

Safety Tips & Volunteer Orientation

Survey the site before your cleanup begins.

When recruiting volunteers, advise them to bring gloves (leather is preferable), sunscreen and wear long pants, long-sleeve shirts and sturdy, thick-soled shoes. If you are utilizing a boat, raft, or other vessel, always wear a life jacket or personal floatation device (PFD).

Advise volunteers to bring a trash poker (one can be made by partially inserting a nail into the end of a wooden dowel or broomstick and then cutting off the head of the nail with wire cutters) & long tongs (BBQ style). Tongs are useful for picking up pieces of broken glass and other objects.

Plan for signs and directions to help other volunteers find the place to assemble and tell them when and where your event will end.

Volunteers should not work alone. Work in groups of three or more. Youth groups and children need more supervision.

Advise against lifting heavy objects like engine blocks without mechanical assistance. Do not attempt to remove drums or containers that may contain toxic waste. Do not move or disturb explosive materials such as dynamite or live ammunition. Mark the spot and inform the proper authorities.

Advise your group to stay away from hypodermic needles or medical wastes. Care should be exercised when picking up sacks or other soft containers. Advise caution when handling broken glass, sharp objects, aerosol cans, and containers with chemical residue. Avoid dangerous locations and stay clear of animals.

Provide drinking water and hand washing stations for participants. Hand sanitizers such as Purell may work well.

Be sure participants know where to put trash that has been collected.

Report any accidents or injuries to the zone captain immediately. Be sure to have a plan for contacting emergency authorities and for proper first aid on site. Usually a rescue squad or nurses group will volunteer to help.