



Dear Interested Party:

Thank you for your interest in the Whatcom County Adopt-A-Road Program. Adopt-A-Road is a cooperative effort between Whatcom County and community volunteers. The County provides litterbags and loans out safety equipment while community volunteers supply the labor.

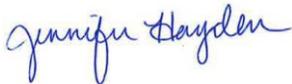
At least twice a year, road adopters remove tons of trash and litter from county roadways, making them safer and more scenic for travel.

Enclosed is an agreement for you to complete and return along with a Release of Liability form that must be signed. Each volunteer should complete a Volunteer Registration form. Please feel free to make photocopies or contact us if more are needed. When the agreement is completed and returned to us, you may plan for a cleanup event.

Whatcom County is appreciative that your organization is interested in this program and will do everything reasonably possible to ensure your safe participation and recognition for your efforts.

Thank you again for your interest. I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Hayden, Environmental Health Supervisor  
Whatcom County Adopt-A-Road Program Coordinator





WHATCOM COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
**ADOPT A ROAD PROGRAM**  
Adopt-A-Road Information

**What is Adopt-A-Road?**

The Adopt-A-Road program is an anti-litter and roadside cleanup campaign intended to promote pride and local ownership in Washington State. Signs are located on roadways statewide, recognizing the many volunteers who spend time picking up litter on the roadside.

**How does it work?**

Participating groups agree to clean up an “adopted” section of roadway two to six times a year (depending in the roadway traffic and volume of anticipated litter) for at least one year. Whatcom County will supply litter bags and safety materials. Typically, the assigned sections include two to four miles of roadside and may be of the participant’s choosing or one suggested by the coordinator. Safety of the participants is the primary concern in determining where sections are assigned. Sections are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis and waiting lists may be maintained for the more popular roadways.

After pick up, volunteers send in an activity report describing the hours worked. This secures medical insurance for the volunteers and alerts Whatcom County litter crews that litter bags are ready for collection and disposal. One person is designated as the “crew leader” to contact if the County coordinator has questions. A road sign recognizing volunteer groups is installed along the adopted section of the road after six months of demonstrated pick-up activities.

**Why Adopt?**

Washington is the Evergreen State, and we want to keep it that way. The condition of Washington State roads is a reflection on us, the people who live here. Adopting a road shows pride in the county and it’s a great way to show that you and your organization care.

Litter is not only unattractive; it can be a traffic hazard if it blows into the view of drivers on the highway. Litter is also harmful to the environment. Did you know it takes over one million years for plastic and Styrofoam containers to decompose?

You can get involved in Adopt-A-Road with your business, club, organization, school, religious group or family.



### **How do I sign up for Adopt-A-Road?**

Contact your local coordinator. The coordinator will send you more information, including an agreement and registration forms that you can mail in if you decide to participate.

### **How often are we asked to clean up our section?**

This depends on the area's traffic flow and the amount of litter expected. Usually groups are asked to pick up litter two to six times a year. This will be outlined in your agreement with Whatcom County.

### **Can we landscape our section of the highway?**

This is not included in standard volunteer or sponsor agreements. Contact your county coordinator if you'd like to do more, since some types of activities can be added to your agreement.

### **When and where do we get the equipment (hats, vests, signs, etc.)?**

Whatcom County loans the equipment for the duration of a litter pickup only. Volunteers pick up equipment before picking up litter and return it when the work is completed. Contact Whatcom County Public Works at (360) 778-6400 to coordinate a litter pickup event.

### **Do we get "pick up sticks"?**

Yes, Whatcom County does provide these for your convenience and safety.

### **About how long does it take on a day to pick up litter?**

It depends on the size of the group. Larger groups can have their section picked up in a couple of hours- individuals and families may spend a large part of the day picking up litter.

### **How does my group stay safe picking litter on the highway?**

Use the equipment provided to you by your coordinator. Also see Whatcom County's safety tips and guidelines.

### **How can we protect ourselves from recent herbicide spraying?**

Call your coordinator before you pick up litter and they can let you know if Whatcom County recently sprayed any herbicides in your section.

### **Why can't we pick up litter on holidays?**

This is for your own safety. Traffic tends to be greater during these times, and you are encouraged to pick up during non-peak traffic flows, such as weekends and mid-day during the week.

### **What do we do if we find large or dangerous objects?**

Please do not pick them up. Try to leave a bright marker or piece of tape by the object. Call your coordinator and they will arrange for Whatcom County crews to pick up the object(s).

### **How do we report a pick up?**

Your coordinator will send you an activity report for you to return along with your equipment after each pick up. **This must be filled out and returned** because Whatcom County needs to keep track of how often groups are picking up litter to keep the state looking clean. It also allows Whatcom County to maintain insurance coverage for our volunteers and tells Whatcom County to collect the filled bags for disposal.

