



*County of San Diego - Land Use & Environment Group*  
*Department of Public Works*

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

**ADOPT-A-ROAD**

**PROGRAM**

# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS (DPW)

## THE LITTER PROBLEM

Litter is a major problem along San Diego County roadways. The County of San Diego Department of Public Works (DPW) picks up litter and debris illegally disposed along county roads. Despite the level of effort, the amount of litter on many county roads is increasing from an already unacceptable level. About half of the litter gets blown to the roadside from uncovered trucks traveling down the roads. The other half is thrown deliberately from vehicles. Eighty-five percent of the littering occurs in urbanized areas. **What can you do to help?**

## DPW's ADOPT-A-ROAD PROGRAM

- ❖ Allows non-political organizations, corporations, groups and individuals to participate in maintaining and enhancing San Diego County's roadsides.
- ❖ Is similar to programs in over 24 other states, and 16 other California counties.
- ❖ Recognizes participants with courtesy signs installed at each project site, press releases, and certificates of appreciation. DPW provides and places the signs. Participants may provide a customized name panel with logo and color at their expense as an option.
- ❖ Is designed to be fun and educational, to promote civic responsibility, community spirit and camaraderie, and to provide an opportunity to accomplish something worthwhile.
- ❖ Is designed to save taxpayer dollars.
- ❖ Is designed to operate with a minimum of red tape and with minimum supervision by DPW.
- ❖ Is designed to allow citizens to work responsibly at their own convenience.

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- ❖ All participants agree to pick up litter from a segment of roadside for a **two-year period**. Participants do all the litter pickup on the roadside. For safety reasons, participants may not pick up litter in medians or along the shoulders of heavily traveled roads. DPW will conduct litter operations in these areas.
- ❖ The minimum length of adopted segments is two miles and includes both sides of the road. Participants may adopt adjacent segments of road if the adjacent segments are not already adopted and meet safety requirements.
- ❖ Litter must be picked up according to the frequency you assign for that segment. Frequencies may be quarterly (four times per year), bi-monthly (six times per year), monthly (twelve times per year), or weekly (52 times per year), depending on the area.
- ❖ **DPW will provide free trash bags and will dispose of filled bags if the adopter is unable to dispose of them.**
- ❖ **In order to measure the success of the program, participants are** required to call or e-mail the following information to the Program Coordinator: 1) Number of bags of trash picked

up; 2) Number of volunteers that participated in the cleanup; and 3) number of hours spent picking up litter.

### **ADOPTABLE ROADS**

The Adopt-A-Road Program applies to all types of roads – conventional two to four lane roads, divided roads with medians, unpaved roads – provided that the adopted roads are part of the County Maintained System. State roads, such as freeways and highways, private roads, public non-maintained roads, and roads within city limits are not maintained by DPW. For information on these roads, please contact the responsible agency (Caltrans or the appropriate city). However, some county roads or some segments of those roads may not be adoptable, for safety reasons.

Reasons why certain segments may not be adoptable include:

- ❖ Heavy traffic
- ❖ Narrow pavement or shoulder widths
- ❖ Restricted visibility
- ❖ Rugged terrain or steep slopes
- ❖ Narrow roadside
- ❖ Difficult access
- ❖ Dense brush or vegetation
- ❖ Site conditions inappropriate for age level or experience of participants
- ❖ Frequency of litter pickup too great for capability of participants.

DPW will let you know if a certain segment of road is adoptable for your purpose. If it is determined that the segment should not be adopted for one or more of the reasons stated above, DPW will assist with identifying alternate work locations.

### **SAFETY**

The safety of Adopt-A-Road participants is always the utmost consideration of DPW. The Adopt-A-Road program is designed so common sense safety will prevail.

Adoptable segments of roads are selected based on the safety of the participants, and the appropriateness of the work involved.

Participants bear individual responsibility for personal safety and appropriate behavior when working within the limits of a County maintained road.

Participants work without DPW supervision and without traffic control. However, groups are required to have at least one adult supervisor for every five minors on the roadside.

DPW safety requirements must be provided to every participant, and must be reviewed before entering the right-of-way. Group leaders are responsible for conducting safety briefings for all participants prior to each cleanup event.

Safety topics generally involve:

- ❖ Wearing proper safety gear and appropriate clothing
- ❖ Safe access to and from the work site
- ❖ Staying away from traffic, and being alert at all times
- ❖ Not working when weather, light or road conditions are poor
- ❖ Not touching potentially toxic substances
- ❖ Staying away from jagged objects, snakes or other hazards
- ❖ Not distracting or interfering with motorists
- ❖ Using a traffic observer whose only job is to watch for and warn of vehicles being driven erratically.

