



# Nova Scotia Litter Handbook

**A guide to organizing your litter clean-up**

BROUGHT TO YOU BY





## ABOUT THE NOVA SCOTIA ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY PROGRAM

The Nova Scotia Adopt-A-Highway Program provides organizations, volunteer groups, and businesses the opportunity to contribute to our local communities and province by removing litter from roadsides or interchanges. In 1992, the Women's Institute of Nova Scotia, Lions Club of NS, Clean NS and Department of Transportation initiated the program as a pilot project. Starting with only 18 volunteer groups the

program has grown to over 170 groups, who have adopted more than 1000 km of NS roadways and 18 interchanges. In 2019, the Nova Scotia Adopt-A-Highway Program took over the delivery of Great Nova Scotia Pick-Me-Up Program. The new initiative means that the Adopt-A-Highway will be able to broaden their reach and remove even more litter from the province than ever before.

## ABOUT THE GREAT NOVA SCOTIA PICK-ME-UP

The Great Nova Scotia Pick-Me-Up is Nova Scotia's primary volunteer driven community clean-up program, facilitating clean-ups across the province. Since 1988, The Great Nova

Scotia Pick-Me-Up has been providing supplies and support to volunteers (individuals, groups, businesses, schools) to carry out community-based litter cleanups.

## CONTACT US

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**nspickmeup.ca**

T: 902-843-3553

E: [Litterprograms@divertns.ca](mailto:Litterprograms@divertns.ca)

Attention: Divert NS  
35 Commercial Street  
Truro, NS B2N 3H9

 [@NSPickMeUp](https://twitter.com/NSPickMeUp)

 [@NSPickMeUp](https://www.instagram.com/NSPickMeUp)

 [@NSPickMeUp](https://www.facebook.com/NSPickMeUp/) / [@NSAdoptAHighway](https://www.facebook.com/NSAdoptAHighway)

 [#NSPickMeUp](https://www.instagram.com/NSPickMeUp/) / [#NSAdoptAHighway](https://www.instagram.com/NSAdoptAHighway/)



# GREAT NOVA SCOTIA PICK-ME-UP CHECKLIST



## 3-4 WEEKS PRIOR

- identify any wildlife concerns in the area ..... *page 4*
- establish landowner permission at your site ..... *page 4*

## 2 WEEKS PRIOR

- review waste sorting requirements for your region. . . . *page 5*
- arrange for waste collection ..... *page 8*
- promote your event to rally participants ..... *page 4*  
(event poster provided with registration)

## 1 WEEK PRIOR

- visit site and identify safety concerns ..... *page 9*
- create and share a schedule for your clean-up day. . . . *page 6*
- prepare materials required for day of clean-up ..... *page 7*

## DAY OF CLEAN-UP

- review the health & safety protocols ..... *page 2 & 3*
- go over safety instructions with your group ..... *pages 9 - 13*
- be sure garbage is removed before you leave the site. . *page 6*
- fill out your data card and return it to  
the Adopt-A-Highway program ..... *page 6*

# STAYING HEALTHY

## STEER CLEAR OF HAZARDS

Make sure that you are aware of any potential hazards at your cleanup location. Don't take any unnecessary risks during your cleanup!



## SANITIZE FREQUENTLY

Bring sanitizer with you to the cleanup and have it readily accessible. Ensure that your sanitizer meets Health Canada standards.

Sanitize your hands frequently to avoid cross contamination. Remember to use enough sanitizer to cover the fronts and backs of both hands and between all your fingers and always rub your hands together until they feel dry.



## AVOID CROSS CONTAMINATION

Cross contamination is the process of unintentionally transferring pathogens from one surface to another. For instance, touching litter and then touching your phone without first removing gloves and sanitizing or washing your hands. Always be aware and avoid cross contamination.

## STAY HOME IF YOU ARE SICK



While we are happy you want to help, we require that if you are sick or if you have been directed to self-isolate to please stay home. And if you need to cough, cough into your shoulder or elbow, not your hand!



## CHECK THE WEATHER

Be sure to check the weather before your cleanup, and bring the proper clothing/supplies. For example: rain gear, sunscreen, wide-brimmed hats, extra layers.



