



ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY PROGRAM

CHIPPEWA COUNTY



The Chippewa County Highway Department has developed an Adopt-A-Highway program, which allows organizations (or groups) to volunteer and support the County and State anti-litter efforts. State Adopt-A-Highway Program details can be found at: <https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/real-estate/roadsides/adopt-hwy/default.aspx>

Purpose

The program offers groups an inexpensive project that gives its members the satisfaction of making a contribution to their community and their state. At the same time, the Adopt-A-Highway program generates publicity for the group's service activities while assisting the public in keeping our highways clean and aesthetically pleasing.

Application Process

Interested organizations may obtain Adopt-A-Highway application materials from the Chippewa County Highway Department Administrative Assistant during regular business hours. Any organized group may volunteer to participate; however, partisan political groups are not permitted. Application materials can be requested in person, by emailing highwayadmin@co.chippewa.wi.us, or by calling (715) 726-7916.

The Highway Department is able to provide application materials, which includes:

- a) A detailed description of the Adopt-A-Highway program and requirements.
- b) A list of open highway segments for the Adopt-A-Highway program in the area that is not already taken.
- c) An application form that must be completed and returned to the Highway Department for approval.

Approval Process

The Chippewa County Highway Department will review the completed application materials and each qualified group will be assigned a minimum two-mile segment of county highway for litter control. The Highway Department then provides further instructions, including a training video highlighting safety instructions. The approved application serves as the permit to work within the highway right-of-way.

Signage

A permanent sign, with the group's name, will be placed at the beginning and end of the highway segment. The sign announces to the motoring public the group's sponsorship for litter control. Each group may request the name (or acronyms) that will appear on the signs. Up to three (3) lines and 12 characters per line will be allowed. The Chippewa County Highway Department reserves the editorial right to work with sponsors to revise group names and/or acronyms to fit most appropriately on the signs or that might be offensive to the general public.

Adopt-A-Highway Program Requirements

The Adopt-A-Highway program is intended to provide an opportunity for groups to participate and contribute to the overall beautification of the County. There are, however, requirements that must be followed to maintain good standing. These requirements include the following:

Annual Requirements

- 1) The group is to pick-up litter on its designated highway segment at least three (3) times a year between April 1 and November 1 and notify the Highway Department Administrative Assistant (highwayadmin@co.chippewa.wi.us) one week prior to each scheduled pickup day so bags can

be picked up in a timely manner. Administrative Assistant will also document activity so the segment is not lost to a new applicant due to non-participation.

- 2) The organization may retain their designated highway section if they are in compliance with all the Adopt-A-Highway Requirements. Approved permits are effective indefinitely or until Chippewa County Highway Department Administrative Assistant receives completed abandonment form or written notice.

Age and Supervision Requirements

- 1) All workers must be at least 11 years of age or in the 6th grade to participate in the roadside clean up.
- 2) The group will be required to provide one (1) adult supervisor for every five (5) to six (6) workers. This adult supervisor will be designated as the crew chief and will be responsible for reviewing safety guidelines with entire work group before start of pick up.
- 3) The crew chief should keep the workers together as a team and is responsible to enforce all safety rules.
- 4) The crew chief should know where the nearest telephone is located and it is recommended that the crew chief carry a cell phone if possible.
- 5) Only eligible, group volunteers should be in the designated roadside cleanup area. No other persons should be on the work site.

Safety Requirements

- 1) The group needs to emphasize safety at all times when traveling to/from the designated Adopt-A-Highway segment and when working in the roadside cleanup area.
 - a. All workers are required to review the training/safety video located on the State of Wisconsin Department of Transportation website (<https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/real-estate/roadsides/adopt-hwy/safety.aspx>). Review of the video should be completed by the group annually and should be shown to any new volunteers before participating in a cleanup session.
 - b. Group (crew chief) will attach “people working” signs on the permanent sign posts, located at both the beginning and end of the work area. Signs shall be removed at completion of litter pickup.
 - c. The group (crew chief) will hold a safety meeting at the beginning of each clean-up day. This meeting is intended to ensure each person is fully aware of the safety precautions and that everyone is as protected as possible. This meeting should take place prior to arriving at the designated highway cleanup area.
 - d. **All workers are required to wear safety vests at all times.** Hiking boots or shoes with thick soles, are recommended to prevent foot injuries from any sharp objects. Additional items that are recommended include work gloves, sunscreen, baseball caps or wide-brimmed hats, long sleeve shirts, and long pants.
 - e. The group is not to work in potentially dangerous areas including the pavement (traveled way), shoulders, medians, bridges, tunnels, overpasses, and steep slopes.
 - f. The group should only conduct a cleanup session during daylight hours and when adequate daylight is available. The group should not work during inclement weather.

- g. Group volunteers should avoid overexertion and everyone should know their physical condition and limitations. The crew chief should be aware of any special needs of any crewmembers.
- h. Group volunteers should stay alert for any potential hazards including snakes, stinging insects, ticks, poison ivy, mowing equipment, construction equipment, parked cars, other equipment, etc.
- i. Group volunteers should stay mentally alert while at the designated roadside cleanup area. No one should use headsets, stereos, or radios as this could distract volunteers and make it difficult to hear oncoming traffic. The number of accidents caused by distracted or inattentive drivers continues to increase – please be completely alert at all times and aware of your surroundings.)
- j. The group should bring plenty of water, especially on hot, humid days, and alcoholic beverages are not permitted at the designated roadside cleanup area.

