

NEIGHBORHOOD CLEANUP EVENTS



Neighborhood and community area cleanups are more than just opportunities to stash our trash. They also give us a great chance to inspire our neighbors to “reduce, reuse and recycle,” while improving the beauty and livability of the metro region.

The results and rewards of conducting a neighborhood cleanup event can be very satisfying. However, the organization and energy required shouldn’t be underestimated. Cleanup organizers with a few events under their belts will tell you that advanced planning and attention to the details along the way are the ingredients to holding a successful cleanup.

BEFORE AN EVENT



Before an event

When planning an event, there are some important things to consider long before the day of your cleanup.

- ✓ **Funding.** Lining up funding for your event is “job one.” There are a number of local organizations that provide funding and support for neighborhood cleanups.
- ✓ **Recordkeeping.** Be prepared from the very beginning to keep receipts and records, from the number of people who attended to the cost of waste disposal.
- ✓ **Planning.** You’ll need to find a location that is large enough for the type of event you want to hold, and then get the necessary permissions or permits.
- ✓ **Volunteers.** How you recruit and motivate volunteers will make a real difference in the success of your event.
- ✓ **Publicity.** You want to invite the right people (usually those living in a certain geographic area) and give them good information about what they can and cannot bring to the event.
- ✓ **Logistics.** Lining up haulers and deciding what material you want to accept at your event is the last crucial piece of the “before” stage. Good planning and preparation will ensure that you keep costs down, keep recycling up and keep the material moving throughout your event.

BEFORE AN EVENT

Funding sources and reporting

There are a number of sources of funding for neighborhood cleanup events.

Local government program assistance

Metro provides matching grants to local governments within the metro area for community cleanup events. These grants cover costs such as drop box rental and hauling fees, advertising, supplies, personnel and equipment – *up to a certain amount, depending on the location of the event*. These costs are reimbursable, so keep track of your expenditures and receipts. Funding varies, and may not cover the total cost of supplies.

Contact the local government office in your area that manages solid waste and recycling for information about whether you qualify for these funds and how much is available for your event.

Each city in the Metro region has staff that handles solid waste and recycling.

Contact the offices listed below for information on who you are allowed to hire for garbage and recycling service in your area, information on matching grant funds to reimburse for some event costs and access to support and equipment to assist with recycling efforts. This assistance varies – ask staff about options in your area.

Beaverton 503-526-2665

Cornelius 503-357-3011

Damascus Call Clackamas County 503-353-4450

Durham 503-639-6851

Fairview 503-674-6230

Forest Grove 503-992-3234

Gladstone 503-557-2767

Gresham and Wood Village 503-618-2656

Happy Valley 503-760-3325

Hillsboro 503-681-6134

King City 503-639-4082

Lake Oswego 503-635-0215

Milwaukie 503-786-7508

Oregon City 503-496-1571

Portland 503-823-4519

The Portland Office of Sustainable Development contracts with neighborhood coalitions to distribute cleanup funding. Contact the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, which can direct you to your District Coalition. Organizers of civic events should contact Portland's Public Place Recycling Program (see page 61 for details).

BEFORE AN EVENT

Sherwood 503-925-2311

Tigard 503-718-2595

Troutdale 503-665-5175

Tualatin 503-691-3093

West Linn 503-657-0331

Wilsonville 503-682-1011

Unincorporated Clackamas County 503-353-4450

Unincorporated Washington County 503-846-3651

Metro disposal vouchers

These vouchers cover the cost of disposing waste (called “tipping fees”) at Metro’s transfer stations in Northwest Portland and Oregon City, or at another approved facility that may be closer to your event. For voucher information and an application, contact Metro’s Recycling Information hotline at 503-234-3000, or visit www.metro-region.org/cleanup.

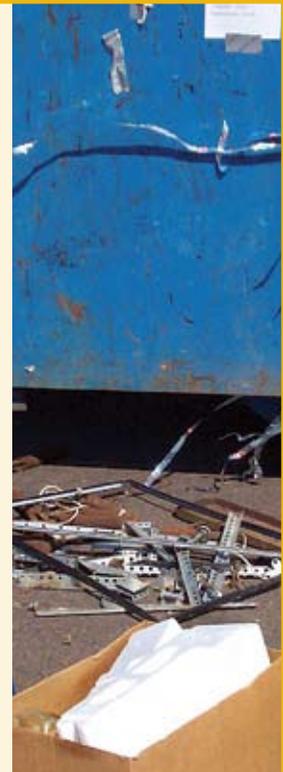
Note: Disposal vouchers only pay for the cost of disposing waste at a transfer station; they do not cover the fees for renting or hauling drop boxes. These other fees may be covered by partnering local governments.

