

City of Rockville, Maryland
Adopt-A-Stream Guidelines

General Program Conditions

1. The City of Rockville encourages local businesses, civic organizations, watershed groups, academic institutions, scout groups and other neighborhood groups to adopt local streams for the purpose of managing litter along stream banks, shorelines and in waterways. Stream cleanups directly benefit us by enhancing the aesthetics of our natural areas, removing potential pollutants in our drinking water supply and removing potential mosquito breeding habitat (litter containing stagnant water such as cups, plastic bags, etc.). Stream cleanups also benefit aquatic plants and animals through improved habitat and water quality.
2. Adopting Groups are also encouraged to survey their stream section for signs of pollution or illegal dumping and report this to the City. Citizen reporting is often the only way many of these infrequent illegal discharges can ever be discovered and stopped.
3. Each Adopting Group must specify a Designated Representative to act as the point of contact with the City. The Adopting Group must include a participating adult of 18 years or older. Individuals under 18 years of age can participate in a stream cleanup if supervised by an adult. The City of Rockville requires one adult per six youth.
4. The Adopting Group and/or Designated Representative should walk the section of stream valley they plan to adopt prior to applying for the Adopt-A-Stream program to determine whether the site conditions are appropriate for the abilities of the group's members.
5. Adopting Groups agree to collect litter on both sides of the stream at least twice a year. The City recommends that groups conduct one cleanup in the late spring/early summer and one in the fall. Traditionally, the amount of litter is greatest during these times. And don't forget about cleaning the trash out of the upland areas! It won't take long for any trash found anywhere within the watershed to wind up in the stream.
6. The amount of time required to clean each section of stream will vary given the length of the stream section and the number of volunteers, but each stream cleanup typically lasts for 2 – 4 hours. (Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons are popular stream cleanup times!)
7. The Adopting Group is encouraged to adopt a stream for a period of at least one year. After that year, the Adopting Group may renew their designation and agreement, modify their designation (*choose a different stream section*), or terminate the agreement.
8. The Designated Representative must contact the City of Rockville at least one week before a scheduled cleanup. At that time, City staff will provide the Designated Representative with safety information, gloves, safety vests (if requested), trash bags for every participant and other support as needed.
9. Adopting Group participants shall not trespass on private property. Permission must be secured from the property owner before entering private property.

10. The adopting group will stockpile litter collected in a centralized location designated by the City of Rockville for subsequent removal by the City. The City encourages participants to separate and recycle materials to the maximum extent practical, recognizing that highly degraded collected materials would be unsuitable for recycling.
11. The City encourages Adopting Groups to coordinate cleanups with other regional events, such as Montgomery County Cleanup Day or the Potomac Watershed Cleanup Day.
12. The City of Rockville reserves the right to deny an adoption request or cancel the adoption agreement of any group.
13. Each adopting group participating in the Adopt-A-Stream Program, including all participants working under the auspices of the adopting group, must sign the “Informed Consent; Liability and Hold Harmless; Publicity Permission” form.
14. Note that the City of Rockville is a pre-approved organization with Montgomery County Public Schools, and as such students participating in the Adopt-A-Stream program may be eligible for Student Service Learning (SSL) hours. Please inform the City if there is to be any students performing SSL hours before the cleanup event takes place.