

ADOPT-A-SPOT and ADOPT-A-CREEK

Program Information

The **Adopt-A-Spot / Adopt-A-Creek Program** is a partnership between the Alameda County Public Works Agency and its residents and merchants.

This Program is designed to enable individuals, community groups, businesses, churches, schools and other organizations to play an active role in maintaining the beauty and cleanliness of their neighborhoods, while allowing them to set their own schedule. This is also a great opportunity for students to obtain community service hours.

Volunteers, including school age children under the supervision of an adult, come together for projects such as removing litter from roadways, sidewalks, and, when approved, creek trails. Adopt-A-Spot/Adopt-A-Creek projects can also include removing weeds and other unwanted vegetation, painting over graffiti, and maintaining plants and wildlife habitat.

Adopted areas include County streets, County-owned vacant land, and some creeks and flood control channels, where ACPWA staff have determined it's safe for volunteers to work.

Other adoptable areas include storm drain inlets, gutters, and sidewalks. Removal of debris in these areas are particularly important prior to and during winter storms to ensure proper storm water runoff and help prevent localized flooding.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US:

- Safety gear – orange vests, gloves, trash grabbers and safety glasses – for your estimated number of participants annually.
- One color of paint, rollers, and basic painting supplies for graffiti abatement.
- Free trash bags and disposal of the trash you collect.
- You're encouraged to separate recyclables and take them with you.
- Installation of signs recognizing you and/or your group.
- Technical assistance with authorized and approved planting projects.

RECOGNITION SIGNS:

Your participation in the Adopt-a-Spot/Creek Program facilitates clean and attractive areas within your community. The Public Works Agency may install signs near project locations recognizing individuals or groups.

- Signage may vary in size according to the location.
- Recognition signs are limited to your group's name and/or logo*. No products, phone numbers or addresses may be identified. (*You will need to provide weather-proof decals of your organization's standardized logo for inclusion on the sign.)
- The decision to place signs, the sign size, and sign location are at the sole discretion of Alameda County.

WHAT WE EXPECT FROM YOU:

- Each volunteer should understand and conform to the provisions noted on the form or in discussions.
- Provide a copy of the safety requirements to each participant.
- Conduct a safety meeting and discussion before you begin your project.
- Each work group must have a copy of the application and safety requirements with them on the work site.
- All participants are required to sign and return a Hold Harmless Release.
 - The Public Works Agency does not require insurance for volunteers.
- Follow all safety requirements.

SAFETY & CLOTHING:

This program depends on the common sense and responsibility of individual participants.

❖ GENERAL SAFETY

- Do not do anything that you think is possibly dangerous. Make a note of the items or locations of concern (use a cell phone camera) and contact us at 510-670-5500. Be safe!
- For emergencies, call Alameda County Sheriff at 510-667-7721 or 911.
- Use gloves and trash grabbers to pick up trash.
- Wear long pants, orange safety vests, and sturdy leather shoes or boots with ankle support when working.
- Avoid breathing in the dust when you are moving leaf debris or mulch or have allergies.
- Never wear open-toed shoes or short shorts.
- Light colored clothing, long sleeve shirts and sunscreen are strongly suggested.
- Collect all tools and equipment early. Stop work before sunset.
- No work shall be performed on rainy days or when stream flow is high.
- Bring and drink lots of water. Take breaks.
- Do NOT consume alcoholic beverages or drugs before or while during work.
- Do NOT run, throw objects or engage in horseplay.
- Always sweep, rake or shovel glass. Never pick up sharp objects with your hands.
- Always place broken glass or sharp objects in a bucket using a trash grabber.
- Do NOT try to compact trash bags. Injuries from broken or jagged objects may occur.
- Do NOT use power tools.

