



Safety Guidelines

Safety is our first priority—your safety is critical! We have made every effort to make this a safe activity, but ultimately you are responsible for your own safety. Safety precautions can never be overemphasized. Please follow these guidelines.

General Guidelines

While public health guidelines vary, there are clear general guidelines we urge everyone to follow if your family or other small group plans to do a litter cleanup this fall.

- Make sure your state and/or local governing agency allows access to and use of the beach, park, or public area that you want to clean.
- Know and follow the opening and closing times for the beach or park.
- Select a time when the beach or park is not likely to be crowded so that all volunteers can maintain a safe physical distance of 6 feet. Many beaches and parks right now are experiencing a record number of visitors, especially on weekends. This can also mean that parking areas will be crowded. Cleanups scheduled for weekdays might work best.
- All volunteers are to work together in groups of three or more. This way, if one were to be injured, at least two other people will be nearby to help or call 911 if needed.
- **Data collection:** Volunteers are strongly encouraged to collect data from their cleanup event by using the smartphone app "[CleanSwell](#)" or by filling out a paper data card and mailing or scanning and emailing it to cleanva@longwood.edu. The data card can be downloaded [here](#).

COVID-19 Guidelines

Participation in all cleanup events is voluntary and solely at the participants' own risk, including risks associated with COVID-19 (SARS-CoV-2). Individuals should only participate to the extent that they can comply with applicable federal, state, and local rules and restrictions and the below required practices including physical distancing.

The following rules must be followed to ensure individuals are equipped to make an educated, safe, and mindful decision to conduct a cleanup while following CDC public health guidance, local beach access restrictions, and EPA recommendations for properly discarding used Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) items such as disposable gloves and masks.

- If you are sick, stay home and contact your doctor's office for care.
- If you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, follow your doctor's guidance on the proper duration for a quarantine.
- Check with your local authority on beach use and access restrictions. Select a location where you can maintain a minimum physical distance of six feet. Avoid crowded areas at crowded times.
- Maintain at least six feet of separation between people at all times.
- Wear a mask or cloth face covering when in public per CDC recommendations.
- Refrain from touching your face or public surfaces during the cleanup.
- Wearing gloves is critical. This will discourage you from touching your face or face mask. If using reusable gloves, be sure to properly sanitize between uses. See CDC and EPA guidance on how to effectively sanitize reusable items against COVID-19.
- Remember to properly disinfect all reusable equipment before and after the cleanup using an EPA-approved product for use against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

- Grabbers (litter pickup tools) are a good way to minimize contact between your gloves and trash items. Sanitize these after use and before transport or storage.
- Improperly discarded Personal Protective Equipment such as gloves, masks, disinfectant wipes, or other medical waste should be handled and properly discarded following very strict protocol. It's important that all PPE items collected are properly disposed of following CDC and EPA guidance. If you feel comfortable handling such items, use grabbers and place the PPE items in the receptacle separate from collected recyclables. Used PPE should be tightly sealed in a trash bag and discarded in a lined and secure trash receptacle. PPE items should not be recycled due to possible contamination.
- Remember to use hand sanitizer after the cleanup is over, then wash your hands with soap and hot water for 20 seconds as soon as you're able to do so.
- Don't share food or water containers, and frequently clean surfaces you touch.
- **What to bring:** mask/cloth face covering, gloves, 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer, grabbers (if you have them).

What to wear

- **Clothing:** Wear appropriate clothing to protect you from the sun, insects, and scratches. Long pants are preferred. Wear a sun hat or wool hat depending on the weather. In case of rain, wear wool or waterproof clothes. They will keep you warm even when wet.
- **Footwear:** Wear appropriate footwear. It is imperative that you wear shoes which protect your entire foot (absolutely no sandals, crocs, or flipflops). Boots which will protect your ankles are preferable, but tennis shoes are acceptable for most situations. Keep your shoes on at all times to protect your feet from harm.
- **Safety Gear:** Wear gloves!

Medical & First Aid

- Keep hydrated. Bring a full re-usable water bottle with you. On hot or sunny days, drink fluids throughout the day to keep from getting overtired or having a headache. If you become excessively hot or tired, stop immediately. Seek shade and water. Ask for assistance if needed.
- Use sunscreen or insect repellent if needed.
- After the cleanup, do not eat any food without first carefully washing (or sanitizing) your hands.
- If you are leading a cleanup, please bring the following supplies:
 - First Aid Kit
 - Bug spray
 - Sunscreen
 - Hand sanitizer
 - Water & cups
 - Bucket or coffee can for dangerous, sharp trash items
 - Cell phone
 - Clear directions to your cleanup site (in case you need to give them to emergency services.)

Safety for Children

Children volunteers are welcomed at some cleanup sites. If children are allowed, follow these guidelines:

- All children under the age of 18 should be supervised by an adult family member or other adult.
- If a youth group wants to take part in a cleanup event, the group must bring enough chaperones for the children. Depending on the children's ages, there should be one adult for every three to five children.
- Children are to stay with their group members at all times.
- Children should call an adult immediately if any dangerous item, such as a syringe, large drum, chemical container, or medical waste is found.
- ONLY adults should pick up dangerous or sharp trash items! These items should not be placed in a trash bag, as they could harm someone. Place sharp items in a bucket or can for separate disposal.
- Children should not go near or into the water.
- Make sure children wash their hands after the cleanup event before eating.

Watch for Wildlife

- Watch for wildlife, insects (such as ticks), hornets, and wasps. Know what to do if you get bitten or stung.
- Watch for poison ivy, poison oak, sumac, and other types of vegetation in your area that can cause rashes and irritation.
- Keep out of dunes and do not step on any plants.
- Do not touch any wildlife that you find. Do not taste any water or plants.

If Working by Boat

- Wear a life jacket (person floatation device) at all times while on the vessel.
- Keep hands clear when leaving or returning to the dock.
- Remain seated while the vessel is moving.
- Follow all instructions from the boat captain.

If Working on The Shoreline

- Stay in the assigned work area. Shorelines can have treacherous mud, sudden drop-offs, and other hidden dangers.
- Do not walk in soft mud if possible.
- Never wade in swift or high water.
- If working near roads, stay off the road and be extra alert about traffic. Place orange traffic cones and signs between you and on-coming traffic.

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