### **How long will it take for our sign to go up?**

Your sign will go up after six months of demonstrated cleanup activities.



WHATCOM COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
**ADOPT-A-ROAD PROGRAM**  
Safety Tips

## Safety First

While volunteer help is greatly appreciated, safety is Whatcom County's number one concern. Our Adopt-A-Road program has an outstanding safety record, and Whatcom County wants to keep it that way.

All groups are required to watch a safety video available at: <https://www.wsdot.wa.gov/Operations/adoptahwy/video.htm> and read through these safety tips before picking up litter. In addition, all groups are loaned safety equipment for use while picking up litter. Whatcom County provides bright orange vests, hard hats, traffic signs, etc.

Tips for volunteer groups include:

- Carpool to the adopted section and pull all vehicles as far off the side of the road as possible
- Have a first aid kit on hand, and a person who has a first aid card
- Do not pick up heavy or hazardous materials – call the Whatcom County Adopt-A-Road coordinator for a crew to dispose the objects

## Safety Tips

### Wear appropriate clothing during cleanup

Make yourself visible to the traveling public and protect yourself from weather conditions or possible injury. Be sure everyone in the group wears the following items:

- Safety hat and vest
- Gloves
- Long pants and long sleeve shirt
- Thick-soled boots or shoes

### Preparing for litter cleanup

Before litter pickup begins, always set up a temporary "Volunteer Litter Crew Ahead" sign and park a buffer vehicle ahead of the adopted area (See the Adopt-A-Road Traffic Control Plan).



Conduct a refresher safety review for crew members. You will need to have an adult supervisor for every eight minor crew members – those between 12 and 18 years old. We recommend you take a first-aid kit appropriate for the size of the crew with a listing of the location and phone numbers for local emergency services. At least one person should have a valid first-aid card.

Carpool when you transport crew members to the work site using no more than two vehicles when possible. Vehicles should be parked off the shoulder when conditions permit, otherwise park with no more than two wheels on the paved shoulder. Make yourself familiar with the most direct route to the hospital and park at least one vehicle nearby in case of an emergency.

### **While picking up**

Be safe and always use caution. At all times:

- Watch your footing, stay off rocky, steep or unstable slopes.
- Avoid poison ivy, poison oak, blackberries and other thorny plants.
- Watch for stinging insects.
- Walk single file across bridges.
- Carry a box for broken glass and other sharp objects.
- Avoid over exertion, rest when needed.
- Drink plenty of water and use sun screen on warm sunny days.
- RECYCLE!!! Recycle any of the materials found during your litter control effort. Profits from the sale of these collected items belong to your group.

### **For your safety**

- Don't use earbuds or headphones which interfere with hearing and warnings.
- Don't engage in horseplay or pranks endangering the safety of yourself, fellow members or the traveling public.
- Don't cross the roadway on foot. Get in a vehicle and get out on the same side as the pickup will take place. No U-turns at intersections and interchanges. Don't pick up litter on the roadway.
- Don't pick up litter on bridges, tunnels or overpasses.
- Don't compact trash bags -- injuries from sharp or broken objects may result or the bag may burst.
- Don't pick up syringes or hypodermic needles.
- Don't carry knives, machetes, axes, etc.
- Never pick up exceptionally heavy or unyielding objects, dead animals, or suspected toxic or hazardous materials. Mark the location and notify the Adopt-A-Road Coordinator.

If your group has any further questions regarding safety tips or litter control, please contact the Adopt-A-Road Coordinator.



WHATCOM COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
**ADOPT-A-ROAD PROGRAM**  
Agreement for Volunteers

This agreement is made and entered into and between the Whatcom County Health Department, hereinafter called the "County" and the "Grantee".

The County does hereby authorize the grantee permission to participate in the Adopt-A-Road Program by picking up litter, and conducting other enhancement work if specified, within the following terms and conditions:

The Grantee does hereby agree:

1. To conduct activities in a safe manner and comply with any conditions as may be required by the county for the safety of the participants. Safety is the number one priority of the program.
2. To assign a leader to each volunteer crew and that crew leader shall have a copy of this Agreement with them while working on the roadside.
3. To pick up litter at least once per year. Additional clean ups should be done as necessary to maintain a neat appearance. Specific coordination for cleanup is required. **Contact Whatcom County Public Works at least 30 days prior to the anticipated cleanup date at (360) 778-6400 to arrange for picking up supplies and to coordinate a pickup date.**
4. To have all participants wear the safety equipment (hard hat and vest) furnished by the County when out on the roadside.
5. To have no more than two vehicles parked on the roadway shoulder within the assigned area during an activity.
6. Participants shall be 12 years of age or older. The Grantee shall furnish supervision by one or more adults for every eight (8) minors (under 18 years of age) participating in the activity.
7. Each participant shall receive and review safety training materials and training aids provided by the County before participating in a roadside activity
8. To obtain supplies and materials from the County during regular business hours.
9. To comply with all specifications in the attached Adopt-A-Road Program Traffic Control Plan when conduction activities.
10. To place filled bags at the agreed upon location for pickup and disposal by the County.
11. Participants who find anything they suspect to be hazardous shall not touch it, but take appropriate precautions and report the location and description of the material/substance to the County Representative.



