LOVE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Community Cleanup Toolkit

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LOVE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAM OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION:

The Love Your Neighborhood program is an "action-ready" stormwater pollution prevention initiative for Riverside County that spans 27 cities and three watersheds: Middle Santa Ana River, Santa Margarita, and Whitewater River watersheds.

Love Your Neighborhood is a pollution prevention initiative administered by the Western Riverside Council of Governments (WRCOG) and supported through a sponsorship with Riverside County Watershed Protection Program (RCWPP) and Riverside County Flood Control (RCFC) to meet compliance objectives with the MS4 Permits and other mandates related to solid waste, recycling, and household hazardous waste that align with WRCOG's mission and support existing programs. Quantifiable results will be tracked for litter removal and other behaviors that support mandates set by state agencies including CalRecycle and the California Regional Water Quality Control Boards.

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAM OVERVIEW

PROGRAM GOALS:

1. To increase pollution awareness and its impact on the environment through local cleanup efforts coordinated by partner cities and local agencies.
2. To empower cities, community groups, and residents to conduct their own cleanup events to help minimize stormwater pollution in our watersheds.

KEY ISSUES:

The program focuses on 4 issues:

Litter

Whether intentional or not, any trash that has been thrown anywhere other than the trash bin is considered litter and can result in impacts on our waterways.

Recycling

Properly recycling single-use products (i.e., coffee k-cups, plastic grocery bags, water bottles) creates less trash that will likely end up in a storm drain that leads to our ocean.

Household Hazardous Waste (HHW)

Many everyday items are considered HHW and can only be disposed of at HHW centers so that they don't harm the health of our communities and the environment.

Overwatering

Overwatering can cause runoff, which picks up pollutants and carries them to our storm drains that lead to our waterways.

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAM OVERVIEW

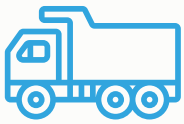
CLEANUP TOOLKIT OVERVIEW:

This toolkit aims to help you kickstart your own cleanup! Included within this packet are convenient step-by-step directions from the planning phase of the cleanup to sharing your impact after the cleanup. You'll have all of the materials you need to lead and promote your cleanup so others will want to join your clean waterways movement!

HOW TO ORGANIZE A CLEANUP

BEFORE THE CLEANUP:

PICK A LOCATION, DATE & TIME:
This could be a lake, waterway, or an inland location. Make sure that it is safe and accessible for volunteers. Check with the local state park for permission.



COME UP WITH A TRASH DISPOSAL PLAN:
Contact a commercial business, Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) facility, or transfer station to see if they would be willing to let you dispose of your collected trash from the cleanup in their dumpsters. You can also contact your city for additional disposal options. For a sample call script, see the Appendix.

CONTACT VOLUNTEERS:
For examples of volunteers you could contact and sample email templates and scripts, see the Appendix.

ACQUIRE CLEANUP SUPPLIES:
Plan ahead and gather the materials that you need to keep the cleanup organized and safe for volunteers:

- Gloves (reusable garden/work gloves are best!)
- Trash claws (for picking up trash)
- Trash bags

HOW TO ORGANIZE A CLEANUP

DURING THE CLEANUP:

HAVE A CHECK-IN LOCATION:

Create a designated check-in spot so that cleanup volunteers know where to meet and gather their cleanup supplies.

PROVIDE SNACKS TO KEEP YOUR TEAM MOTIVATED:

If feasible, provide light snacks (i.e., granola bars, tangerines, and water). Contact local establishments like markets to see if they would be willing to donate snacks. Bonus points if you can bring a large jug of water and encourage your volunteers to bring reusable water bottles!

GO OVER SAFETY PROTOCOL & OTHER PROCEDURES:

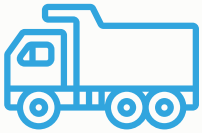
Emphasize that volunteers wear gloves and be mindful of sharp or other potentially hazardous discarded materials (i.e., needles). Review the safety checklist in the Appendix.

COLLECT DATA:

- Take “before” and “after” photos of the cleanup
- Track the type and quantities of trash they collect (trash versus recycling)

HOW TO ORGANIZE A CLEANUP

AFTER THE CLEANUP:



TAKE TRASH TO PRE-DETERMINED DUMP SITE:

Have your designated volunteer trash haulers help you transport the waste from the cleanup to the dump site that you secured when doing outreach to local commercial businesses.