PROFILE: Gresham Earth Day

At its annual Earth Day event in 2007, the City of Gresham offered a one-day free drop off event for three hard-to-recycle materials: block foam, electronics and fluorescent lighting. The city leveraged its Metro matching grant funds to cover more than 55 percent of the cost of recycling these products, using available resources to offer an easy opportunity for community members to recycle responsibly.

Gresham incorporated recycling into a fun community event. As a result:

- 697 computer monitors and televisions were sent to a local recycler, keeping toxic heavy metals out of the landfill
- 2,115 fluorescent light tubes and bulbs were sent to a local recycler, keeping mercury and lead from polluting air, land and water
- 3,200 cubic feet of block foam were collected, providing raw material for a local company that reprocesses it into television cabinets, media centers, computer cases and more.



Courtesy of Jane Rosenstein

BEFORE AN EVENT

SOLV supplies and grants

SOLV provides resources to support cleanup, beautification and enhancement projects. This non-profit organization offers small grants through various programs to assist with certain costs. Grants of up to \$100 can be used for waste disposal and hauling fees, promotional assistance and some supplies and equipment. To receive a SOLV grant, you must fill out an application. SOLV-sponsored events can also receive free supplies such as litterbags, gloves and signage geared toward assisting volunteers in sorting debris. In addition, events held in partnership with SOLV benefit from inclusion in their Web-based volunteer recruitment; visibility through SOLV media and publicity efforts; use of SOLV's online volunteer registration system; and coverage under SOLV's liability and key volunteer medical insurance policies. For information on SOLV's programs, call 503-844-9571 or visit www.solv.org.

Business sponsors and donors

As you shop for goods or services for your event (including garbage hauling and recycling services), ask if businesses will donate all or a portion of the cost of the goods or services. Many cleanup organizers solicit donations of refreshments for volunteers, printing services for signs and fliers, and gift certificates to raffle or distribute as volunteer incentives. Other local businesses may be willing to sponsor your event or some part of it. Emphasize that your event involves the local community, and that you will promote sponsor businesses in your publicity and at the event.



Courtesy of REACH Community Development

PROFILE: RICHMOND NEIGHBORHOOD CLEANUP

The Richmond Neighborhood in southeast Portland holds an annual spring cleanup that provides a great example of reuse, recycling and community participation. This cleanup has consistently diverted more than 60 percent of the debris it receives from a landfill, with a record of 72 percent in 2006. The 2007 cleanup diverted 68 percent.

The event's "U Price It Sale" began years ago, when volunteers would set aside reusable items that they could not bear to put into dumpsters. Proceeds currently go back into the community through support of the Neighborhood Tree Committee, which plants street and lot trees.

Materials that are separated for recycling at this event are:

- yard debris
- scrap metals and appliances
- electronics
- miscellaneous plastics
- books and magazines
- molded foam and foam "peanuts"
- athletic shoes
- carpet padding
- "media" (CDs, DVDs, audio and video tapes.)

Best management practices

- When they arrive customers are given information on the Richmond Neighborhood Association, its activities and how to get involved. Information on local year-round recycling resources also is provided.
- Two Master Recycler volunteers (see p. 33) are on site to coordinate the sorting of plastics at the event. These volunteers are responsible for training and supervising other volunteers assigned to work in the plastics sorting area.

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Courtesy of Jane Rosenstein

More best management practices

- Prominent signs around the site give important safety information, and explain what specific materials go in which container or area.
- Intensive sorting done by volunteers during unloading allows for maximum recycling and also maintains safe conditions.
- Carts and wheelbarrows are provided for transport of materials to the correct collection container or area. This keeps auto traffic within the site – and in and around drop boxes – to a minimum. Some loads are put on the outside of the drop boxes during particularly busy times, or if the load has mixed recyclable materials, it can be sorted when time allows.
- Young volunteers are assigned jobs away from drop boxes. They separate wood, metal, foam padding and other recyclable components from items such as box springs and furniture.
- Event publicity emphasizes waste reduction and year-round recycling opportunities.
- There is a focus on separating reusable materials to match neighborhood demand. For example, since customers started asking about reusable lumber, more of an effort is made to pull that material out of incoming loads.
- Year after year, the event fills only five drop boxes with debris. Other comparably sized events fill ten or more. Co-coordinator Sarah F. Moore jokes that ideally, the events will be so successful in educating neighbors on recycling and waste reduction that it will “put itself out of business.”