Transportation to the Cleanup Area

- 1) The group should meet at a safe location prior to proceeding to the designated roadside cleanup area. This meeting location provides a good opportunity to conduct the safety meeting before traveling to and beginning the cleanup.
- 2) The groups should carpool to the designated roadside cleanup area and use as few vehicles as possible.
- 3) All vehicles should park parallel to the road and at least three (3) feet away from the pavement surface before unloading the group. All vehicles should park on the same side of the road that the group plans to work on. (See Figure 11 for an example).
- 4) Upon arriving at the cleanup area (see Figure 12), the group should open/place highway worker signs provided by the Highway Department at the beginning and end of the cleanup area. The signs should be attached to the permanent sign posts under the Adopt-A-Highway section signs. The signs are meant to alert on-coming traffic, from both directions, that workers are present.
- 5) The group should be driven to the opposite side of the highway when it is ready to switch sides. The crew chief should not allow any member of the crew to walk across the pavement to the opposite side of the highway without exercising proper safety precautions.
- 6) When the cleanup is complete, the group (crew chief) should take down/close the highway worker signs.

Handling the Litter

- 1) Group volunteers should not touch or pick-up anything that cannot be identified. Some materials may be hazardous (hazardous materials are commonly found in closed metal containers). These items should be flagged using the flags provided by the Highway Department and not removed.
- 2) The group should flag any item that they do not want to pick-up.
- 3) Do not overload the trash bags as this could cause the bag to break and make the pick-up more difficult.
- 4) The group may keep any recyclable materials that are collected. A trash bag may be used to remove these materials from the site.
- 5) Place filled trash bags at the designated pickup site. The Highway Department will collect the filled trash bags and flagged items from the designated roadside cleanup area.
- 6) Extra attention needs to be given to any hazardous waste or drug paraphernalia that may have been thrown in the ditches. DO NOT TOUCH or come close to any suspicious looking items. If you feel an item could be dangerous, please report it to Chippewa County Sheriff Department by calling 715-726-7701.

Figure 11 - Parking at the Roadside Cleanup Area

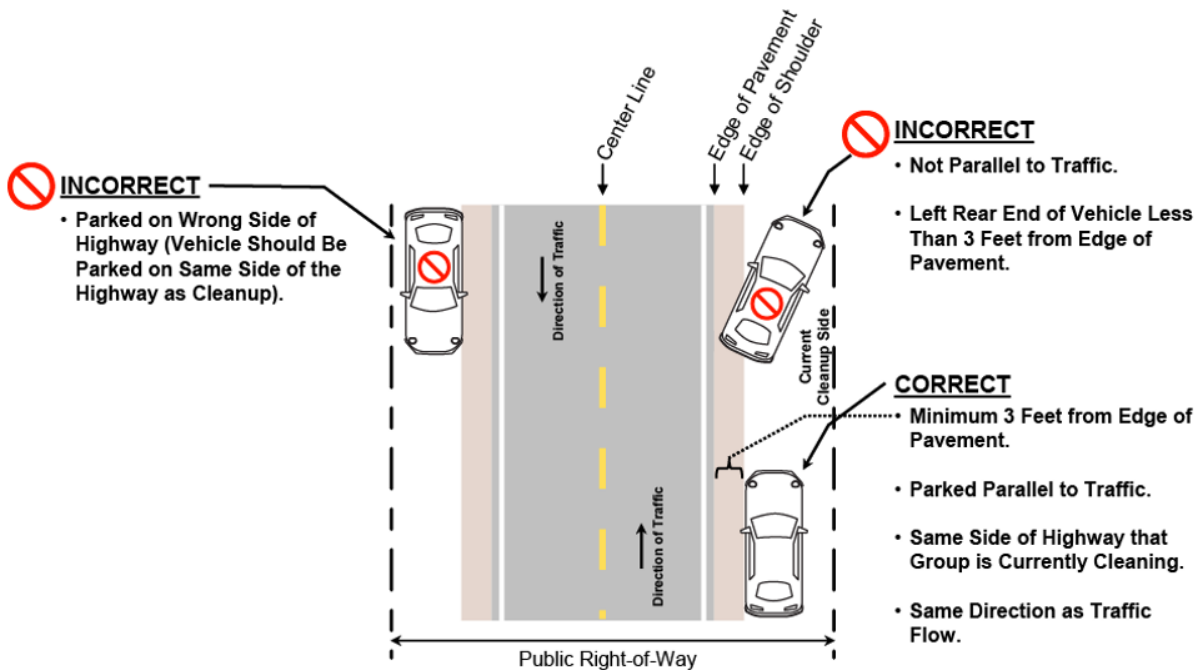


Figure 12 - Roadside Cleanup Area

(Usually the roadwork sign is mounted on the Adopt-A-Highway signpost either by foldout or bracket mount.)

