean-Up Group. Once you know where you'll be cleaning up, look for ways to find volunteers for the event. Print up flyers (included in this lesson plan) with information about where the clean-up will be, the date, time, contact person(s), etc. See if your school will make an announcement over the PA system, or place flyers on announcement bulletin boards. Ask your place of worship to include a flyer in the weekly bulletin. Go to local coffee houses and other businesses where they allow the posting of flyers for local events. The goal is to gather a group to work together cleaning up one location over the course of 2-3 hours (maximum). How many people you need will depend on the size of the area and the amount of trash it contains.

4. Enlist Local Businesses to Help with Key Materials. Go to businesses that are closest to the clean-up area—or that may be otherwise connected to your group—and ask for help with necessary materials. All businesses have trash bags; ask each business for 15-20 of their largest, most durable bags. If your local government doesn't have tools for you to borrow, contact a local landscaping business or lawn care business and ask if they could make some tools available for the day.

You'll need leaf rakes, garden rakes, shovels, spades, hoes, etc. You might also ask a local lawn care business to borrow some orange or yellow work vests, in case your clean-up crews will be near roadways. Go to local home improvement stores, ask for the manager, and see if they'll donate pairs of work gloves. Try to get varying sizes and also some more durable gloves (thick, rubber-coated) for adults to use if they encounter metal or glass objects. Don't limit your requests to businesses that might sell or stock such items. Most religious organizations, lodges, golf courses civic groups have groundskeeping tools that they might be willing to loan for a day. **SOMETHING COOL:** Ask local retailers to donate 15-20 T-Shirts of various sizes, and ask a local office supply store to donate packets of printable iron-on T-Shirt transfers. Having participants (especially younger people) in matching shirts unifies them and adds excitement to the event. If 25-30 shirts of various sizes can be created, everyone can go home with something fun! (Printable T-Shirt art is included in this lesson plan.)



- 5. Don't Forget Refreshments!** THIS IS IMPORTANT: find a business that will either provide refreshments (coffee, water, juices cookies, muffins, etc.) directly, or give you money to buy them yourself. Consider grocery stores, restaurants and coffee houses closest to your clean-up area. Refreshments are a great morale booster and provide a way for participants to get to know one another as they snack. Make sure you have a small table where you can keep the refreshments (with, of course, napkins, cups, trash and recycling containers nearby).
- 6. What to Do with the Trash:** If the clean-up area and group are large enough, many municipalities or even private waste management companies will agree to place a dumpster at the clean-up site and then pick it up after the event. If you can't secure a dumpster or even a trash pick-up, call your local landfill and ask if they'll agree to take the trash at no charge.
- 7. What About Recyclables?** Unless you live in a fairly progressive community that will provide both trash and recycling containers at the clean-up site, you may be on your own with recycling. However, this is a GREAT opportunity to get kids (and a lot of grown-ups) to learn more about what can and can't be recycled. (See "Online Resources" at the bottom of this page). Many clean-up groups assign a couple of grown-ups to sort through the trash and separate recyclables, then bag them and take them home to place into their own recycling containers. Of course, if there are hundreds of bottles or plastic containers, you may need to divide the recyclables among more people.
- 8. Plan for Publicity.** Both during the week before the event and on the day of the event, make sure your local media is alerted. Send press releases to every radio, television and newspaper you can. (Sample press release included in this lesson plan). Many of these organizations can be called first. Once you find the proper person at the media location (usually a city-beat or human interest writer), they will often ask you to email or fax the information, which saves time and money!
- 9. On the Day of the Event:** Gather everyone together at the beginning of the event. Make sure everyone has gloves, tools, a specific assignment and has clear instructions about what to do with the trash they collect. Also, point out the refreshments and invite them to enjoy them throughout the clean-up period. **ASSIGN SOMEONE TO BRING A CAMERA AND TAKE PICTURES!** You can use these for follow-up publicity, and for content in a flyer or mailing for a clean-up future event. Announce the time at which the event will end, and ask that everyone stay until then, if possible, so you can have a quick follow-up session.
- 10. At the End of the Event:** During the brief (no more than 5-minutes) session at the end, **BE SURE TO THANK** your volunteers, and ask for feedback about what could be done to improve on similar events in the future. Finally, make sure you have contact information for everyone, so you can plan another clean-up event without starting from scratch.