❖ HAZARDOUS OR MEDICAL WASTE

- **NEVER TOUCH HAZARDOUS OR MEDICAL WASTE!!!** Hazardous waste may include but is not limited to powder chemicals, smelly substances, suspicious packages, chemical drums or containers, car batteries, weapons, syringes or hypodermic needles, and dead animals.
- Call Alameda County Fire at (925) 422-7595 to report hazardous or medical waste.

❖ TRAIL SAFETY

- Watch for bike and pedestrian traffic on the trail.
- Stay clear of homeless encampments.
- Do not leave tools or trash bags on the trail. Set them to the side of the trail.

❖ TRAFFIC SAFETY

- When possible, stay on the sidewalk. Never walk in the street.
- When working in or around a gutter, work from the sidewalk.
- Exit and enter your vehicle on the side away from traffic when possible.
- Walk and work facing oncoming traffic when possible.
- Cross streets at signals or crosswalks, not mid-block.
- Do NOT enter tunnels or drainage culverts.

❖ WORKING NEAR WATERWAYS

- Always work with a partner when near water.
- Never walk through the creeks or channels.
- Watch for blackberry thorns, hypodermic needles and syringes, stinging insects, snakes and poisonous plants like poison oak.
- Watch your footing on slopes, drainage facilities, and other places you may fall.
- Never allow children to work on slopes or near drainage facilities without adult supervision.
- Do NOT drink or swallow water found in the creek.
- Wash your hands with antibacterial soap after performing work activities.
- Wash your clothes separately and in cold water after performing work activities.

❖ TOOL SAFETY

- Carry tools carefully to avoid hitting others.
- Never allow children to play with tools or to use sharp tools.
- Always keep your tools close to you.
- Clean your tools after use.

HOW TO ADOPT A SPOT/CREEK:

- Select the location and develop a plan for the type of work you would like to do, including any plans for planting.
- Complete an “Adopt a Spot/Creek” application and submit the form (Forms are available online at www.acpwa.org).
- Discuss location and project plans with an Alameda County Public Works Adopt-A-Spot/Creek Coordinator.
- After the application is approved, notify Alameda County five days before each work event.
- Review and follow all safety requirements.
- Perform all work satisfactorily.
- Call the Maintenance and Operations Department at (510) 670-5500 to arrange removal of all trash and debris bags filled (either in advance or after completion of your work.)

ALAMEDA COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS ADOPT-A-SPOT / ADOPT -A-CREEK

VOLUNTEER SERVICE HOLD HARMLESS RELEASE AGREEMENT

Adopt-A-Spot / Adopt-A-Creek is a Public Works Agency program to encourage individuals, neighborhood groups, civic organizations and businesses to play an active role in beautifying and maintaining their neighborhoods. Volunteers, including school age children under the supervision of an adult, are being recruited to clean creeks and flood control channels in need of ongoing attention. All volunteers will be instructed in safety requirements before they participate.

I, the undersigned, being of lawful age or the parent or legal guardian of the volunteer involved in the Alameda County Adopt-A-Spot / Adopt-A-Creek Program (hereinafter referred to as "Program"), in consideration of being allowed to participate in the Program, I hereby release and discharge for myself, my marital community, heirs, executors and assigns, release acquire, and forever discharge Alameda County, a political subdivision of the State of California, and Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, a body corporate and politic, and their officers, agents and employees from any and all actions, causes of action, claims of any other thing whatsoever on account of or in any way related to or arising out of my participation in the program.

I, the undersigned, further understand that Alameda County, Alameda County Public Works Agency, Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, and the officers, agents, and employees of these entities, shall not be liable for any death, injury, illness, or property damage claim which arises from my participation in the Adopt-A-Spot or Adopt-A-Creek Program. If any claim arises out of the foregoing, I agree to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless Alameda County, Alameda County Public Works Agency, Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, their officers, agents, and employees.

Further, I assume liability for any non-participants who accompany me.

PARTICIPANT'S NAME: _____
(Please print)

PARTICIPANT'S AGE: _____

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN:

DATE: _____

Send completed form to: adopt-a-spot@acpwa.org