## WASH HANDS

Remember to properly wash your hands as soon as possible after your cleanup.

## DO NOT TOUCH YOUR FACE



## MONITOR CHILDREN

Monitor children to ensure they are following safety precautions. Be sure to run through all safety precautions with your group before your cleanup begins. Give children time to ask questions!

## WEARING GLOVES



Please wear gloves during a litter cleanup. Using a grabber tool, while also wearing gloves, is strongly recommended.



# TYPES OF CLEAN-UPS AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS



Please consider the following precautions for these site-specific clean-ups.

## BEACH AND SHORELINE CLEAN-UPS

Please be aware of any wildlife in the area that may not appreciate your intrusion. Call the Department of Land and Forestry **(902) 424-5935** or Environment Canada **1-800-668-6767** to ensure that your activities will not be disruptive to native birds, such as plovers, and other animals in the area.

## ROADWAY CLEAN-UPS

To conduct a roadside clean-up, please contact us at **(902) 843-3553** and we will gladly help! More on roads: p.12, 13.

## LAKEFRONT AND RIVERFRONT CLEAN-UPS

Be mindful of private property. Lakes and rivers are home to various types of creatures so watch where you step and be careful when extracting litter that is half-buried in the sand. Supervise younger participants when working close to the water and avoid trekking along steep embankments that may result in injury.

## PARK CLEAN-UPS

Park clean-ups should be coordinated with the applicable park authorities. The park staff can provide information regarding park regulations or wildlife concerns and possibly offer assistance with equipment and supervision.

## OTHER FREQUENTED PUBLIC AREAS

Public areas such as vacant lots, downtown cores or cemeteries could be good clean-up locations. Try to anticipate any special considerations that might arise. These might include obtaining landowner permission, informing police/municipal departments, or following particular safety precautions.

## GREENING YOUR EVENT

Try your best to reduce the amount of garbage you produce at your clean-up event. Some fun ideas could include:

- Ask your group to walk, bike or take public transit if possible.
- During your event, try to minimize the amount of bags you use by collecting the garbage in buckets and combine them into bags at the end of the clean-up or when they are full.
- Instead of giving out bottled water, ask your group to bring their own reusable water bottles.
- To help reduce waste, participants could use reusable gloves instead of disposable ones. Always ensure that reusable gloves are properly cleaned.

# WASTE SORTING

## RECYCLING



Recyclable materials should be placed in a blue bag for collection. Materials must be clean and dry. Upon registration, your team will be provided with some blue bags. Contact your waste region (see *page 14*) or review recycling regulations for your community by visiting: [divertns.ca/recycling/sorting-guide](https://divertns.ca/recycling/sorting-guide)

## ITEMS NOT COLLECTED THROUGH GENERAL PICK UP

Some materials that you find during your clean-up are not accepted in general waste collection and may have to be transported to a designated depot in your region. The web links below provide disposal information local to your area. You can also find out more by contacting your waste region (*page 14*).

## ELECTRONICS

The Electronic Products Recycling Association – Nova Scotia (EPRA – NS) is responsible for operating an electronic recycling program for consumers and businesses. To review which electronics cannot be disposed of in regular garbage, as well as the location of designated drop-off depots, visit [recyclemyelectronics.ca/ns](https://recyclemyelectronics.ca/ns) or call your local waste region (*page 14*). Residents can now take **ALL BATTERIES** to a **Call2Recycle** drop-off location for disposal (including rechargeable and single-use batteries). Visit [call2recycle.ca](https://call2recycle.ca) to find the drop-off site nearest you.

## TIRES

Nova Scotians can return up to four regulated tires at any time to any tire retailer in the province for free. For more information, visit [divertns.ca/recycling/what-goes-where/tires](https://divertns.ca/recycling/what-goes-where/tires)

## PAINT CANS AND HAZARDOUS WASTE

All of the waste regions in the province have Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Depots. You can contact your waste region (*page 14*) or visit [divertns.ca/recycling/sorting-guide](https://divertns.ca/recycling/sorting-guide) to learn more and/or find a HHW depot near you. Please note that safety precautions for hazardous waste are included on page 8. Nova Scotians can return leftover paint at any **ENVIRO-DEPOT** facility across the province, free of charge.

