

Naperville Park District's ADOPT-A-PARK



HANDBOOK For Adopt-A-Park Volunteers



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Naperville, IL 60540
630-848-5000
www.napervilleparks.org



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About the Adopt-A-Park Program

Our Mission

Adopt-A-Park: To involve members of the Naperville community and beyond in the ongoing maintenance of Naperville's parks by volunteering of their time to help keep the parks attractive and safe.

What is Adopt-A-Park?

Adopt-A-Park is a program developed by the Naperville Park District that recruits and trains residents and business community members who wish to assist in the general care and maintenance of parks and park amenities by selecting a specific location to care for.

Who Volunteers?

Our programs support all people interested in improving the quality and safety the local parks of Naperville. Some examples of volunteers include:

- Individuals
- Senior citizens
- Schools
- Families
- Youth groups
- Neighborhood associations
- Businesses
- Church groups
- Scouts/Troops

What You Can Adopt

You can adopt the entire park or a particular area in the park including:

- Sports Fields
- Playgrounds
- Courts
- Flower beds
- Trails
- Trees and shrubs

What Volunteers Do

- Pick up litter
- Clean up shrub beds
- Remove weeds
- Remove light graffiti
- Rake mulch
- Sweep pathways and courts
- Rake leaves
- Report park hazards
- Clean sand in playgrounds



Adopt-A-Park Process

Commitment Requirements

The Naperville Park District asks all volunteers to commit to one year of service to the adopted park, scheduling at least 6 work days per year.

Initial Process

- A group leader or individual must complete, sign and return the Adoption Application and Agreement forms. All members of the volunteer group must sign and return the Volunteer Service Waiver/Adult or Volunteer Service Waiver/Minor depending on the age of group members. Minors are required to have a parent or guardian signature as well.
- The Adopt-A-Park staff will first review your application and forms then contact you about your request.

Orientation

- Once the adoption is approved, the program staff will meet with the group leader and members to review basic tasks of park maintenance and provide the group leader with a kit of supplies for the season.
- Volunteers are required to read, understand and follow the Safety Guidelines in the handbook. Volunteers also are expected to follow all park and trail rules.

Volunteer Tasks

General Tasks vs. Approval Tasks

- General Tasks can be done at your adopted park on a regular basis and do not require prior approval or supervision from the Naperville Park District staff, nor do they require any special tools. Tasks include:
 - Litter pick up
 - Sweeping
 - Weeding
 - Light cleaning of graffiti
 - Reporting of any park hazards
- Approval Tasks require pre-approval and/or supervision from the Naperville Park District staff, as well as special training or tools that volunteers are not regularly supplied with. Examples of these tasks include:
 - Painting of graffiti, park fixtures, etc.
 - Planting projects or removal
 - Major weed removal or pruning



- If you are interested in completing one of these special tasks at your adopted location, please complete the Special Tasks Request form and Supply Request form if you will require any special tools or supplies and return it to staff. Please allow three weeks for the Special Tasks approval process.
- At times, park staff may have tasks that they wish to have completed in their park in addition to special projects. You may be contacted and given the opportunity to help with those projects.

Tracking Hours

- Volunteers are asked to track the hours they spend working on their adopted location. They should report these hours to staff by completing the Volunteer Hours Tracking form and submitting it by June 15 and November 15 each year. Program staff will track these hours. Tracking helps support the program by:
 - Justifying the need for more tools and supplies when submitting annual budgets
 - Tracking the growth or decline of the program
 - Assisting staff in providing volunteers with awards and recognition

Adding or removing members of your volunteer group

- Any new members of your volunteer group are required to sign and submit the Volunteer Service Waiver/Adult or Minor form, depending on their age, before they are allowed to perform any task in the park.
- Group leaders are responsible for training any new member of the group following the Naperville Park District orientation session and are responsible to ensure that members follow all guidelines.
- Group leaders need to inform program staff of any group members that join or leave the volunteer group by completing the Member Change form and submitting it to staff.

Supplies

- Program staff will provide a kit of tools and supplies to assist you in your tasks. The following tools and supplies are available on a limited basis and must be scheduled in advance from NPD.
 - Bags and gloves
 - Litter sticks
 - Basic gardening tools-rakes, brooms, shovels
 - Light graffiti removal supplies
- All tools, except bags and gloves, must be checked out. Bags and gloves may be picked up at any time. If you require tools for your general tasks, please complete the Supply Request form and submit it to staff. Please allow two weeks for processing and delivery or availability of these tools. For approval tasks, please submit the Supply Request form along with your request form.