### **ADOPT-A-ROAD SIGNS**

The County will provide up to two (2) Adopt-A-Road signs for each segment of road adopted. Sign information allowed for individuals, memorials, organizations, businesses, and agencies are as follows:

- Individuals: full name, or first name
- Memorials: "In Memory of" plus the deceased person's name
- Organizations, including informal groups: name, logo, or both
- Businesses & Agencies: official business license/agency name, with or without a logo

Community name may be added only to distinguish from another same-named entity. Additional text is not permitted. Applicants also have the option to order custom plates for the signs, which can include a logo, through a private sign shop. ALL LOGOS AND TEXT STYLES SHALL be approved by DPW before the plates are ordered. The plates shall be 30" wide by 8" high with 1" radius corners and 0.25" diameter holes at the same center point as each of the rounded corners. White Engineer Grade sign film sheeting is applied as the background color of the plate. Text and logo should be designed to be simple and easy to read. Four (4) plates shall be provided to the Adopt-A-Road Coordinator (2 are for replacement). Litter removal may begin after County staff installs the signs with the plates. Fabrication of plates and installation of signs may take four to eight weeks. The County will install and maintain the signs. Organizations shall have no ownership interest in any of the Adopt-A-Road Program signs and attached name plates.

### **YOUR ADOPT-A-ROAD COORDINATOR**

The DPW Adopt-A-Road Coordinator is Vincent De Anda. The Coordinator is responsible for assisting with identifying adoptable segments of road, obtaining approval of work plans, and processing the permit application. The Coordinator will also assure that participants fulfill their permit obligations.

The Coordinator can make arrangements for you to obtain safety vests and litter bags.

If you have any questions regarding the program, contact the Coordinator at (858) 694-3929 [Vincent.DeAnda@sdcountry.ca.gov](mailto:Vincent.DeAnda@sdcountry.ca.gov) Monday through Friday between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM. The Coordinator will explain the details and assist you with getting things started.

## **APPLICATION AND AGREEMENT**

Adopt-A-Road requires an application and agreement. The Coordinator will process your application. If you decide you want to participate in the Adopt-A-Road Program, simply fill out and sign the attached application and agreement and send it in. No fee is required, but the applicant is required to accept several conditions attached to it, including a “hold harmless” stipulation.

Expect the process to take eight to twelve weeks, depending on staff workload, the extent of plan review, and any necessary coordination.

## **ACTIVITIES RELATED TO ADOPT-A-ROAD**

While activities like weed removal, landscaping and graffiti removal involving county maintained road rights-of-way are not part of the Adopt-A-Road Program, the Coordinator will assist anyone interested in those activities. DPW would like our Volunteers be advised about preserving wildlife habitat, avoiding trespassing on private property, etc. They will also be advised about possible hazards involved with working in county maintained road rights-of-way and to wear safety vests easily recognizable by motorists.



*County of San Diego - Land Use & Environment Group*  
**Department of Public Works**

**ADOPT-A-ROAD APPLICATION**

**COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS – ROAD MAINTENANCE**  
**5510 Overland Ave, Ste 410, Room 470 MS-0334**  
**San Diego, CA 92123-1239**  
**Phone (858) 694-3850 – Fax (858) 694-3928**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Adopter Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Plate Text : \_\_\_\_\_

Road Requested for Adoption: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

Frequency of Cleaning (circle one) 4x/Yr.  6x/Yr.  12x/Yr.  52x/Yr.

Adoption Length (calendar years): 2  
 Effective Date: Immediately

**AGREEMENT**

In consideration of allowing Adopter to participate in the Adopt-A-Road Program, the Adopter agrees:

1. To indemnify, defend and hold harmless the County of San Diego, its Board of Supervisors, officers, directors, agents, employees, and volunteers from and against any and all claims, demands, actions, losses, liabilities, damages, costs, expenses and responsibility, including any attorney's fees and costs, arising out of or resulting from participation in the Adopt-A-Road Program.
2. Adopter has voluntarily requested to participate in the Adopt-A-Road Program and is not an employee or agent of the County of San Diego. Adopter is solely responsible for complying with all laws that may relate to Adopter's activities, including but not limited to those related to the proper handling and disposal of property located or found within the road right-of-way and the handling and disposal of hazardous and solid waste.
3. Adopter shall at all times abide by the "CONDITIONS FOR ADOPT-A-ROAD PROGRAM PARTICIPATION", "SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPANTS" and "SAN DIEGO COUNTY, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS VOLUNTEER HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT FOR THE ADOPT-A-ROAD PROGRAM" which are by this reference made a part of this Agreement and a condition of Adopter's continued participation in the Adopt-A-Road Program.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SAN DIEGO COUNTY, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

**VOLUNTEER HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT FOR THE ADOPT-A-ROAD PROGRAM**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name or participant), or \_\_\_\_\_ (name of parent or guardian) as the parent or guardian on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ (name of participant), agree to participate in the Adopt-A-Road Program as a volunteer in accordance with all program guidelines and requirements. I have read and understand or have been provided with the “SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPANTS” prepared for the Adopt-A-Road Program and will abide by these requirements.