Courtesy of Jane Rosenstein

Ongoing challenges

- It is consistently difficult to find a charitable organization willing to pick up leftover materials. Volunteers transport remaining reusable goods to a charity at the end of the day in personal vehicles, and they also take plastics and carpet padding to area recyclers.
- Managing electronics has also been challenging, and fees collected for electronics have not covered the recycling costs.

Site planning and layout

STEP

1 Secure a location

School parking lots, government buildings, churches or businesses that will be closed on the day of your event are ideal. Look for sites that have:

- a paved surface with adequate clearance for drop boxes
- easy access (entrance from a secondary street helps)
- good visibility
- a separate entrance and exit, preferably at opposite ends of the site
- bathroom and hand-washing facilities (if the site does not have access to bathroom facilities, check “Toilets – Portable” in the Yellow Pages)
- an electrical hookup.

Get formal permission from the property owner before proceeding with any other project planning. Contact the person in charge of the site (such as the principal, pastor, or business owner), to discuss requirements. Some sites require a permit and a small fee, especially for events held on public property. If so, file the permit application eight to 12 weeks before the event.

The week before the event, contact the property owner as a reminder. If you are using a parking lot, ensure that it will be empty. If any drop boxes are going to be delivered early, ensure the hauler can easily access the site to drop off and collect the drop boxes.

STEP

2 Pick a date

Saturdays are the best day to hold cleanup events. If you choose to schedule your event during Earth Day weekend or on a large SOLV event day, reserve your drop boxes early to ensure availability of containers and services. Be aware of other types of events being held the same day. If sporting or other civic events are going on, traffic and parking issues are likely to arise. Talk to coordinators of these events to address parking, traffic and other logistics.

STEP

3 Map the site

As a part of your planning process, conduct a thorough site visit. Walking the site will help you refine your goals, determine logistics and estimate the number of volunteers you will need. Invite the garbage hauler and other service providers, the property owner and other key partners to walk the site with you. Create an initial site map from this visit. Appendix 3 provides an example of a neighborhood cleanup site map.

BEFORE AN EVENT

Important considerations for site planning

Volunteer parking Identify sufficient and secure parking for your volunteers and provide this information to them beforehand.

Volunteer hub Have an area where volunteers sign in, receive training, receive safety vests (or other identification) and safety equipment, and can find refreshments.

Traffic flow Consider how you will handle the customer traffic, including how you will queue up cars entering the site. Allow for some vehicle movement between drop boxes, since most loads will contain a mix of materials. Aim to reduce or eliminate foot traffic through lanes of auto traffic by routing customers and volunteers around traffic. Allow for room for vehicles to turn around. Consider where customers will park vehicles while visiting reuse “sales.”

Drop box placement Drop boxes should be placed with plenty of room around them. The rear of the drop box (where the doors are located) should face the area where vehicles will pull up to unload debris. The area at the opposite side of the drop box needs to be large enough to allow hauling trucks easy access for pick-up. Avoid areas where tree limbs may impede truck access.

Reuse and recycling Prominent areas for collection and sale/trade of reusable items should be set well away from drop boxes. Consider parking for customers visiting reuse areas.

PROFILE: Spiffin' Martin Luther King Boulevard

In 2007, the community along Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard turned out for a first-time cleanup project. Coordinator Gary Marschke oversaw the successful efforts of 300 volunteers at the “**First Annual Spiffin'**” event. Among their successes, participants:

- removed a quarter ton of trash and debris
- cleaned up graffiti at 34 locations
- involved three neighborhood associations and two faith-based organizations
- recruited 22 business partners and sponsors, including eight business-sponsored teams.

Marschke credits the cleanup's success to cooperation and collaboration among its main partners, which included Friends of Trees and the Portland Development Commission. SOLV approved a \$100 grant in addition to providing trash bags, safety vests, gloves, first aid kits and hazardous materials receptacles.

Marschke reports, “exceptional planning, outreach and visibility” contributed to the day's successes. Simplicity is also a key. Marschke says, “Show up, eat, be engaged, eat again and celebrate!”