# HOW TO CARRY OUT YOUR CLEAN-UP



**Choose a rallying point and start time** where participants can pick up their materials and receive specific instructions and safety tips. Thank them on behalf of Nova Scotia Adopt-A-Highway for helping to make our beautiful province cleaner and healthier.

**Collect data.** Assign your participants to fill out data cards and record the types of items being found.

**Choose an end time** to gather in the same spot following the clean-up to talk about the kinds of waste that were found so that you can properly fill out your data card. Alternatively, copy the data card and give one to each cleaning team (collect the sheets after the clean-up and collate the responses onto one sheet).

Once the garbage has been picked up and participants are filling out the data sheet, be sure to **weigh your garbage**. You can use a household or spring scale, or try comparing the weight of individual bags to regular items (eg. a bag of sugar = 2kg). Other ideas include having the bags or large items weighed at pick-up or when dropping them off at the landfill. You can also look up weight estimates for large items (e.g. tire = 22lbs).

**Take photos** if you can and (with permission from your participants) email them to [info@nsadoptahighway.ca](mailto:info@nsadoptahighway.ca) or to your local newspaper with a description of the photo. If your photos are online,

please send us a link so we can share your success. Please post 'before and after' photos of your clean-up location and post to social media using the hashtag [@EBU? Wb](https://twitter.com/EBU?Wb)

*Any photos submitted to Adopt-A-Highway may be used on social media, our website or for promotional purposes. Please note, by submitting your photos, you are consenting to Adopt-A-Highway's use of the photos for promotional and communications purposes.*

**Thank your participants!** Always tell your participants they are doing a great job throughout the clean-up process to let them know their work is appreciated and important.

Ensure all the **garbage is removed** from your clean-up location or keep an eye on it while you wait for it to be collected.

Send your **completed data card** to the Adopt-A-Highway office as soon as possible after your clean-up. Do your best to fill in all of the the blanks. Each clean-up team will be provided a data card that can be printed off for the event and then mailed to 35 Commercial St., Suite 400, Truro, NS B2N 3H9 or emailed to [info@nsadoptahighway.ca](mailto:info@nsadoptahighway.ca). Alternatively, teams can fill out their data forms electronically by visiting [nspickmeup.ca](http://nspickmeup.ca).





## LIST OF ITEMS YOU MAY NEED

- hand sanitizer
- gloves
- sunscreen
- drinking water, snacks
- hats
- first aid kit
- approved sharps container (see page 8)
- map of the area
- camera to capture your clean-up fun!
- vehicle (preferably a truck) to collect bags and take them to one location
- pliers
- buckets
- shovels
- wheelbarrow
- prizes (for most bags collected, most unusual item, etc.)
- clipboards and pens to collect data
- scale to weigh your garbage

# WASTE COLLECTION

**Disposal of waste after the clean-up is the responsibility of the team coordinator. We advise the team coordinator to make arrangements at least two weeks prior to the clean-up. Please do not abandon the garbage expecting someone else to collect it.**

## PUT WASTE IN ITS PLACE!

Contact your local municipality or waste region, at least two weeks prior, for garbage disposal options as practices vary slightly from region to region. See *page 14* for your local contact.

## LARGE OR DANGEROUS WASTE

Do not attempt to lift heavy objects such as car parts or refrigerators. Make a note of their whereabouts and Inform your waste region. If the object(s) are roadside please contact the road 'owner' such as the NS Department of Public Works (PW), Town or HRM (see *page 14*).

## CURBSIDE COLLECTIONS

**PLACE IT CURBSIDE:** Garbage and recycling can always be disposed of by dividing it among participants and placing it curbside with household waste. *Please note: This material will count toward the current bag limit per single unit household.*

**LABEL IT:** When putting your collected litter curbside, remember to always tag it as litter.

## HAZARDOUS & DANGEROUS WASTE

Watch out for potentially dangerous waste such as poisons, needles and syringes, insecticides and broken glass. Make a note of their whereabouts and inform your waste region. If the object(s) are roadside please contact the road 'owner' such as the NS Department of Public Works (PW), Town or HRM (see *page 14*).