I agree to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the County of San Diego, its Board of Supervisors, officers, directors, agents, employees and volunteers (collectively “County Parties”) against any and all claims, demands, actions, losses, liabilities, costs and expenses, including attorney’s fees and costs, (collectively “Claims”) resulting from participation in the program. I assume all risk of personal injury and loss or damage of personal property resulting from participation in the program and waive and release any and all Claims against County Parties resulting from participation in the Program. This waiver and release specifically extends to and includes a waiver of any Claims covered by Civil Code 1542 which provides that, “A general release does not extend to claims which the creditor does not know or suspect exist in his or her favor at the time of executing the release, which if known by him or her must have materially affected his or her settlement with the debtor.”

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Volunteer Signature (or parent or Guardian)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Printed Name*



## CONDITIONS FOR ADOPT-A-ROAD PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

### GENERAL PROVISIONS:

**Term of Participation:** Participations shall be for a term of two (2) calendar years from date of approval by the Adopt-A-Road Program Coordinator (Coordinator), and may be renewed by receipt of an appropriate subsequent application. In the event the Adopter wishes to renew, a notice of such intent shall be submitted to the Coordinator at least thirty (30) days prior to the expiration of the two (2) year term. Timely submittal of a renewal application does not guarantee continued maintenance of the road segment by the Adopter. County reserves the right in its sole and absolute discretion to allow a new or different organization to maintain the road segment.

**Application at Work Site:** Adopter shall keep a copy of the approved Adopt-A-Road Program application, including conditions and hold harmless agreement, at the site of work. Adopter shall present these documents to any representative of the County or any law enforcement officer on demand. WORK SHALL BE SUSPENDED IF THESE DOCUMENTS ARE NOT AT THE JOB SITE.

**Time and Location of Work Site:** No work shall be conducted on holiday weekends, or within twenty-four (24) hours preceding a holiday weekend unless specifically authorized elsewhere in this permit. Work shall only be conducted during daylight hours. Adopter shall not conduct any work during periods of inclement weather, twilight or dusk hours, or at any other time where visibility, weather, traffic or other conditions may present an increased risk of harm to the Adopter and any volunteers recruited by Adopter. Litter pickup shall not be performed within center dividing strips, or upon bridges, culverts or structures of any kind.

**Disposal of Litter:** All litter collected from the right-of-way shall be put within County provided trash bags when possible and placed in a manner that prevents the bags from being blown, rolling or falling into an area where vehicles are likely to pass. Adopter shall not handle or place within any trash bags materials that are a hazardous or toxic substances. Because the cost of having County Road Crews pick up and dispose of bags can be quite high, Adopter is encouraged to dispose of its own filled trash bags. Adopters electing to dispose of litter themselves, are solely responsible for handling and disposing of the material collecting in accordance with all applicable laws, including but not those related to the handling and disposal of toxic or hazardous substances. **If Adopter cannot dispose of its own bags, it shall notify the Adopt-A-Road Coordinator as soon as possible following the collection of litter. Adopter can leave the Coordinator a message any time of day. Give the Coordinator the number of bags and their location.**

**Protection of Right-of-Way:** Adopter shall not remove, damage or destroy roadside vegetation, signage and other right-of-way improvements or encroachments. Notwithstanding the foregoing, minor trampling or damage of vegetation reasonably associated with litter pick-up is anticipated.

**Courtesy Signs:** The County will provide up to two (2) Adopt-A-Road signs for each segment of road adopted. Sign information allowed for individuals, memorials, organizations, businesses, and agencies are as follows:

- Individuals: full name, or first name
- Memorials: "In Memory of" plus the deceased person's name
- Organizations, including informal groups: name, logo, or both
- Businesses & Agencies: official business license/agency name, with or without a logo

Community name may be added only to distinguish from another same-named entity. Additional text is not permitted. Applicants also have the option to order custom plates for the signs, which can include a logo, through a private sign shop. ALL LOGOS AND TEXT STYLES SHALL be approved by DPW before the plates are ordered. The plates shall be 30" wide by 8" high with 1" radius corners and 0.25" diameter holes at the same center point as each of the rounded corners. White Engineer Grade sign film sheeting is applied as the background color of the plate. Text and logo should be designed to be simple and easy to read. Four (4) plates shall be provided to the Adopt-A-Road Coordinator (2 are for replacement). Litter removal may begin after County staff install the signs with the plates. Fabrication of plates and installation of signs may take four to eight weeks.