THANK YOUR VOLUNTEERS:

Send out an email after the event to thank your volunteers for their help. Let them know the event outcome and how much trash you collectively gathered (how many bags were collected and the size of the bags (i.e., 5-gallon bag)).

SHARE YOUR IMPACT:

Encourage your participants to share the cleanup results that you share with them! Sharing your results from the cleanup will help inspire others to take action to prevent stormwater pollution.

APPENDIX

CLEANUP CHECKLIST:

Access this link for a checklist to help keep you organized and track your progress.
Please make a copy of this spreadsheet before filling it in.

SAFETY CHECKLIST:

Access the second tab in the spreadsheet provided above to help volunteers be aware of safety practices and procedures.

APPENDIX

LIST OF GROUPS TO CONTACT:

Spread the word to get people to join your cleanup movement!

Potential groups in your community you can contact:

- Your friends and family!
- Boy/Cub Scouts
- Girl Scouts
- Church groups
- Boys and Girls Club
- Service organizations
- Rotary

Potential types of businesses you could contact:

- Larger hardware/home improvement stores
- Household hazardous waste (HHW) facilities
- Waste transfer stations
- Riverside County Department of Waste Resources
    - General contact information: Waste-Volunteer@rivco.org or 951-486-3200
    - Love Your Neighborhood program: info@loveyourneighborhood.us

APPENDIX

EMAIL SCRIPT FOR CONTACTING VOLUNTEER GROUPS:

Hi [NAME OF VOLUNTEER GROUP CONTACT],

My name is [NAME]. I'm partnering with the Love Your Neighborhood program to organize a local cleanup to help protect our waterways. I'm looking for volunteers who would want to participate in this event which would be at [LOCATION] on [DATE] at [TIME]. Would anyone from your group be interested in joining or helping out?

Please let me know.

Thank you for your help!

[NAME]

APPENDIX

CALL SCRIPT FOR CONTACTING A COMMERCIAL BUSINESS:

Hi,

My name is [NAME]. I'm organizing a local cleanup to help protect our waterways and we're looking for a place where we can dump our trash after the cleanup. I was wondering if you could direct me to a manager.

They direct you to a manager - Great, thank you!

Hi, my name is [NAME]. I'm partnering with the Love Your Neighborhood program to organize a local cleanup to help protect our waterways and we're looking for a place where we can dump our trash after the cleanup.

We were wondering if you would be willing to let us use your dumpster to dispose of the trash that we collect.

If they seem unsure, offer to clean up their parking lot as well and/or mention that they could advertise that they have partnered with the local community to help prevent stormwater pollution (reference flyer in Appendix).

Thank you so much for your time and help!

APPENDIX

EMAIL SCRIPT FOR CONTACTING A COMMERCIAL BUSINESS:

Hi,

My name is [NAME]. I'm partnering with the Love Your Neighborhood program to organize a local cleanup to help protect our waterways and we're looking for a place where we can dump our trash after the cleanup.

We were wondering if you would be willing to let us use your dumpster to dispose of the trash that we collect. We would be more than willing to clean up your parking lot as well and you're welcome to advertise that you have partnered with us to help prevent stormwater pollution. Please feel free to use the flyer that we have attached.

Please let me know if you would be willing to let us dispose of our cleanup trash in your dumpster.

Thank you so much for your time and help!

Best,
[NAME]

APPENDIX

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POST:

FOR A DOWNLOADABLE COPY OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA FLYER, CLICK **HERE.**

Caption: We're partnering with the Love Your Neighborhood program to help reduce pollution in our waterways! Join our community cleanup at [INSERT LOCATION] on [INSERT DATE] at [INSERT TIME]. No experience is required. Light refreshments will be served. Interested in joining us or learning more about how you can help, DM me!

APPENDIX

SAMPLE FLYER FOR COMMERCIAL BUSINESSES:
TO DOWNLOAD THE FOLLOWING FLYER, CLICK **HERE.**

APPENDIX

VOLUNTEER THANK YOU EMAIL:

Hi,

Thank you for helping make the cleanup at [LOCATION] possible! As a group, we protected our local waterways from the following amount of trash and recyclables:

- # of trash bags filled with nonrecyclables:
- # of trash bags filled with recyclables:

Share the great news and your impact with others on social media so we can motivate more people to take action to prevent stormwater pollution!

Thanks for joining in our efforts to make a difference,

[NAME]

Thanks for taking the initiative to prevent trash from entering storm drains and harming our waterways!
Love Your Neighborhood