## ILLEGAL DUMPSITES

Regardless of the area, if you come across an area that you believe to be an illegal dumpsite please report it to your waste region (*see page 14*).



# SAFE CLEAN-UP PRACTICES



**Prior to your clean-up, please review the following safe clean-up practices. Please note that the safety of participants is the responsibility of the team coordinator and we encourage teams to carry their own liability insurance.**

- The team coordinator should provide a briefing to all participants regarding rules, collecting useful data, and safety precautions.
- The team coordinator should complete a visit of the site, prior to the time of the clean-up, to identify any areas of risk such as railway tracks, street traffic, presence of dangerous litter items, steep areas, holes, uneven terrain, etc.
- The team coordinator should ensure that a basic first aid kit containing surgical dressings, antiseptic and bandages is available. The team coordinator can also ask participants who are medically trained to make themselves known.
- Wear bright or reflective clothing.
- Make sure everyone is dressed for the weather, with close-toed shoes and gloves.
- Student and youth events should be supervised by an adult with first aid certification.
- Only clean where you feel safe.
- Use caution near the water's edge. Keep non-swimmers away from water, avoid slippery surfaces and check water levels and high-tide schedules before the clean-up.
- Have a cellular phone on site to call **9-1-1** in the event of an accident or emergency.
- Never reach into areas, such as bushes or groundcover, which you cannot see into clearly.
- Used condoms should only be picked up using tongs and while wearing gloves. Do not touch the condom directly with bare hands.
- Needles and syringes should be left where they are and their location reported to the team coordinator. Used needles and syringes belong in an approved sharps container, not the garbage! (see page 8).



# PICK UP FOR FITNESS

## **Your clean-up is an opportunity to get outside and be active!**

Completing regular clean-ups is a great way to improve and maintain your cardiovascular health. Here are some tips to help you keep your body feeling good during and after your clean-up!

### **TIPS:**

- Always warm up with light to moderate acrobatic exercise before stretching. You will thank yourself later!
- Stretching is an essential part of everyone's exercise program that should never be ignored. As you age, you'll be glad you stretched! If you have a pre-existing back condition, exercise #5 on the next page should be omitted. When in doubt, please consult your doctor.
- Parking your car further from the clean-up site is an excellent addition to your warm-up.
- Listen to what your body is telling you. Take breaks as needed, and always stop, rest, and rehydrate if you start to feel sore during your clean-up.

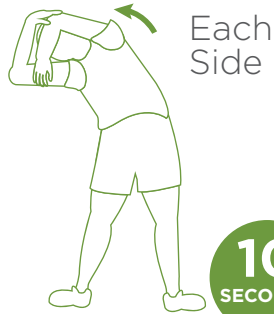
Below are some stretches to keep you from feeling stiff during and after your activities.

1



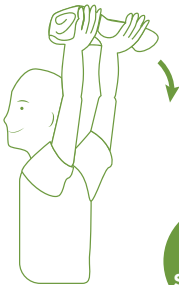
15  
SECONDS

2



10  
SECONDS

3



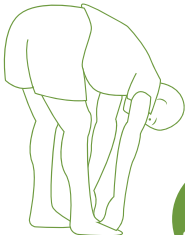
15  
SECONDS

4



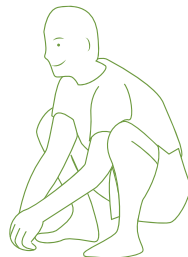
30  
SECONDS

5



20  
SECONDS

6



25  
SECONDS

# ROADWAY OFF LIMITS

SHOULDER



PICK UP VEHICLE

MUST BE 12 YEARS OR OLDER



All volunteers are required to wear safety vests.



Place full bags near but not on the shoulder.



Do not go on the shoulder of the road.



Ensure the correct adult to minor ratio is maintained at all times.

SHOULDER



Keep youngest participants furthest from the road.



Do not park on the shoulder of the road.

SHOULDER



DROP OFF VEHICLE



Have a First Aid Kit on site.