**No Traffic Control:** Adopter is not authorized to perform any traffic control. Adopter's wishing to institute traffic control during litter pick-up shall apply for a traffic control permit.

**Subordination of Activities:** Adopter's litter removal activities are subordinate to operations which the County may conduct and shall not interfere with work by County forces or contractors, law enforcement functions, or other governmental functions or activities.

**Reflective Vests:** Personnel performing work in connection with the Adopt-A-Road program shall wear reflectorized orange safety vests while on County road right-of-way. The County may provide these vests upon request. Adopter shall return all County provided vests upon completion of litter removal work. Adopter shall reimburse County for replacement or all lost or misplaced vests provided by County.

**Designation of Group Leader, Minimum Age of Participants & Safety Requirements:** Adopter shall designate a spokesperson that shall represent the group. In addition, one (1) adult supervisor eighteen (18) years of age or older shall be assigned to each five (5) minors. No minor less than thirteen (13) years of age shall be allowed to participate. The Group Leader shall ensure that all participants are aware of the attached "SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPANTS." All participants shall sign the attached "SAN DIEGO COUNTY, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS VOLUNTEER HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT FOR THE ADOPT-A-ROAD PROGRAM" before performing any work pursuant to the Adopt-A-Road Program.

**Vehicle Parking:** Adopter's personal vehicles shall be legally parked off the traveled way in a manner that does not interfere with the flow of vehicular, pedestrian or equestrian traffic. Vehicles should not be parked in dry vegetation that could be ignited by hot exhaust systems. Emergency flashers should not be left on while vehicles are parked.

**Termination:** County may cancel this permit for non-conformance with permit provisions or failure to adhere to direction given by County's representative.

## **SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPANTS**

While on the roadside, remember: **Safety First!**

To protect yourself and others:

- ❖ Each participant shall be given a copy of these requirements, and they shall be discussed among all members of your group before commencing work.
- ❖ The Group Leader shall assure that each participant is given a briefing regarding these requirements at least once per year.
- ❖ Any vehicles used by your group must be legally parked off the traveled way, in a manner not interfering with the free flow of vehicular, pedestrian or equestrian traffic. Do not park in areas with dry vegetation, which can be ignited by hot exhaust systems. Do not use emergency flashers. Do not park under bridges.
- ❖ Stay out of the lanes that carry moving traffic.
- ❖ Use caution when crossing roads. Use crosswalks and signals where available.
- ❖ Face oncoming traffic as you work, and keep an eye on all moving vehicles. Be prepared to move quickly, if necessary. Work behind the berm or curb, or six feet from the edge of pavement where there are no berms or curbs.
- ❖ Provide a person whose only job is to observe traffic, and warn of any vehicles being driven erratically. That person should carry some type of warning device (horn, whistle) to alert other participants to erratically driven vehicles.
- ❖ Do not work on lanes carrying moving traffic or on bridges or underpasses.
- ❖ Do not work before dawn, and discontinue work at dusk.
- ❖ Do not attempt to work when fog or other conditions reduce visibility for drivers.
- ❖ Do not attempt to work when the roadway is icy or wet.
- ❖ Do not touch or attempt to remove any materials that you suspect may be toxic or hazardous. Items to avoid include powders, chemicals, smelly substances, suspicious packages, chemical drums or containers, weapons, syringes or hypodermic needles, dead animals, or broken glass. Notify DPW or the appropriate law enforcement agency (CHP or Sheriff) of the location of weapons or suspected toxic substances immediately.
- ❖ Do not try to compact filled trash bags. Injuries from broken or jagged objects may occur.
- ❖ Wear orange safety vests whenever you are on the roadside.
- ❖ Wear long pants and substantial footwear with ankle support. Watch your footing and stay away from steep slopes, drainage facilities or places from which you might fall. Light-colored clothing, long sleeve shirts and sunscreen lotion are recommended.
- ❖ Do not run, throw objects, engage in horseplay, or any other activity that may distract drivers.
- ❖ Avoid overexertion. Drink plenty of water, especially on warm, humid days.

- ❖ Do not consume alcoholic beverages or drugs before entering, or while on the roadside.
- ❖ Be alert for places where snakes may be located. Also be alert for stinging insects, poisonous plants (poison oak, etc.), broken glass, and hypodermic needles.
- ❖ Allow no more than a total of 12 participants during any cleaning event. Minors under the age of thirteen (13) shall not be allowed. An adult supervisor shall be provided for every five (5) minors.
- ❖ Place filled trash bags outside the edge of the road right-of-way (usually about ten (10) feet back from the curb or edge of pavement), in locations where they do not interfere with traffic.