Courtesy of Annie Cochran, SOLV

Volunteers

General guidelines for recruiting and working with volunteers

- If you are coordinating an annual event, approach recruitment as a year-round activity. Mention the need for volunteers in all publicity. If possible, provide both phone and e-mail contact information.
- When you recruit volunteers in person or through the media, briefly describe the goals of the cleanup and mention some specific volunteer jobs that need to be filled. Emphasize the community benefits of your event.
- Encourage volunteers to further develop the event based on their strengths or interests. A project builds community when volunteers feel that their contributions are appreciated and their judgment is trusted.
- Safety and volunteerism are integrally connected: if volunteers do not feel safe, they will not return.
- Be clear about your expectations and the working conditions. If the work will be dirty, let your volunteers know. Make sure that each volunteer knows the specific timeframe in which they are expected.
- Social opportunities are an important motivator to volunteering. Build informal gatherings into your planning process to engage committed volunteers. In doing so, you may be building a network that will continue to address sustainability and livability issues in the community.
- Consider the diversity of your community in recruiting volunteers. Local churches, businesses and service clubs can be important partners in connecting you with a variety of volunteers.

The more you incorporate waste reduction and recycling into your cleanup, the more help you'll need with planning and logistics, and the more you'll need to invest in training on-site volunteers. Remember to seek assistance from the Master Recyclers (see p. 33 for more information).

Where to find volunteers

- Past volunteers are a good place to start; ask your committed volunteers to recruit family, friends and neighbors.
- Neighborhood association board members and meetings. Request time on the agenda to be sure that you have the chance to speak. Suggest the meeting's sign-in sheets include an area-of-interest survey to identify those in your community interested in environmental projects. Then, call and invite them to work with you.
- Local schools that have community service requirements and/or environmental programs.
- Local churches, through community boards or newsletters.
- Local youth groups such as Explorers, Boy/Girl Scouts, or Earth Scouts.
- Service and social clubs, such as Kiwanis, Elks or Rotary.

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- Partnering with the Master Recycler Program or SOLV gives you access to their volunteer databases and recruitment programs. SOLV also offers coordinator training programs. See the Resources section for details.
- Hands On Greater Portland, a non-profit organization, connects volunteers with projects throughout Portland and Washington County. It also offers workshops on volunteer recruitment and management. More information can be found at www.handsonportland.org.
- County corrections or community service program work crews. A county employee supervises these crews. Programs include:
 - Clackamas County** Call the Community Service Department at 503-655-8727
 - Multnomah County** For information on juvenile work crews, contact 503-988-3460 at least one month prior to your event. For information on adult crews, contact the Alternative Community Service Program at 503-803-4033, at least one month prior to your event.
 - Washington County** Call the Community Service Program at 503-846-3730.
- On-line listings, such as Craigslist (www.portland.craigslist.org/, go to “Community, Volunteers” subsection), or Idealist (www.idealist.org/ go to “Post” tab, choose “Volunteer Opportunity.”) Craigslist and Idealist may be options for recruiting volunteers, but first try the other local resources listed above.

How to assign tasks to volunteers

Divide and assign planning tasks. Volunteers are most effective when they are given clearly defined jobs. Assigning volunteers to a specific job or task also increases their sense of commitment.

Event coordinator Has responsibility for overall planning and logistics. Delegates jobs, but has responsibility for ensuring all the other jobs get done. This person fills out funding applications and reporting forms, and handles communications with the garbage hauler, including signing vouchers on cleanup day.

Volunteer coordinator Recruits volunteers, assigns cleanup day jobs. Motivates, evaluates and acts as a resource for volunteers. Places reminder and logistics call or e-mail to volunteers one week before the cleanup.

Sponsorship coordinator Solicits donations of money, goods and services.

Site coordinator Secures permission to use site. Creates site map and ensures that containers and equipment are set up according to plan.

Reuse and recycling coordinator Makes arrangements with reuse and recycling companies. Works with the site coordinator to locate collection areas. (Master Recycler volunteers could take on this role.) See profile on page 33 for information on the Master Recycler program.

Special events coordinator Organizes components of the cleanup such as neighborhood litter patrol and special assistance pick-up.

BEFORE AN EVENT

Publicity coordinator Writes articles, prints signs and fliers and sends press releases.

Treasurer Keeps track of expenditures and receipts. On cleanup day, collects monies from volunteers taking fees.

