

Cleanup Guide

Volunteer & Resource
Guide



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Great American Cleanup

At Keep Nebraska Beautiful, we believe strong communities are built on a solid foundation, just like a healthy environment. Whether you reside in a bustling metropolis or a charming rural town, the Great American Cleanup is your chance to lay a brick in the foundation of positive change for Nebraska.



Imagine a collective construction project, where affiliates, partners, and dedicated volunteers like you are the builders. Together, we'll solidify the groundwork for a cleaner, safer, and healthier Nebraska. Every cleanup event, every planting project, every recycling initiative is a brick laid in this sturdy foundation.

Ready to build a brighter Nebraska? Sign up for a Great American Cleanup event and witness the immediate impact of your contribution and be a vital part of constructing a more sustainable future for our state, one cleanup at a time.

Project Ideas

Quick Start Guide to Plan a Successful and Fun Project!



- Define the purpose of your project
- Gather a team
- Set a date
- Develop a plan including tools and materials needed, budget and day-of instructions
- Execute
- Celebrate
- Share results with Keep Nebraska Beautiful by sending stories, data, and photos to mbrinkman@knb.org

The goal of your project should be to take the knowledge learned at a local Great American Cleanup or similar project and implement it in a project in your neighborhood – or your block – to improve your community’s environment. Focus on results with immediate impact (e.g. # of trees planted, pounds of litter collected, yards of fencing painted, etc.).

Litter Cleanup

Every piece of litter picked up makes a big difference for Nebraska's environment!



Before the Event:

- Organize a cleanup committee of family, friends and neighbors who share your passion for the cause
- Visit the area you are planning to clean
- Determine if the area is public or private property. Make sure you obtain written permission to host your event at that location
- Determine areas to target and set boundaries
- Take "before" photos
- Register your event by emailing mbrinkman@knb.org
- Contact your local sanitation or public works department to see if they advise you to use any special trash bags/receptacles or if they can provide hauling services for bulk items
- Prepare with equipment you'll need (bags, gloves, litter pickers, rakes, shovels, and luggage scale), any permissions required, and make volunteers aware of equipment needed and appropriate clothing they should wear

Day of Event:

- Set up an assembly area for volunteers to gather prior to and after the cleanup
- Ensure you have all materials (i.e. trash bags, gloves)
- Arrange collection locations for filled litter bags and bulky items
- Conduct a safety talk at the beginning of the activity so volunteers know how to safely pick up litter
- Assign volunteer responsibilities
- Have a first-aid kit on hand, and provide access to water
- Take photos during the event
- Record your results (i.e. pounds of litter) and take "after" photos (the best "after" photos are taken from the same location you took the "before" photos)

Litter Cleanup Tips

Bagging Litter & Bulk Items

Make sure you have identified collection containers for litter vs. recyclables (check with your local trash hauler for local recycling standards)

Bulky items, including electronics, tires and appliances, should be managed as appropriate.

Use clear bags or a clearly identifiable container for collecting recyclables and a trash bag for all other littered items for disposal.

Typically, recyclables include aluminum, metal, plastic bottles and cans, including aerosol containers. Check with your local recyclers to find out what can be recycled!

Safety First

Wear gloves; thick-soled, closed shoes; long pants; and long sleeve shirts.

Be aware of your surroundings and any potential hazards.

Wear sunscreen and bug repellent.

Use tools to pick up litter and debris if available.

Wash hands with antibacterial soap after the cleanup.



Plant Trees, Shrubs & Gardens

Create a blooming community garden!



Before the Event:

- Organize a cleanup committee
- Visit the site and determine areas to be planted
- Take “before” photos
- Register your event on knb.org
- Set goals – for example, number of trees to plant
- Research native species to consider planting
- Make sure there is enough space for the trees and/or plants to grow
- Draw up your design
- Prepare with equipment and any necessary permissions
- Gather volunteers and educate on appropriate clothing

Day of Event:

- Set up an assembly area for volunteers to gather prior to and after the event
- Ensure you have all materials i.e. gardening gloves, tools: large and small shovels, rakes
- Arrange collection locations for filled litter bags and bulky items
- Assign volunteer responsibilities
- Have a first-aid kit on hand
- Apply any necessary safety parameters (i.e.: signage on roadways to make passing vehicles aware of planting)
- Take “during” photos
- Record results, i.e. # of trees/plants planted and take “after” photos (the best “after” photos are taken from the same location you took the “before” photos)

Planting Techniques

Trees

- 1 Dig your hole a couple of inches deeper and twice as wide as the bottom wrapped part of the tree that contains the roots
- 2 Place the tree in your hole and fill the area around the root ball with soil
- 3 Build the soil up in a mound around the tree's trunk, slightly higher than the level ground
- 4 Water the tree once you're done to thoroughly drench the roots
- 5 **Water regularly** until established

Flowers

- 1 Ensure you have all materials e.g. gardening gloves, large and small shovels
- 2 Arrange the plants atop the soil, spaced evenly
- 3 Soak the plants while they are still in their original pots
- 4 Gently pry apart matted roots, so they'll spread in the soil
- 5 If available, add slow-release flower food into each hole and mix into soil
- 6 Place flower plant in soil, cover with dirt, and water thoroughly

Native Plants

- 1 Dig your hole slightly bigger than the size of the pot the plant is currently growing in
 - 2 Use a tool (garden fork) to loosen the base of the hole and add additional compost
 - 3 Soak the roots of the plant in a bucket of water prior to planting
 - 4 Invert the pot and gently take the plant out then place plant in the hole
 - 5 Fill the root of the plant with additional soil and water the plant to drench the roots – Water regularly
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Park Revitalization

Give your community's park a makeover!



