

# BIG CLEAN WESTCHESTER

## How to Organize a Community Clean-up Event



### **Choose, and visit your site**

Visit your site to identify hazards, and observe the amount of debris in order to estimate how many volunteers you will need.

### **Select a date, time, and meeting location for your cleanup**

If it is a large area, use a map to divide the area into cleanup sectors.

If you are organizing a shoreline cleanup, consider the tides when you pick a date and time for your project.

### **Determine landowner & contact them for permission**

Contact the landowner/municipality and the police department to ask for permission to coordinate the project and to find out if you need a permit (notify NYS DOT if you are planning to work near main roads). Inquire about assistance with trash and recycling hauling. Ask if the landowner/municipality/DOT can provide gloves, garbage bags, rakes, pickers, vests, etc.

### **Register your cleanup event(s) with Big Clean Westchester at *Volunteer New York!***

[www.volunteernewyork.org/bigclean](http://www.volunteernewyork.org/bigclean)

### **Recruit volunteers locally**

Reach out to local church, scout, school, non-profit, business, chambers of commerce, environmental and other groups. Consider creating posters to hang up at libraries, post offices, community centers and other public bulletin boards. Use social media and your own network to recruit volunteers. Be sure to include a place to RSVP such as the link to ***Volunteer New York!*** or an e-mail address or Facebook event.

### **Outreach**

Let your local media know about your clean up event. For larger projects, consider newspapers, online media, radio and TV. Include the date, time, and location of your project, your contact information, and the phrase “to sign up to volunteer, visit [www.volunteernewyork.org/bigclean](http://www.volunteernewyork.org/bigclean)”

### **Seek donations from local businesses**

Many home improvement, grocery and local businesses will donate work gloves, refreshments and/or other provisions. Assign volunteers to coordinate the donated supplies and food.

### **Secure trash hauling and develop your recycling strategy**

The landowner typically handles trash hauling. Be sure to ask about how and what they will recycle, and how to separate trash from recyclables. Try to make recycling a focal point of your cleanup.

### **Reach out to your volunteers**

E-mail your registered volunteers with a friendly reminder of the date, time, meeting location, things they may want to bring/wear, etc. A personalized e-mail with your cell phone number and enthusiasm goes a long way. **Note:** if you register with ***Volunteer New York!*** they will send out a reminder email to all the volunteers who sign up on their site.

**Questions? Contact [BigClean@westchestergov.com](mailto:BigClean@westchestergov.com)**

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## Day-Of Cleanup Checklist



## Ensure Your Volunteers Have a Safe & Productive Cleanup!

### Before Volunteers Arrive

- Place signage, if necessary, to help volunteers find the meeting place.
- It is helpful to have a table and chairs at each sign-in location.
- Arrange your materials (trash bags, gloves, t-shirts, etc.) so they are easy to distribute as volunteers arrive.
- Check for any hazards to communicate to your volunteers, such as slippery conditions, poison ivy, ticks and “sharps” such as glass or needles, which are sometimes found.

### As Volunteers Arrive

- Have your volunteers sign in (name, contact information).
- Assign a specific cleanup location to each volunteer/group of volunteers.
- If it is a large area, provide a map and/or list of locations to volunteers.
- Welcome the group and make them aware of any hazards.
- Provide each volunteer with the appropriate equipment.

### During the Cleanup

- Take photos! Try to take shots of volunteers in action, and a group shot of all volunteers with the trash pile(s). Try to capture smiling faces! Take photos of any particularly noteworthy trash.
- Share your success on social media using the hashtag **#BigCleanWestchester**.

### End of Cleanup

- Count how many bags of trash/recycling you collected, see what items your volunteers found most frequently, as well as any weird finds.
- Thank your volunteers! Let them know you value their hard work and that their efforts made a difference.

### Following the Cleanup

- Share your success! Use social media to share your hard work with your friends and family.
- Help others see the importance of being responsible for their local community.
- Share photos with Big Clean Westchester! We want to hear from you!  
E-mail photos to [BigClean@westchestergov.com](mailto:BigClean@westchestergov.com).
- Stay tuned for how to share your results (how much litter you collected) with Big Clean Westchester!