

## STREAM CLEAN-UP TOOLKIT FOR CHAPTERS

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Stream clean-ups are one of the most straight-forward volunteer activities to organize and can have a big impact. Large amounts of litter can be removed from within and along a waterbody and volunteers get involved in a hands-on activity to benefit their local river or stream. By encouraging local residents to explore nearby watercourses we can grow the community of those invested in improving these resources. Stream clean-ups can also be a good tool to introduce a new community to Freshwater Conservation Canada and what we do so that approaching them down the road about more intensive projects is more likely to be successful.

### **Purpose**

- Improve water quality, available aquatic habitat and general aesthetics of watercourse
- Reduce contaminants

### **Materials**

- Consumables:
  - Garbage bags (heavy duty)
  - Hand sanitizer
- Equipment:
  - Gloves
  - Sharps container for dangerous material (wide-mouth recommended)
  - Marking flags to highlight hazards or indicate locations for waste to be gathered for disposal
  - First-aid kit
  - Promotional hand outs
  - Clip board
  - Freshwater Conservation Canada signage or banners (if applicable)

### **Permits/ Authorizations**

- Ensure that you have permission from the landowner to access the site
- It may be necessary to let the local conservation authority know about the event. The local municipality should be contacted to arrange waste disposal. No formal authorizations should be required.

## Timing

Consideration	Time estimate
Time needed to plan the event	8 hours
Time needed to carry out the event	4 hours (* but dependent on length of stream targeted)
Post-monitoring required	Not necessary
Special timing considerations	May wish to time the clean-up during warmer weather to encourage more people to participate

## Location

- Choose a location for the clean-up. Consider whether the site is appropriate in terms of accessibility, safety, size, and amount of litter.

## Method

### Prior to the Clean-Up

1. Research whether your clean-up can fit into a larger program (example: Great Canadian Shoreline Clean-up or City of Calgary River and Pathway Clean-up) and if necessary, register your clean-up.
2. Contact the municipality. Get permission to conduct the clean-up and arrange for garbage pick-up and disposal.

### During the Clean-Up Event

1. Arrive early to set out equipment.
2. Welcome volunteers and introduce yourself. Ask each participant to sign in on the Freshwater Conservation Canada Workday Sign-in Sheet.
3. Review safety.
4. Outline expectations for the day (what to do with filled garbage bags, what time to return to the meeting place, what is the boundary of the area, etc.) and answer questions.
5. Ask volunteers to work in pairs or small groups.
6. Have fun!

## Required Freshwater Conservation Canada Documentation

- Volunteer sign in sheet and photo release form

## Communications Instructions

Timing	Comment
Before the event	Contact the municipality. Get permission to conduct the clean-up and arrange for garbage pick-up and disposal.  Advertise the event at least one week in advance, two if possible!
Methods of communication	Facebook posts, Eventbrite, Freshwater Conservation Canada website and socials, ads in the local newspaper. Are there local partners who will be involved and can also help spread the word?
Are safety talks required?	Yes, see safety considerations
After the event	Share photos or highlights of the event via social media and/or send an update to Freshwater Conservation Canada staff to share through social media.  Send the Freshwater Conservation Canada Workday Sign-in Sheet to staff to update contacts in the national database.  Remember to acknowledge any event sponsors or donors.

## Safety Considerations

- Participants should wear gloves and appropriate footwear
- Children should be supervised by a responsible adult
- Avoid walking on loose, uneven or steep terrain
- Do not attempt to lift items that are too heavy
- Dangerous or sharp items (needles, broken glass) should be placed in a “sharps” container or flagged for pick-up by municipal staff
- Be aware of the nearest hospital and emergency numbers

## Additional Considerations Resources and Reading

- [Why should you care about Small streams?](#)