



HOW TO HOST A NEIGHBORHOOD CLEANUP

AN APPRECIATE PEORIA GUIDE



Tired of looking at the trash in the lot next door?

A great way to get neighbors together and make some changes is to organize a neighborhood cleanup. It's a lot easier than you may think.

Residents have gotten together all over the Peoria area to clean up vacant lots, parks, and streets — and keep them clean. All it takes is a little investigation, elbow grease, and a group of willing neighbors.

What Are the Advantages of a Neighborhood Cleanup?

- Creates the groundwork to keep the community clean over a long period of time.
- Fosters a sense of community and pride among the residents of the neighborhood.
- Encourages people to come out for a one-day event that has visible results.



HOW TO PLAN A NEIGHBORHOOD CLEANUP

Step 1-Identifying the Problem

Is there a park filled with litter, a vacant lot that people have used for dumping their old furniture, or trash lining a block? Walk through your neighborhood, looking at it through the same eyes you would use if you were inspecting your home for things that needed cleaning.

Carry a notebook or piece of paper with you and jot down what you see. Try to be as specific as you can, noticing “when, where, and what” in your observations.

Step 2-Getting Your Neighbors Organized

A well-organized neighborhood group can have powerful influence when addressing the needs and problems of local residents. With this in mind, it is a good idea to schedule a planning meeting to make sure that the neighborhood is united behind the clean-up cause.

Find a meeting space — a church, school, library, local restaurant, or someone’s home — that will hold your group and schedule a time and date for the meeting.

Reach out to people who live around the area that you’ve targeted for cleaning first. They will probably be the most interested in getting rid of the trash and would make a strong first line of recruits.

Don’t forget to contact surrounding homes, blocks, and businesses. Print a flyer that has the time and date of the meeting on it and ask local churches, schools, and businesses to pass out copies of it.

Step 3-Contact PDC

Contact PDC (Peoria Disposal Company) at 309.688-0760 to let them know when and where you are planning your neighborhood cleanup. The more they know, the more they will be able to help.

- Decide which area of the neighborhood you want to clean up first.
- Pick a date and time for the cleanup day and figure out all of the jobs that need to be done to make it a success.



Step 4- Hold the Planning Meeting

1. Introduction: Everyone attending should introduce themselves and share where they live and what they would like to see happen in the neighborhood.
2. Set Priorities: Break out the list you made in Step 1 and share the areas of concern with the group. Ask everyone else in attendance if they have noticed any other areas in need of attention.

3. Supplies: Remember that all neighborhood cleanups require supplies including:
 - a. Latex-free rubber gloves.
 - b. Garbage bags.
 - c. Trash pickers (optional).

Decide at the meeting whether these supplies will be provided by the organizers or donated from local businesses.

4. Create Tasks: Break your project ideas down into a series of tasks and assign volunteers. If the work involves a lot of people, create a committee and assign a head.
 - a. Contact PDC to
 - b. Assign a few people to spread the word with flyers.
 - c. Follow up with anyone who expressed interest in helping.
 - d. Ask someone to contact the Peoria Journal Star to send out a press release.
 - e. Reach out to members of City Council to see if they can give a pep talk before the cleanup begins. To find your councilperson, click [here](#). If you need help finding your council district, please contact us at 309.494-8654.
 - f. If you decide that the best way to secure cleanup supplies is through donations, assign someone to contact local businesses for donations.
5. Set a date for the cleanup: It is essential to agree on a date, time, and location for the next meeting before adjourning.

Step 5- Cleanup

- Gather volunteers in a public place to kick off the day.
- Have a sign-in sheet at the refreshment table to collect names and contact information of volunteers. This will make it easier to organize another cleanup event in the future.
- Make sure everyone has a job that matches their physical abilities.
- Thank the volunteers for their time and effort.
- Write thank you notes to businesses and organizations for donating supplies, refreshments, and volunteers.

Even if you can't finish the cleanup work all in one day, stay positive and celebrate what you were able to do together. You're on your way to making a cleaner and safer neighborhood for everyone!