Day-of-event volunteers

Divide and assign event-day tasks. As you recruit cleanup day volunteers, sign them up for specific duties. Use a form that allows you to fill each job for each block of time during the day. On-site jobs to assign include:

- set up
- hospitality – picks up refreshments for volunteers
- greeter - checks in customers, ensures funds are properly collected and that restricted materials (or commercial loads) are turned away
- fee collector (if money not taken by greeter)
- traffic monitor
- unloader/sorter
- recycling specialist
- reuse specialist
- delivery driver – transports materials that will not be picked up
- clean up.

Volunteer reminders

One week before the cleanup, call or e-mail volunteers with information on:

- location, date and time of the cleanup
- specific instructions on where to park and check in
- how to dress and what tools or supplies to bring
- specific instructions on what their role will be.



BEFORE AN EVENT

Publicity

General guidelines

- Size the promotion of your event with your capacity. If you are planning a small event, plan on a limited amount of advertising. If you are organizing a large-scale cleanup and want high numbers of both volunteers and attendees, your promotion needs to reach a larger audience. Contact media outlets with a wide audience such as neighborhood and citywide newspapers, and radio stations.
- Limit news releases and pre-event fliers to one page.
- Use your publicity to explain who can and cannot attend, what will and will not be accepted, and any fees that will be charged.
- Make certain that waste reduction and recycling information is included in all forms of publicity.
- Mention sponsors and partners in your publicity. Some may ask you to include their logo on any advertising.
- Consider non-English speaking residents in your community. Seek out residents who can translate publicity materials into other languages, or seek a bilingual volunteer who can assist non-native speakers before the event or at the event itself.
- Consider residents in your community without access to computers or the Internet when providing contact information regarding event details. Provide a phone contact as well as an e-mail or Web page address.
- Use post-event publicity to celebrate your achievements, to acknowledge your volunteers and to recruit new volunteers for your next event.



Courtesy of Master Recyclers

Create a flier

Publicize your event and produce a flier only after you have obtained all the required approvals and permits to use the intended site on the desired date. This will help you avoid having people show up at an event that never got off the ground due to lack of required approvals.

Fliers are the most important way to inform the public about the details of your event. Your flier should include:

- information on what will and will not be accepted
- fees
- a site map
- information on alternative recycling options
- additional components of the event, such as litter patrol and special assistance pick-up
- a call for volunteers, explaining what tasks you need help with and whom to call
- acknowledgement of sponsors and partners
- a line noting you've printed the flier on recycled-content paper.

In publicity materials, avoid using terms and phrases such as "throw away" and "dump your garbage." Use terms such as "donate," "reuse," "recycle" and "waste." You are setting a tone and building awareness with volunteers and customers.

Where to distribute and post fliers

Fliers can be reprinted or inserted in community newspapers and newsletters. Post fliers in areas such as:

- local businesses. Ask to post fliers in their windows, and leave some for distribution.
- community bulletin boards located in neighborhood gathering places
- area library branches, community centers, schools and churches; ask local schools and churches if they will mention your event, or print your flier, in their newsletters
- online. Design the flier to be easily sent electronically as an Acrobat PDF file. If partner and local organizations have Web sites, request that they include your flier, or a link to it, on their site.

Write articles and press releases

Send articles about your event to recruit volunteers. You can write articles on the recycling businesses or reuse agencies you are partnering with, or about recycling resources available in the region.

Send press releases to large media outlets. Notice of community volunteer projects is typically considered a "calendar item" by large newspapers, television media and radio. If possible, connect your project to a larger issue or happening being discussed in the community. This way, you may attract coverage as a "soft news" or human-interest feature story. See Appendix 5 for media contacts and Appendix 6 for a sample press release.

BEFORE AN EVENT

Advertising

If your budget allows, place advertisements in community newspapers. If space is limited, provide a Web site address for more information. Keep in mind that newspaper advertisements may reach a bigger audience than you are prepared to serve at your event. If you do advertise, specify that the event is intended for residents of a certain geographic area, if that is the case.

Direct mail

Direct mail can be an expensive approach to publicity, with costs higher than any other form of promotion. However, this can be an excellent option for events that need to draw in a very targeted community.

To use direct mail:

- contact your local government community involvement office or neighborhood association about accessing addresses within your targeted area (fees may be charged for use of this information)
- find out if you have access to a bulk-mailing permit and/or are eligible for non-profit mailing rates through your neighborhood association or sponsoring organization.