Before the Event:

- Determine what you want to accomplish
- Event ideas: Equipment/fence painting, graffiti removal, surface replenishment
- Meet with any local park/council representatives to share ideas, get approvals and written permission
- Organize a cleanup committee
- Determine how much time the project warrants
- Determine which skills are needed for specific efforts
- Set a date and location
- Create job descriptions
- Take "before" photos

Day of Event:

- Set up an assembly area for volunteers to gather prior to and after the event
- Ensure you have all the tools needed to specific project
- Assign volunteer responsibilities
- Have a first-aid kit on hand
- Apply any necessary safety parameter
- Take "during" photos
- Record results (i.e. acres of parks cleaned and improved)
- Take "after" photos (the best "after" photos are taken from the same location as the "before" photos)



Revive your Park Sparkling Ideas

Think about what types of activities you want to happen in your park to help you decide what equipment you will need or changes you want to implement.

If you want it to be a place for relaxing, gardens and benches may be the best-suited project; if you want it to be a place for socializing, picnic benches may be more desirable.

When you have gathered your team and started brainstorming about your project, bring pictures and videos to show people the possibilities.

Learn your community's needs. Talk to your community members and those who regularly use the park to ensure your project meets their current need.

Once you've decided on your project, contact [Keep Nebraska Beautiful](#) for project support.

Cleanup Registration Form



KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE
8101 O STREET, SUITE 114 | LINCOLN, NE 68510
402-486-4562 | MBRINKMAN@KNB.ORG

[Register Online](#)

Register for a cleanup to receive resources from Keep Nebraska Beautiful!

Community/Group/School

Name of Contact

Phone Number

Email

Address

Date of Event

Number of Expected Volunteers

Please Provide a Brief Description of your Anticipated Activities:

Please indicate which of the items below you would like to receive:

☐

Trash bags for your litter cleanup

☐

Poster to promote your cleanup

☐

Cleanup Planning Guide

☐

Add me to the KNB e-Newsletter

Participant Commitment Statement

☐

I acknowledge that by registering for a cleanup event with Keep Nebraska Beautiful, I am committing to fulfill my responsibility by submitting the completed form within one week (7 days) following the event.

Cleanup Signup Form

Volunteer Sign-In



Organization Name

Date

Event/Location

| # | Volunteer Name | Youth or Adult | Start Time | End Time | Total Time |
|---|----------------|----------------------|------------|----------|---------------|
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Cleanup Results Form



KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE
8101 O STREET, SUITE 114 | LINCOLN, NE 68510
402-486-4562 | MBRINKMAN@KNB.ORG

[Fill Out Report Online](#)

Please include a description of your event, volunteer sign-in Sheets, photos from your event, copies of any press clippings or advertisements from your event.

Basic Information

Community/Group/School

Name of Contact

Phone Number

Email

Cleanup Details

Event Location(s)

Length of Event

of Volunteers

Litter Collected

Number of Public Spaces cleaned or improved:

Miles of streets, roads & highways cleaned:

Miles of rivers, lakes, shores, wetlands cleaned:

Acres of parks, public land, playgrounds, trails cleaned:

Number of trash bags used:

Pounds of litter and debris collected:

Beautification

Number of gardens, green spaces, & gateways:

Number of homes, community / commercial buildings painted, renovated, or built:

Number of trees planted: *(don't include seedlings)*

Number of plants, shrubs, flowers & bulbs planted:

Recycling

Single stream recycling collected:

Pounds of beverage containers collected:

Pounds of electronics collected:

Pounds of mixed paper collected:

Pounds of other items collected:

Donations

Total cash donations:

Total in-kind donations:

Volume to Weight Conversion

Commonly Found Items

| Brown Goods | lbs | Litter Solid Municipal Waste | lbs | Electronics | lbs |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------|------|
| Chair - Desk | 40 | 13 Gallon Bag | 15 | Television/CRT<19" | 41 |
| Chair - Recliner | 125 | 30 Gallon Bag | 35 | Television/CRT>19" | 73 |
| Dresser - 3 Drawer | 50 | 1 Yard Container | 235 | TV Flat Panel | 29 |
| Mattress - King | 100 | 8 Cubic Yd Container | 1,880 | Automotive | lbs |
| Mattress - Queen | 75 | 30 Yard Roll-Off | 7,050 | Lead Acid Battery | 36 |
| Mattress - Twin | 50 | 40 Yard Roll Off | 9,400 | Tire - Commercial I | 120 |
| Shopping Cart | 50 |  <div>Keep Nebraska Beautiful</div> <div>KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL AFFILIATE</div> | | Tire - Auto/Light Truck | 22.5 |
| Sofa (2 Cushion) | 55 | | | Textiles | lbs |
| Sofa (3 Cushion) | 100 | | | Bag of Clothes (30 gal) | 22 |
| White Goods | lbs | | | Carpet | 147 |
| Dishwasher | 125 | Recyclable Containers | lbs | Recyclable Containers | lbs |
| Dryer | 125 | 1 Cubic Yard | | 30 Gallon Bag | |
| Refrigerator | 250 | Aluminum Cans | 45 | Aluminum Cans | 7 |
| Washer | 150 | Glass Containers | 380 | Glass Containers | 50 |
| NOTE: 1 ton= 2,000 Lbs 1 Gallon = 0.0049 Cubic Yards 30 Gallons=0.1485 1 Cubic Yard of Litter= Approx. seven (7) 30 gallon garbage bags or 235 lbs | | Food & Beverage Cartons | 35 | Food & Beverage Cartons | 5 |
| | | Mixed Recyclable w/o glass | 32 | Mixed Recyclable w/o glass | 5 |
| | | Mixed Recyclable w/ glass | 70 | Mixed Recyclable w/ glass | 11 |
| | | PET Bottles | 35 | PET Bottles | 5 |
| | | | | | |