

Risk Assessment for Volunteer Litter Picking

This form should be completed by the lead volunteer before the start of any litter pick. Litter picks are generally very safe and it is unlikely that you will encounter any serious hazards or incidents – you will see that the points below are just common sense and are worth considering to ensure your event runs as smoothly and safely as possible.

As the organiser of the litter pick you should ensure that all volunteers know the risks and understand the control measures before clearing any litter. It is sensible to address all volunteers and introduce yourself as the lead volunteer/organiser, so they know who to go to with questions/to report an incident. You should also check that all volunteers know what equipment they must use and what area they may clean up. Also advise that a copy of the risk assessment is available on request.

Name	Date	Telephone	Location of Clean up

Before starting your clean up ensure all volunteers:

- Have the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – e.g. thick gloves, hi-viz vest, sensible footwear, weather appropriate clothing etc.
- Have the correct equipment – e.g. litter grabbers, plastic bags, dog waste bags, brush, shovel etc and know how to use the equipment.
- Consider all the risks and hazards in the work area, e.g. hazardous waste, broken glass, dog waste, vomit, needles, condoms and roads/cycle ways, thorny bushes, low branches, uneven ground, hidden bankings etc.
- Know the work area and how to report incidents or hazardous or unidentified waste, where to get first aid, meet on completion, deposit bags of waste and mark bags containing sharp material e.g. broken glass.

Use the table below to score the risks in the **Risk Assessment Table**

Likelihood (a)		Severity (b)		Magnitude = a x b
Certain	5	Fatality	6	2 x 3 = 6
Probable	4	Serious Disablement	5	i.e. LOW RISK
Even Chance	3	Sprain, Major Cuts/ Bruises	4	High Risk = 21-30
Possible	2	Minor Cut/Strain	3	Med Risk = 11 to 20
Unlikely	1	Minor Bruises/Grazes	2	Low Risk = 2 to 10

Risk Assessment Table

HAZARD	RISK	CONTROLS	MEASURES TO REDUCE EFFECT IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT	Score	Risk
Broken glass, sharp/ rusty edges	Cuts & Infections	Use litter grabbers to pick up sharp litter. All participants should have up to date tetanus protection.	Seek medical attention where appropriate. Thoroughly wash any cuts or abrasions as soon as possible, however minor.		
Needles	Cuts & Infections	Leave alone and report to Council for removal	Seek medical attention where appropriate		
Heavy/awkward to handle rubbish	Pulled muscles and strains	Extreme care to be taken, use good lifting practices and share the load with an appropriate number of people. If too heavy to handle leave the object in place and report it to the organiser to arrange removal by the Council	Stop immediately if suffering any pain or discomfort. Seek medical attention if the ill effects persist		
Batteries, asbestos & miscellaneous chemicals	Potentially dangerous depending on condition	Do not approach or remove any potentially hazardous waste. Report to the Council for disposal	Seek medical attention if exposed to pesticides, insecticides or other chemicals – record any label details		
Ground conditions	Sprains, muscle damage & broken bones	Avoid dangerous areas and choose the safest possible route over difficult ground. Instruct volunteers to wear suitable footwear	Thoroughly wash any cuts or abrasions as soon as possible, however minor. Seek medical attention for any serious cuts, bruises or strains		
Highways vehicles, bicycles, plant & machinery	Collision with moving traffic	Avoid close proximity to traffic if possible. Stay off the highway. Be alert to the potential presence of agricultural machinery. Wear high visibility clothing if necessary. Do not work on the roadside if the speed limit is 40mph or over. Be aware of the vehicles around you during the litter pick. Keep a look out. Children should not work by a roadside	Seek medical attention in the event of injury		

HAZARD	RISK	CONTROLS	MEASURES TO REDUCE EFFECT IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT	Score	Risk
People, lone working	Physical or verbal assault	Be aware of aggressive and difficult people. Withdraw rather than face conflict. Do not work out of sight of others in the group. Organisers/section leader to have mobile phone. Keep together and stay off private property	Seek medical attention following any assault/ injury		
Animals – domestic, wild and farm	Lymes Disease carried by animal ticks and bites/ scratches from animals	Wear appropriate clothing. Beware of loose dogs. Avoid contact with animals. Avoid contact with animal faeces.	Seek medical attention as soon as possible after being bitten or scratched. Wash hands immediately after contact with faeces. Avoid touching eyes or mouth		
Waterside diseases	Weil's Disease from rats urine	Do not touch dead animals. Cover any cuts or sores with a waterproof plaster before carrying out a litter pick. Avoid getting hands wet in rivers, ponds or canals	Seek medical attention where appropriate. Thoroughly wash any cuts or abrasions as soon as possible, however minor		
Dog faeces	Toxocara Canis	Do not touch dog faeces. Always wear gloves and use a shovel when removing dog faeces	Thoroughly wash your hands. Thoroughly wash any cuts or abrasions as soon as possible, however minor. Seek medical attention where appropriate		
Weather e.g. thunderstorms	Various health issues	Cease work in inappropriate conditions. Avoid working in extreme conditions. Dress for conditions and carry additional clothing. In the event of extreme weather conditions, the litter pick should be postponed or abandoned	Seek medical attention where appropriate		

HAZARD	RISK	CONTROLS	MEASURES TO REDUCE EFFECT IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT	Score	Risk
Cliffs and steep slopes	Falls leading to sprains, muscle damage and broken bones	Instruct volunteers to stay away from these areas. Avoid picking on or close to the edge of cliffs, steep slopes etc and below unstable cliffs and slopes. Take weather conditions and possible weather changes into account. Seek medical treatment in the event of injury. Take account of tides	Seek medical attention where appropriate		
Electric fences	Electrocution	Always assume electric fences are live. Warn volunteers not to touch electric fences	Seek medical attention where appropriate		
Water, marshes and bogs	Hypothermia, drowning	Avoid banks, especially if they appear unstable. Always work in pairs if close to water. Shower and change into warm, dry clothing if immersed. Never allow children to work in these areas. Adults should be cautious and non-swimmers must not litter pick near water	Seek medical attention where appropriate		
Hedges, fences, walls and ditches		Take care when climbing stiles, particularly in wet weather. Avoid climbing walls, ditches and fences. Stay within the nominated location			
Tools, equipment		Team to be shown how to use equipment if appropriate. Allow sufficient working area for the correct and safe use of the tool. Use appropriate protection. First aid training. Have first aid kit available. Volunteers must use the equipment provided and as instructed	Obtain medical attention in the event of injury		
Trees, shrubs	Tips, cuts and eye pokes	Be alert to the risks and keep a look out for hazards. Be aware of low hanging branches and exposed tree and shrub roots	Obtain medical attention in the event of injury		

HAZARD	RISK	CONTROLS	MEASURES TO REDUCE EFFECT IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT	Score	Risk
Irritants, dangerous plants	Poisoning, skin irritations or allergic reaction	Wear the gloves provided. Be aware of dangerous plants and possible adverse reactions. Wash thoroughly on completion of such operations	Seek medical attention for unusual or suspicious symptoms after contact with vegetation		

On completion of the litter pick ensure:

- Everyone washes their hands thoroughly as soon as possible after the litter pick and before taking any food or drink.
- Any wounds are redressed after cleaning and disinfecting if there has been any contact with water.
- Volunteers carry out a personal inspection for cuts etc.
- All volunteers have reported back and all equipment is collected back in.
- All rubbish for collection has been left in the arranged pick up site.
- Any bags containing sharp material, e.g. broken glass, are clearly identified.