Community events

Your neighborhood association or community planning organization may rent a table at community events. Provide information about your event, or better yet, send a representative to publicize your event and recruit volunteers.

Signage

Yard signs like those used by political candidates can be placed on busy corners and heavily traveled streets around the event (follow sign placement laws in your local jurisdiction). Signs should provide basic event information – such as date and time – and should include a contact number or Web site address for more information. Purchase yard signs with replaceable lettering that can be reused year after year.

- Banners can be hung a week or more before your event at or near the site.
- Ask local schools or other buildings with reader boards to advertise your event.
- “Sandwich boards” can be placed on strategic corners on the day of the event.

Web listings

Web sites and listservs (e-mail distribution lists) provide opportunities for either targeted or widespread publicity.

Notify neighbors

If your site abuts homes, hand-deliver fliers to residents two weeks before the event. Place fliers inside screen doors or on door handles, not in mailboxes (it’s illegal).

PROFILE: CULLY NEIGHBORHOOD CLEANUP

In NE Portland's Cully Neighborhood, the 2007 Earth Day Spring Cleanup filled 22 dumpsters with more than 52 tons of yard debris, bulky waste, metal, computers, cell phones and tires. A strong emphasis on reuse and recycling significantly lessened the volume of landfill-destined trash. Several strategies facilitated waste reduction:

- Master Recyclers separated and recycled plastics
- volunteers plucked incoming items for a "You Price It" area, encouraging neighbors to reuse still-useful articles
- leftover "You Price It" goods were donated to the ARC for resale in thrift stores
- multi-cultural outreach conducted in the neighborhood promoted the cleanup.

Cully Cleanup partners included the Cully Association of Neighborhoods, local churches, organizations, schools and businesses, the local hauler and even a motorcycle club. Metro and the Portland Office of Sustainable Development were major sponsors.

SOLV provided a \$100 grant and also contributed litterbags, first aid kits, a portable toilet and signage to assist in sorting recyclables. Impressive results quantify the event's success:

- nearly four tons of metal were diverted for recycling by Metro Metals
- 900 pounds of plastics were hauled to Agri-Plas for reprocessing and reuse
- 16 computers and 30 miscellaneous electronics delivered to Free Geek
- approximately 1,000 pounds of reusable goods were salvaged onsite by neighbors or picked up by the ARC for resale.

"It's great to recycle, lessening the burden on the environment and enhancing the livability of the neighborhood by disposing of unusable items in an earth-friendly way," says Kathy Fuerstenau, site coordinator. Thanks to a corps of efficient volunteers, "wait-time for unloading was lessened significantly [over previous cleanups], enticing some people to make two trips to our site to dispose and recycle."



Courtesy of Jane Rosenstein

BEFORE AN EVENT

Materials and haulers

The heart of a community cleanup is planning for opportunities for people to dispose of or recycle a variety of materials, and ensuring that hauling services are in place to take care of them.

STEP Line up your hauler

1 Garbage and recycling hauling services are managed differently throughout the metro region. You may be holding your event in an area with franchised garbage and recycling service, meaning that only one hauler is allowed to work with you. Call your local government office for available options.

To find and hire a hauler, use the Hauler Worksheet (Appendix 8). Experienced coordinators emphasize the importance of getting a signed agreement or contract with your hauler that details fees and special service arrangements.

The hauler serving your event has expertise and can be a great resource. Contact your hauler with questions about what materials to accept, how to handle certain types of waste and other issues. As you cultivate a relationship with a hauler, they may offer in-kind services, valuable feedback or other assistance.

It is nearly impossible to predict how many people will attend your event or how much material and what type of material will be collected. Use information from past events or feedback from other event coordinators to estimate how many drop boxes you will need. Avoid hiring an overbooked hauler. Set a maximum number of boxes that you plan to fill and try to get assurance that the hauler will be able to provide what you need.

Twenty-yard drop boxes can be used for cardboard and paper or other materials that you expect to collect in small amounts. For bulky waste and yard debris, 30- or 40-yard drop boxes are more suitable.

STEP Decide what materials you will accept

2 Common materials typically accepted at neighborhood events range from furniture to tires and many items in-between.

Bulky waste or mixed waste Furniture, mattresses, small appliances, bathtubs, sinks and other items that cannot fit into a garbage can are considered bulky waste. All can be accepted mixed, or can be sorted for reuse or recycling.