12. Participants shall not pick up syringes, hypodermic needles, exceptionally large, heavy or unyielding objects. When these kinds of materials are discovered, the County representative should be notified as soon as possible to arrange for proper disposal.
13. Activities shall not take place during a legal holiday, during the afternoon before a legal holiday, or holiday weekends. See RCW 1.16.050 Legal Holidays defined.
14. To provide the County with a copy of the Adopt-A-Road Volunteer Participant Report with names and signatures of individual participants in the cleanup when returning pickup equipment to the County.
15. The volunteer crew leader shall report any injuries incurred by participants during cleanup activities to the County Representative within two working days of the injury. Notification should include:
  - Name of injured person
  - Nature of injury
  - Date and time of injury
  - How the injury occurred
16. To return to the County the portable advanced warning signs and stand, warning light and any other unused equipment and materials furnished by the County following each use.
17. To return hard hats, vests and any other equipment to the County upon completion of each litter pickup session.
18. If adoption includes activities in addition to or other than litter control, see Exhibit A.
19. The minimum road distance required for litter pick up by the Grantee is one mile.

The County shall hereby agree to:

1. Furnish and install an Adopt-A-Road sign with the Grantee name or acronym displayed at the assigned area after six months of demonstrated pick-up activities.
2. Furnish the Grantee litter bags (if necessary), an "Adopt-A-Road Work Crew Ahead" advanced warning sign and stand, warning light, hard hats, and safety vests for participants to use during cleanup activities.
3. Remove the filled litter bags from the agreed upon location.
4. Assist the Grantee in cleaning up litter and/or debris if necessary (i.e. when heavy, large or dangerous items are found).
5. Provide safety materials and training aids to the Grantee's representative for use by the Grantee in training participants.
6. Maintain necessary records required under RCW 51.11.035 to secure medical benefits under chapter 51.36 RCW for participants.
7. If the Grantee does not provide documented litter pickup each calendar year, the Adopt-A-Road sign will be removed.

**Other Considerations, Terms and Conditions:**

It is recommended the Grantee have a first aid kit available at the roadside site, and at least one person with a valid First Aid Card be present during activities. It is also recommended that the Grantee have a phone on site in case of emergency.

Recycling is an accepted and encouraged activity. Profits from the sale of recyclable items shall belong to the Grantee.

The County is authorized to suspend this Agreement temporarily without incurring liability if roadway maintenance and/or construction is required within the limits of the assigned areas. Once these activities have been completed, the Grantee will be notified and the Agreement restored.

The County is authorized to terminate this Agreement without notice if it deems necessary or if the Grantee fails to comply with any conditions of this Agreement, or for any public purpose, without cost to the County. This Agreement will automatically terminate upon 30 days of written notice of non-compliance, unless the Grantee takes corrective actions.

**The term of this Agreement shall commence when the signed Agreement is received by the Health Department.**

Upon termination of this Agreement, the Adopt-A-Road signs shall be removed and remain the property of the County. The Grantee will have the first opportunity to reapply for the same clean up area if all stipulations in this Agreement are adhered to.

This Agreement is not assignable or transferrable, either in whole or in part.

The Grantee or its agents agree to protect Whatcom County, its officers and employees, and save them harmless from all claims, action or damages of every kind and description which may accrue to or be suffered by any person, persons, or property by reason of the acts of omissions of the Grantee's or its agents in use or occupancy of the right-of-way or in the exercise of this Agreement. In case any suit or action is brought against Whatcom County, its officers and/or employees arising out of or by reason of any of the above causes, the Grantee and its agents will, upon notice of such action, defend the same at their sole cost and expense and satisfy any judgement against Whatcom County, its officers or employees: PROVIDED that if the claims or damages are caused by or result from the concurrent negligence of (a) Whatcom County agents or employees and (b) the Grantee or its agents, this indemnity provision shall be valid and enforceable only to the extent of the negligence of the Grantee or its agents.

The Grantee and on behalf of its assigns and agents, agrees to waive any claims for losses, injury to persons or property, expenses, damages or lost revenues incurred by it or its agents in connection with Grantee, its assigns or agents in the use or occupancy of the right-of-way or in the exercise of this agreement against Whatcom County, its agents or employees except the reasonable cost of repair of property resulting from the negligent injury or damage to the Grantee's property by Whatcom County, its agents or employees.