Recognition

The Naperville Park District values all volunteers and will recognize those who have adopted a park. Recognition includes the following:

- An official Certificate of Adoption
- An invitation to the annual Volunteer Celebration
- Listing on www.napervilleparks.org

Retirement

- When an individual or group is not able to continue their volunteer efforts in their adopted park or trail, we ask that they please submit a letter of resignation to the Adopt-A-Park program staff.



Safety Guidelines

All volunteers of the Naperville Park District's Adopt-A-Park program are required to adhere to the following guidelines while performing tasks in any park:

Do's

- Wear gloves at all times.
- Lift all objects with your legs, not your back.
- Tie all bags tightly before placing in trash cans.
- Handle sharp objects with care (adults only).
- Work with partners when possible.
- Carry a first aid kit.
- Protect yourself and body by wearing sunscreen and a hat or glasses.
- Take breaks, drink plenty of fluids and dress appropriately.
- Wear light or bright colored clothing so others are able to see you.
- Wear hard soled shoes appropriate for the job.
- Work during normal park hours.
- Follow all safety guidelines.
- Have at least one adult per five minors.
- Only perform activities you have been trained and approved to complete.
- Protect yourself from stinging insects, stay away from bees' nests or other animal/insect infestations you are not trained to handle.
- Be aware and cautious of any poisonous plants such as poison ivy.
- Contact the Parks Department at 630-848-5000 immediately if you see any safety hazard such as a broken swing or slide.
- Contact the Park Police Department at 630-848-5000 with any safety concerns that require dispatch to the area such as vandalism or illegal activity.

Don'ts

- Don't bring small children or pets along unless they are closely supervised.
- Don't pick up dead animals.
- Don't pick up materials that may be hazardous (needles, makeshift bombs or drug paraphernalia). Please contact 630-848-5000 if you encounter any of these objects.
- Don't allow children to handle sharp objects.
- Don't stomp on bags as there may be broken glass or sharp objects inside that may injure you or others.



- Don't enter the river environment including creek banks and creek areas, when volunteering in trail areas.
- Don't overexert yourself.

In case of an emergency please dial 911; do not wait to call program staff.

Teachers and Group Leaders

- Students must be supervised at all times.
- Be sure students are fully aware and capable of abiding by rules and guidelines of the program.
- Report any safety hazards to staff.
- Use any additional safety precautions you believe to be necessary.

Students and Minors

- Stay in sight of your teacher or supervisor.
- Work with a partner.
- Do not pick up trash near the street or curbs.
- Do not pick up any sharp objects (broken glass).
- Report any safety issues to your teacher or supervisor.
- If park staff is present, use caution when working around them. Do not run in front of them or get too close when they are operating machinery.
- Wash your hands when you are done working.
- Do not run or throw objects and be sure to follow all rules of the park.
- Do not break sprinkler heads in the grass, do not write on walls and do not destroy park equipment or amenities. These are crimes.



Volunteer Task Guidelines

Litter Removal

- Wear gloves at all times.
- Work during regular park hours.
- Do not work during hazardous weather conditions (rain, storms, high wind).
- Do not overexert yourself. If you begin feeling tired, take a break.
- Tie bags tightly prior to disposal.
- Do not dispose of hazardous material. Please call 630-848-5000 if you encounter any of these objects.
- Do not stomp on trash bags.
- Recycle whenever possible. We have separate containers at each park for recyclable items.
- In the event that the trash cans are full, place your filled bags next to the can and notify the Parks Department at 630-848-5000 that there is additional trash ready for pick up.

Weed Removal

- Wear appropriate gloves at all times.
- Protect yourself by wearing the proper clothing (long pants, shirts, appropriate shoes, glasses, etc.).
- Do not use power equipment.
- Do not use chemicals
- Do not work in dangerous weather conditions (rain, storms, high wind)
- Do not overexert yourself. If you begin feeling tired, take a break.
- Tie bags tightly prior to disposal.
- Children should not use weeding tools. All volunteers must be at least 12 years of age.
- Use caution when working with thorny weeds and be aware of any poisonous plants in the area.
- Do not bag weed clippings; these can be placed into separate bags to be recycled.
- Do not weed on pathways or curbs, and do not block any trails or paths.
- Be cautious and courteous to park and trail patrons.
- Wear bright colored clothing or a vest to ensure others see you.

Graffiti Removals

- Let the Naperville Park District know if you see any major graffiti as we have industrial chemicals and supplies to safely remove it.



Contact Information

Becca Krzyszkowski, Volunteer & Events Manager

Office: 630-848-3606 Fax: 630-848-5001 E-mail: rkrzyszkowski@napervilleparks.org

Park Watch Line

630-848-5050

Please contact the Park Police Watch Line to report any crimes, dangers or suspicious activities in our parks.

For any emergency, please call 911.