Yard debris and wood waste Woody yard debris and scrap lumber should at least be separated from other debris, and can be recycled at most facilities. Assign certain drop boxes for only wood waste and yard debris, and others for mixed waste.

Scrap metal This includes items such as old bed frames, broken tools, filing cabinets and screen doors. Metal should be placed in a designated drop box to ensure it is correctly recycled.

BEFORE AN EVENT

Large appliances Most are accepted with scrap metal (see above), but sometimes there are fees for appliances containing coolant (refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners). Consider how appliances will be unloaded and moved and provide dollies and safety training.

Tires Tires that are sent to Metro transfer stations are currently being recycled. Tires should be sent to a facility all together, in one section of a drop box load, and they should be counted for reporting purposes.

Paper and cardboard As with metal, you may be able to find a recycler who will donate the container and hauling fees for cardboard and paper (called “fibers” by the recycling industry) or you may be able to sell it. Designate a small drop box for fibers. Some events offer paper-shredding services for confidential documents. While this service is attractive to customers, you should make sure the shredding company actually recycles the shredded paper.

NOTE: If you receive Metro disposal vouchers, read the information carefully to be clear about what is prohibited in drop boxes. Some events are authorized to accept everything other than what has been specified as prohibited items, while others can accept only one type of material, such as yard debris or electronics.

Street Cleanups

Street cleanups typically focus on picking up litter from a certain site or business area. This can occur in conjunction with a neighborhood cleanup, or on its own.

- A permit is usually needed for placing a drop box in the right-of-way. Call your local government transportation office for information.
- Distribute maps with litter pickup area, location of drop box and other landmarks.
- Provide a central location for volunteers to pick up gloves, safety vests and litter bags.



Courtesy of SOLV

BEFORE AN EVENT

STEP 3 Create a reuse and recycling plan

There may be a good deal of material you collect at your event that can't be recycled. You'll still want to emphasize recycling as much as you can. This means you need to plan ahead. You may find that the hauler you'll be working with can't take everything you'd like to accept. Don't let that stop you; there may be other options for those materials.

First, find out from your selected hauler what they can recycle. Next, clarify with your hauler how these materials need to be separated.

Call the Metro Recycling Information hotline at 503-234-3000 for information on how to recycle materials that your hauler cannot. The hotline can also provide information about other materials you might want to separate for reuse or recycling. Additional materials to investigate include:

- reusable goods including household items (furniture, linens, kitchen goods), building supplies (dimensional lumber, kitchen and bath fixtures, windows and doors, etc.) and arts and crafts supplies
- plastic food and product packaging is increasingly being collected and recycled by area businesses. Options may be available for block packaging foam, but markets have been inconsistent, so there may not be options for recycling this material at the time of your event. For details, contact Metro Recycling Information, and visit www.masterrecycler.org/plastic-recycling.php
- electronics (see page 21 for information about electronics recycling)
- mattresses
- carpet padding
- athletic shoes
- media plastics may include CDs, DVDs, cassettes and cases for these products.

Neighborhood environmental projects provide tangible community-building opportunities. Community members can become powerful advocates for promoting sustainability in their neighborhoods and among neighbors. You will deepen the volunteer commitment when they can see a focus on the natural environment of their local community.



Courtesy of SOLV

BEFORE AN EVENT

After getting contact information for reuse and recycling businesses from Metro Recycling Information, use Appendix 8 the Recycler Worksheet, to gather the necessary information. Be clear about what items are acceptable, in what condition and what fees may be charged.

A main consideration in deciding whether to partner with a recycler is its ability to pick up materials from the event site. In franchised areas, recyclers may not be allowed

You can encourage the recycling of certain items by not accepting them as garbage. If you are unable to accept some materials for reuse and recycling, tell your customers about other local options. Metro Recycling Information is a great source of information. Include this information in event publicity and hand out fliers at the event. See Appendix 4 for a sample flier.



to pick up from the event site, especially if the recycler charges a fee. Ask your local government representative (Appendix 2) about any regulations before making arrangements for service.

If the provider supplies a drop box or other container for separated materials, ask when they will drop off and pick up the container. Containers left overnight can attract illegal dumpers, and may not be allowed on certain sites. You can plan to have volunteers deliver separated materials to reuse or recycling businesses, but it is difficult to predict how much material you will receive. Avoid overtaxing volunteers at the end of a busy event day.



Courtesy of Master Recyclers

What is “e-waste”?

