

Beautify Your Community This Fall

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Crisp autumn air will make anyone want to be outside and enjoying the seasons changing. Spring and Fall are the most opportune times of the year to work on making your yard and community appearance more inviting. Fall allows preparation for winter months ahead while spring invites us out of our “hibernation” to prepare and enjoy the incoming spring months. Organizing a community cleanup is a great way for community members and neighbors to make a change and show pride in their local community while improving the physical appearances.



Hosting a community clean-up campaign also helps improve the health of the community by eliminating habitation for rodents and insects to live, provides an avenue for residents to become more involved and show visible results and will create a good impression on visitors and potential employers. Organizing your Clean up campaign into seven areas will help make your campaign a successful event.

K-State Community Specialist Nadine Sigle & Former Community PRIDE Program Coordinator Daniel Kahl offer the following advise on how to plan and organize a successful Community Clean up.

1. Organize for success: A Clean-up effort should start with some planning and organizing from a group willing to take initiative to form a core planning committee. Those on the committee could include, but not limited to: Realtors, health professionals, parents, Chamber members, Elected officials, Local media, Civic/youth Organizations, Churches.
2. Plan for Clear Goals: Take photos to document and assist in prioritizing projects. Before and after photos are helpful if reporting is necessary to donated services or resources for the clean up effort. When Ranking projects, consider health, visual impact, safety, resources available to your effort and the likely hood of a successful project completion. K-State Research and Extension is an excellent resource to help in identifying areas of concerns.
3. Develop a plan: Develop a detailed plan that includes what projects are being completed and by who. Also include if there is a deadline for the completion of the project. If there are protentional cost involved in the clean up effort, develop a budget and where the financing or fundraising efforts may come from.
4. Advertise: A good advertising campaign will get others in the community excited to participate in the effort of the community beautification. Contact local media, post pictures and information to local social media stories as well as prepare flyers to be placed around town.
5. Volunteers: Be prepared to accommodate individuals that show up to assist after hearing about the project. Think of Friendships, family network, co-works, etc., that may provide resources or helpful contacts.
6. Execute your Project: The Safety of all volunteers should be the most important part of your execution. Depending on weather situations, have water and drinks available. Encourage workers to come appropriately dressed (Bright colors, appropriate shoes, etc.). Make sure all volunteers know where to take litter that is collected during the clean up effort.
7. Sustain the effort: Make sure to publicly thank all volunteers and cooperating businesses for their efforts in the clean-up. Recognizing a “Yard of the Week” or “Most Improved Property” are great ways to help sustain efforts. Use before and after photos to show the effect of the clean up and to keep the excitement of the beautification going long after the effort.

Find more information on conducting a Community Clean up in your community in “Conducting a Community Clean-up/Fix-up Campaign” publication from K-State Research & Extension found at <http://bit.ly/1HU7Bcq>, or contact Community Vitality Agent Amanda Clasen and amclasen@ksu.edu or any Southwind District Extension office. Make sure to join our Monthly e-newsletter for Health and Wellness at <http://bit.ly/southwindnews>