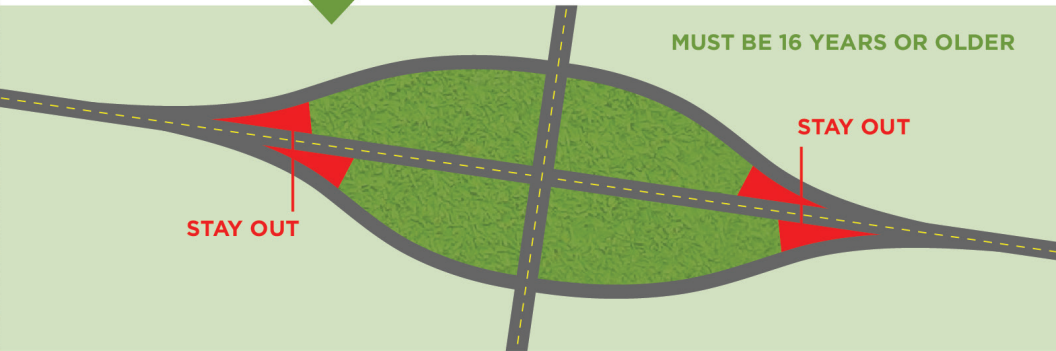


Ensure that the roadside litter cleanup permit is onsite.

## ← PROVINCIAL ROADWAY

- Volunteers completing a roadway cleanup must be 12 years of age or older to participate. Every six participants aged 12-17 require one adult supervisor 18 years of age or older.
- No roadside litter clean-up is to be performed until all volunteers are wearing safety vests which are approved by the authority that maintains that stretch of roadway, such as the Nova Scotia Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal or the Halifax Regional Municipality.
- All participants should maintain an awareness of the traffic and work in such a way to limit having their backs to the traffic.
- An adult supervisor should always work between the outside edge of the shoulder and the children participating in the cleanup, with the youngest participants working furthest from the road.
- A safety meeting must take place prior to the cleanup to review safety rules and guidelines.
- If in doubt - flag it! Any suspicious or unfamiliar objects should be flagged and left alone. This is particularly true for medical waste of any kind.
- Park all vehicles clear of the roadway; parking on the same side of the road as the cleanup area reduces the need to cross the road.
- Carpooling is a great way to minimize the number of vehicles at the worksite

## INTERCHANGE ↓



- Stay within the green area and avoid the area highlighted in red.
- Ensure that every volunteer has signed the cleanup permit and that it is onsite.
- Volunteers completing an interchange cleanup must be 16 years of age or older. Every six participants aged 16-18 require one adult supervisor 19 years of age or older.
- Always check with the Department of Public Works (PW) for the best practices for your interchange
- The approved cleaning area may change depending on the Interchange itself; always abide by the local PW's guidelines if they differ.

# IMPORTANT CONTACTS

Please reach your solid waste management contact below for information on how to properly dispose of litter in your area.

## REGION 1

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Cape Breton Regional Municipality	902-563-5593
Inverness, Richmond, Port Hawkesbury	902-787-2177
Victoria	902-295-3144

## REGION 2

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Antigonish/Guysborough	1-888-377-9622 or 902-870-0788
Pictou	902-396-1495

## REGION 3

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Cumberland	902-667-5141 or 1-888-711-5925
Colchester	902-895-4777
East Hants	1-888-873-3332

## REGION 4

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Halifax Regional Municipality	902-476-2470 or wasteless@halifax.ca
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## REGION 5

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Kings/Annapolis	902-679-1325 or 1-877-927-8300
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## REGION 6

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District of Chester	902-275-2330
Lunenburg	902-634-8992 ext. 246
Bridgewater/Mahone Bay/District of Lunenburg	902-543-2991
Queens Municipality	902-354-3455
Shelburne and surrounding area	902-875-5336
Barrington and surrounding area	902-637-2015
West Hants Region	902-798-8391 ext. 128

## REGION 7

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Digby/Yarmouth County	902-742-1312 or 1-800-569-0039
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Nova Scotia Environment	1-800-565-1633
Adopt-A-Highway	902-843-3553
Marine Explosives (flares)	Call your local RCMP station
Department of Land & Forestry	1-902-424-5935
Environment Canada	1-800-668-6767
NS Department of Public Works	1-888-432-3233



# CLEAN-UP TEAM COORDINATOR NOTES

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GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY



PROGRAM BY