ONLINE RESOURCES

http://www.wkkf.org/Pubs/GreaterBC/Cleanup_00254_02988.pdf

<http://www.neighborhoodday.org>

<http://lancaster.unl.edu/community/articles/organizecleanup.shtml>

<http://www.ci.fort-collins.co.us/neighborhoodservices/cleanup.php>

<http://www.ci.fort-collins.co.us/neighborhoodservices/pdf/cleanup06.pdf>

http://www.ci.irving.tx.us/public_health_and_environmental_services/recycle/keep_irving_beautiful/pdfs/HowOrgNCb.pdf

Press Information For Immediate Release



Area Residents Schedule Neighborhood Clean-Up for (Date) at (Location)

(CITY, STATE, DATE) -- Ask any of the residents near (area near clean-up location) and they'll tell you they have plenty to do with their spare time. Yet, on (date), many of them will be donating their time to help clean up (clean-up location). Helping the clean-up will be (businesses and other organizations), which will be providing (list of tools, refreshments, trash bags, etc.).

Although most have come to expect litter and trash in vacant lots, at athletic fields and in public parks, there's a price for allowing it to accumulate. Here are some reasons why cleaning up litter is important to community health and well-being:

- Litter is an environmental hazard. Land-based litter finds its way into the 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.








Residents who would like to help with the clean-up should contact (contact name, phone, email) before (cut-off date for registration). Also, businesses interested in providing materials or other types of assistance should contact (contact name) before (cut-off date for business assistance).

If you would like to organize your own neighborhood clean-up, visit www.rustletheleaf.com/cleanup.pdf, or visit www.neighborhoodcleanup.org.

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Tools & Materials Check List



| Item | Number Needed | Assigned To |
|--|---------------|-------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy Duty Trash Bags  | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work Gloves  | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brooms - Push | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brooms - Corn | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shovel-Large Scoop  | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shovel-Short Small Scoop | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shovel-Long Small Scoop | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shovel-Long Med Scoop | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shovel-Pointed Tip  | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Edger | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hoe  | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spade | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wheelbarrow | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Litter Grabber | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weeder  | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Garden Rakes | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leaf Rakes  | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Safety Vests | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coffee | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cookies | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Beverages | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cups, Napkins, etc. | | |



Date: _____

Time: From _____ **To** _____

Place: _____

Sponsored By: _____

Contact: _____

What to Bring: _____

Refreshments will Be Provided!

Directions to Location:



Questions? Call: _____



Date: _____

Time: From _____ **To** _____

Place: _____

Sponsored By: _____

Contact: _____

What to Bring: _____

Refreshments will Be Provided!

Directions to Location:



Questions? Call: _____

Neighborhood Clean-Up Registration

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Clean-Up Location _____

Date _____

Notice

The undersigned, recognizing and assuming all risks of accident and injury, hereby agrees that the following sponsors and volunteers:

Will not be held liable or legally responsible for any injury sustained by the participant, or for loss or damage to property owned or in the possession of the participant during, or as a result of, participation in this cleanup project at the above location whether such personal injury or property damage is caused by the negligence of the sponsors or their respective employees, officers, agents or otherwise.

Registrant's Signature

Parent or Guardian's Signature
if Signatory is Under 18 Years of Age

Witness, Date

Neighborhood Clean-Up Registration

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Clean-Up Location _____

Date _____

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Registrant's Signature

Parent or Guardian's Signature
if Signatory is Under 18 Years of Age

Witness, Date



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T-Shirt Art
Rustle's Neighborhood Clean-Up!



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NEIGHBORHOOD
CLEAN-UP



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RUSTLE THE LEAF'S
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Neighborhood Clean-Up Maze: Follow Rustle Through the Vacant Lot to Get the Litter to the Trash Containers.

