

Litter Cleanup Activities – Safety First

This document is designed to provide guidance to individuals wishing to pick up trash and litter in their community. First and foremost, thank you for beautifying your neighborhood and community by picking up trash and litter. Your safety is of utmost concern and should be your primary consideration when deciding if it is safe to pick up litter.

Is it OK to volunteer and pick up litter in my community?

This is a personal decision that only you can make, and the following identifies factors you should consider and exercise when making your decision:

1. **Keep yourself safe** – Wear a safety vest and pay attention to traffic and other conditions around you while collecting litter or trash. Stay aware of your surroundings at all times, and avoid distractions such as being on your phone while walking or near traffic.
2. **Avoid personal injury** – Only pick up litter or trash that you can individually manage. Don't exceed your physical weight lifting limitations. Report any hazardous materials, weapons, or medical waste to local officials for safe removal.
3. **Stay hydrated and energized** – Bring water and snacks as needed. Single-serve packaging is recommended.
4. **Minimize physical contact with litter** – Use a litter grabber and/or protective work gloves to protect yourself from cuts, scrapes, and any contaminant on the collected litter or trash.
5. **Keep your hands away from your face** – During and after collecting litter, avoid touching your face with gloved hands or hands that have not been washed.
6. **Secure the collected materials** – Place collected litter in closable plastic bags or trash containers with secure lids. Minimize handling and transfer of materials where possible.

Post-Cleanup Activities

- a. If you used litter collection equipment, such as a grabber or bucket, wipe it down prior to storage.
- b. Carefully remove gloves and other protective clothing. If you plan to reuse your safety vest, gloves, or other clothing, wash them in a washing machine with regular detergent.
- c. Wash and sanitize your hands thoroughly.