



## **WALLER COUNTY ADOPT-A-COUNTRY MILE PROGRAM BASIC SAFETY TIPS**

The following basic safety tips are provided for informational purposes only. Each volunteer is responsible for ensuring his or her own safety, and the safety of any minors being supervised.

### **Groups**

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- Designate one person as volunteer leader to ensure safety rules are followed by everyone.
- Be alert and use common sense at all times. Some road traffic travels at high speeds, and most drivers don't expect to see crews working along the roadsides. There should not be any horseplay, practical jokes, or endangering of an individual's own or another's personal safety.
- Volunteers should be in good health with good eye sight and hearing. Avoid the use of earphones, headphones, or anything else that could interfere with the ability to hear oncoming traffic, safety warnings, or other potential hazards.
- Volunteers aged 15-17 are required to be supervised by an adult that is 21 years of age or older at a ratio of one adult for every three minors.
- Keep volunteers together for better visibility to motorists. Post a person to look out for traffic dangers. It's best to work in groups of at least 3-4 people.
- Groups sizes should not exceed 25 participants because this could distract drivers.
- Carpool to the site to reduce the number of vehicles on the roadside.

### **Parking**

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- Do not use crossovers in the median to turn vehicles around.
- All vehicles should be parked well off the right shoulder. Do not park on paved shoulders.
- Parking is not allowed along curve, on bridges, or in medians.
- Work only on one side of the road at a time. Keep vehicles on the same side of the road as volunteers. Do not wander onto private property.
- All vehicle occupants should exit and enter the vehicle on the side opposite traffic.

### **Safety**

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- Never walk onto the road. Do not enter the roadway or the shoulder to pick up trash.
- Do not pick up litter in medians or on bridges. These areas are especially dangerous to workers on foot.
- Never go into water or pipes to pick up trash.
- Avoid areas which are being mowed or where other construction or maintenance activities are being conducted. Also avoid contact with areas where herbicides have been applied.
- Watch your footing. Stay off loose stones and steep slopes.
- Face oncoming traffic when working whenever possible. Be prepared to move out of the way of vehicles in an emergency.
- Volunteers should not carry knives, machetes, axes, etc.
- Do not overfill or compact trash bags because of the danger of injuries from broken or jagged objects. Fill bags with what goes in easily, and then start with a new bag.
- Always bring a stick or rod with you to roll an object over before picking it up. Snakes, scorpions, spiders, and other wildlife make homes under cardboard boxes and other items found on the roadside.



## WALLER COUNTY ADOPT-A-COUNTRY MILE PROGRAM BASIC SAFETY TIPS

- Never lift anything that is too heavy - get help with the big things. When lifting a heavy load, lift with the legs, not the back.
- Work during daylight hours. Stop working in bad weather, especially when there is poor visibility and wet or icy roads, during electrical storms, and during other than daylight conditions.
- Avoid overexertion. Drink lots of water, especially on hot, humid days
- Avoid contact with poison ivy and poison oak, as well as dead animals.
- Don't pick up discarded syringes or hypodermic needles, or broken glass.
- Don't try to remove unknown or suspected hazardous materials/toxic substances, such as containers with placards or hazardous symbols, containers with hoses duct taped to spouts, empty starter fluid cans, propane tanks with discolored valves, coffee filters, or bags containing a grayish/white substance. This also includes urine bottles. Notify the Sheriff's Office at 979-826-8282.
- Criminal Evidence: Large Debris piles that have been illegally dumped may contain evidence that could be useful to law enforcement. If mail or similar products with names and addresses, or illegal materials are observed please notify the Sheriff's Office at 979-826-8282.
- Carefully Handle Bottles and similar containers. They may contain human waste.
- Never pick up any item that has potentially infectious waste on it, including possible blood or other bodily fluids.
- Never pick up an old cardboard box with your bare hands. This could be a snake's or another creature's home.
- Be prepared for emergencies and serious injury. Every volunteer group should have an adequate first aid kit. Select an emergency room/hospital and know the route to it from the work area. Every volunteer should have transportation immediately accessible. Use a vehicle with a cellular phone or CB radio if available. Know your location and do not hesitate to dial 911.

### **Dress Code**

- All workers must wear safety vests while working on the roadside. Other clothing should be light colored for increased visibility.
- Wear substantial leather shoes or boots with good ankle support. Never wear sandals or open toe shoes.
- Wear a hat, long sleeves, and sunscreen to avoid sunburn. Early morning hours work best before the sun is too hot. Heavy gloves are recommended to protect your hands.

### **Contact Information**

- Have the following phone numbers available on-site at each cleanup:
  - **For all EMERGENCIES – 911**
  - National Poison Control Center Phone: (800) 222-1222
  - Sheriff's Office Non-Emergency Dispatch Phone: (979) 826-8282
  - Environmental Department: (979) 921-0391
  - Road and Bridge Department: (979) 826-7670