Partners in Parks program
Short-term stewardship activity: Litter cleanup in a park

Help remove litter. See the difference your efforts can make!

Lend a helping hand by removing litter from your neighbourhood parks and trails in Waterloo from May to October, through the Partners in Parks program. If you’re over 18 and interested in organizing a park cleanup, fill out our online form for a short-term stewardship activity one month in advance, and receive supplies and support.

Or celebrate Earth Day (April 22) as we work together to remove litter from Waterloo’s parks and trails during our annual city-wide cleanup, last weekend in April.

For more information, visit: Earth Day Community Cleanup.

Group Leader Responsibilities
Adult group leaders register their cleanup and follow the guidelines below.

Day of event:
• prior to the start of your cleanup, review the safety guidelines outlined on this information sheet (see reverse side) with all participants
• ensure participants are wearing personal protective equipment and use acceptable tools
• collect signed waivers (Informed Consent Agreement) from all adult participants

During event:
• deposit full “Only cure for litter is you” red garbage bags and large items beside existing garbage cans in the park usually located at the trail entrance
• clean and empty recyclables can be included with your household curbside collection

After the event:
• Within 24 hours, complete the online Community Cleanup results form so that garbage can be removed promptly and any dangerous items responded to
• Return participant waivers via email or drop off in a labelled envelope to the Waterloo Service Centre during business hours (Monday to Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)
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SAFETY GUIDELINES

All participants involved in a community litter cleanup activity through the City of Waterloo’s Partners in Parks program must review and understand the safety guidelines outlined below:

- abide by all provincial and Public Health Ontario COVID-19 guidelines; on the day of the event, maintain a minimum of 2m between yourself and others (wear a face covering if that is not possible), practice diligent hand hygiene, and self-isolate in accordance with the Ministry of Health guidelines if you are not feeling well, have someone in your household who is unwell, or have been otherwise advised to self-isolate.
- suspend activities when weather conditions become inclement (e.g. thunderstorms).
- wear personal protective equipment (closed-toe footwear, cloth gloves, long pants/sleeves).
- acceptable tools: plastic garbage nippers and provided red garbage bags and cloth gloves.
- this activity requires moderate physical exertion such as bending, lifting up to 20 lbs and walking on uneven terrain and within natural areas.
- be aware of potential risks in natural areas such as uneven ground, branch/tree failure, exposure to stinging insects or plants (e.g. Giant hogweed, stinging nettle, poison ivy), and unstable or slippery ground near wetlands, creeks, stormwater management ponds.
- only pick-up litter - leave organic yard waste such as leaves, twigs, tree limbs and other plant material on the ground.
- avoid picking up dangerous or heavy, large items and record them on reporting form:
  - **Sharps** include any device having rigid corners or edges or projections capable of causing a cut, puncture or abrasion. Sharps include but is not limited to hypodermic needles/syringes, blades, pointed edged tools, knives, scalpels, probes, sharp metal, broken glass or clinical glass (possibly contaminated with blood, bodily fluids or chemicals).
  - **hazardous waste** - items that are corrosive, flammable, explosive or poisonous including paint products and coatings, asbestos, fluorescent tubes and bulbs, automotive-type fluids, batteries, propane tanks, medical waste, pressurized containers, garden and pest control products, smoke alarms, chemicals and flammable liquids.
  - farm or agricultural debris, large items that are heavy, bulky, difficult to grasp or unstable.

What to do with needles, graffiti or gathering places:

On the Community cleanup results form, indicate any dangerous items including active or abandoned campsites/shelters/forts so that trained City staff can address these concerns.

- if you find a **needle** in a city park, contact the City @ 519-886-1550 (during business hours) or sharpscleanup@waterloo.ca immediately. View our Safe needle disposal webpage.
- report any **graffiti** on park infrastructure (signs, playgrounds, benches, picnic tables, other structures) to the City @ 519-886-2310 or complete the Report an issue form.