



## VOLUNTEER SAFETY TIPS

### For Individuals

#### **DO:**

- Think safety and wear gloves; thick-soled, closed shoes; long pants and long-sleeved shirts.
- Wear safety vests or bright colors if parts of waterway cleanup are located along a roadway. (Press-on neon colored fluorescent tape on back of volunteers' shirts works well too.)
- Wear sunscreen and bug repellent.
- Drink plenty of fluids and keep "quick energy foods" on hand.
- Be aware of your surroundings and the potential hazards associated with them, such as traffic, hazardous tree branches, poison ivy, wasps/bees, and snakes.
- Use the "buddy system" by working in teams of two or three to maximize safety.
- Keep pre-moistened towelettes on hand and wash hands with antibacterial soap after the cleanup.
- Take an occasional break.

#### **DON'T:**

- Don't pick up hazardous materials such as hypodermic needles, sharp objects, old car batteries, condoms, animal carcasses or other unidentified, questionable objects.
- Don't overstuff bags.
- Don't attempt to move large objects such as rusted car shells, old household appliances or swing-sets; report these to your public works contact for removal – call your local fire or police department to report illegal dumping and for instructions on how to proceed.
- Don't allow pets at events. They may distract participants or even detract from the cleanup.
- Don't overdo it physically.
- Don't pick up glass. If possible, sweep into a bag or only pickup if you have thick gloves to protect against injury.
- ***Don't forget to have fun and take pictures to show off your work!***



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### For Group Leaders

#### **DO:**

- Know emergency procedures, such as the location of the nearest emergency facility and how to quickly call the police or an ambulance.
- Have a first-aid kit and cellular phone on hand.
- Be aware of all known allergies of volunteers before participation.
- Provide adequate adult supervision if you involve youth groups. One adult can usually supervise eight participants between the ages of 10-17.
- Regroup every hour to make sure that all participants are accounted for, safe and enjoying the cleanup if going into a heavily wooded or large area.
- Consider using walkie-talkies as a communication device between groups.
- Arrange a "Thank You" party for all of the volunteers after the cleanup.

#### **DON'T:**

- Don't schedule waterway cleanups during peak visitation or traffic hours.
- Don't conduct cleanups during bad weather.
- Don't conduct cleanups near or around construction sites.
- Don't allow small children to participate in waterway cleanups near traffic corridors.



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