Because electronics contain toxic materials like lead, chromium and mercury, Metro recommends that neighborhood cleanups do not include electronics collection. Instead, direct residents to bring unwanted electronics to reuse and recycling organizations in your area. However, if your neighborhood cleanup would like to include electronics collection, partner with an electronics reuse organization or recycling company. The Metro Recycling Information hotline or Metro’s Web site can provide you with a listing.

If you recommend e-waste reuse and recycling options, or if you partner with reuse and recycling companies, it is important to confirm that the businesses adhere to environmentally sound management practices. Ask questions about how the material is handled and processed, and where it is shipped. If computers are being processed for reuse, ask how the computers are tested and the data erased.

For more information on electronics recycling, including resources on holding an electronics collection event, see the Environmental Protection Agency’s eCycling Web site at www.epa.gov/epaoswer/hazwaste/recycle/ecycling/index.htm.

Beginning in January 2009, Oregon’s Electronics Recycling Program (OERP) will make it even easier to recycle electronics. The statewide program will provide free, convenient, safe and environmentally sound recycling of televisions, desktop computers, portable computers and monitors. The program is free for households and small businesses and nonprofits with 10 or fewer employees. In January 2010, landfill disposal of these electronics will be prohibited in Oregon. For more information on OERP, see www.deq.state.or.us/lq/electronics.htm.



off 35 gallons or less of household hazardous waste at Metro's facilities or collection events.

In 2006, Metro's hazardous waste program served 56,453 customers at its facilities and events, collecting 4.4 million pounds of hazardous materials.

In the past, Metro has offered collection of hazardous waste onsite in partnership with neighborhood cleanup events, or has taken requests to schedule events in a particular neighborhood. Currently, the hazardous waste program focuses on equitably distributing events around the region, based on population and factors such as distance from the two permanent facilities. Realistically, few sites have the capacity for a simultaneous hazardous waste collection and regular cleanup event (see photo on page 35 for a view of a collection event.)

Hazardous waste at cleanup events

- Be clear with your volunteers about how to handle hazardous waste and **when not to handle them at all.**
- Unidentifiable materials packaged in a barrel, can, bag, jug, or box should be treated as hazardous waste. If these items (as well as identifiable hazardous waste) are brought to a neighborhood cleanup, the customer should be given information about the two Metro facilities and the closest upcoming collection event.
- If you are planning a street cleanup or natural resource area cleanup, be prepared for any hazardous waste your volunteers may encounter and inform them of the proper procedures.
- Metro can provide containers for sharps that may be found, but if you expect your volunteers to handle these, you must provide gloves, tongs and training on safe transfer of sharps into containers.
- If you encounter any hazardous waste at your event and need assistance, call Metro Recycling Information at 503-234-3000, Monday through Saturday, between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.
- If you suspect that you have encountered an explosive material, call 9-1-1.

Resources

Metro distributes numerous publications on household hazardous waste, which you can make available to your customers. These resources, which are available through the Recycling Information Center, explain what materials are considered hazardous. They also provide information on Metro's disposal program and safer alternatives to toxic home and garden products.



Courtesy of Jane Rosenstein

Plastics are accepted and sorted for recycling at the Richmond Neighborhood cleanup.

Metro's hazardous waste disposal program



What is hazardous waste?

Hazardous and **toxic** are scientific terms to indicate levels of threat to human health posed by a particular substance.

What is household hazardous waste?

Materials accepted by Metro's hazardous waste program include: paint and thinner; solvents; pool and spa chemicals; pesticides and herbicides; motor oil, antifreeze, and other automotive fluids; household cleaners and disinfectants; aerosol spray products; art and hobby chemicals; batteries; medical sharps (syringes); propane tanks and bottles; fluorescent lights (compact bulbs and 4-foot tubes) and ballasts.



While most neighborhood cleanup events don't collect hazardous or toxic materials, some might end up at your event. It's important that you're aware of Metro's Hazardous Waste Disposal Program.

As you probably know, Metro is the regional agency responsible for managing the solid waste, including hazardous waste generated by households and small businesses in the Portland metro area. It's important to prevent toxic materials that may be collected during your event from being disposed in regular landfills, where they can pollute soil and groundwater.

Metro operates two permanent facilities where household hazardous waste is collected, recycled whenever possible, and disposed. Metro also sponsors household hazardous waste collection events from March through November at rotating sites around the region. There is no charge to drop