

SAFETY GUIDELINES	
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1. Introduction

Adopt-a-Spot (including Adopt-a-Road, Park, Beach, Waterway and any public space) is a safe, enjoyable and educational litter cleanup and prevention program that gives local communities the opportunity to contribute to a healthier and cleaner local environment.

Adopt-a-Spot mobilises an army of community-focussed organisations and individuals who clean their local adopted environment. The program's purpose is to educate the community that littering is a social offense and an unacceptable action.

The safety of Adopt-a-Spot volunteers is paramount. These detailed and very specific safety guidelines have been developed to maximise volunteer safety and must be reviewed prior to the start of any Adopt-a-Spot clean up activity.

The guidelines were compiled using the best available information and are based on past and present practices and experiences. In this regard, KQB reserves the right to change, add or delete conditions as required. The safety guidelines apply to all and any Adopt-a-Spot clean-up projects in Queensland.

Where an Adopt-a-Spot program is proposed on state-controlled roads (major road links between cities) the road authority is the Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads. For local roads (roads in cities or low trafficked roads), the relevant road authority is the local government for that area.

Adopt-a-Spot participants must realise they will be working in a potentially hazardous environment and should adhere to the recommendations contained in these safety guidelines. Individual participants are responsible for the success and safety of the program and are asked to display common sense when performing activities.

KQB, Main Roads and participating local governments reserve the right to terminate any Adopt-a-Spot agreement if activities are not performed safely, satisfactorily or for any other reason.

An Adopt-a-Spot agreement between KQB and a registered group does not present any special power to the group. The road authority does not give any rights or privileges, and reserves the right to cancel an agreement or relocate a group to a different public space.

Participants are required to read these safety guidelines thoroughly and encouraged to ask questions if aspects of these guidelines or personal responsibilities during Adopt-a-Spot clean-up activities are not clearly understood.

2. Supervision

2.1 Group Leader

A registered Adopt-a-Spot group shall appoint a **Group Leader** to act as a representative and contact on behalf of the group to assist in communicating information to KQB, Main Roads and local governments.

2.2 Working Party Supervisors

To help avoid accidents, within each actual Adopt-a-Spot group working party, a responsible person should be given the task of “supervisor”.

One of the functions of the supervisor is to act as a spotter to ensure that participants work clear of road shoulders, steep embankments and other potentially hazardous situations. As volunteers concentrate intently on the work they are doing, they may ignore outside dangers and accidentally put themselves at risk.

2.3 Working Party Numbers

To perform work safely, the recommended minimum number of persons in a working party should be three (3) and the maximum number of persons in a working party should not exceed twenty (20).

While it is hoped that all participants in an Adopt-a-Spot activity will enjoy the experience and have a degree of fun, too many participants can generate the misconception that there is safety in numbers. Such an atmosphere when working close to a road is dangerous.

2.4 First-Aid

The Group Leader shall ensure that each working party on an Adopt-a-Spot clean up activity has a first-aid kit available on site. It is recommended that at least one person in each working party have a current first-aid certificate. It is also recommended that the Adopt-a-Spot Group Leader be familiar with the *First Aid 2004 Code of Practice*. For further information visit the Department of Industrial Relations website at www.dir.qld.gov.au.

2.5 Check List

Each Adopt-a-Spot group should develop its own checklist for use before an activity commences. The Activity Checklist (Form 1) will provide a guide. The Group Leader should be responsible for checking off against the list prior to any Adopt-a-Spot activity.

Some things to consider are:

- Safety refresher talk for participants
- Issues identified in the site safety plan
- Who is the Group Leader
- Who are today’s working party supervisors
- First aid kits
- Sharps containers
- Safety vests
- Gloves
- Collection bags and work tools
- Personal protection equipment
- Vehicle parking
- Direction of pick-up
- Make-up of groups and supervision of juniors
- Mobile phones (who has them?)
- Setting & collection of road safety signs

3. Children

Children not participating in an activity should not be left in a vehicle unless supervised by an adult.

3.1 Children 12 Years and Older

Sufficient adults shall be present to supervise younger team members. As a guide, the following should apply:

- one adult supervisor (19 years or older) for every four (4) participants between 12 & 15 years;
- one adult supervisor for every eight (8) participants between 16 and 18 years.

4. Safety Issues

4.1 Risk

Any work undertaken prior to or during an Adopt-a-Spot clean up activity is performed at the participants' own risk. Participants are required to exercise care when performing any activity.

Parents or supervisors of children are responsible for the safety and actions of children at all times.

4.2 Safety Induction

Prior to participants undertaking their first Adopt-a-Spot clean up activity they must complete safety induction training. This will include viewing the safety training video and a thorough review and discussion of these safety guidelines. The group leader must record the date that each participant undertakes the safety induction and the date of each refresher thereafter in the safety induction register (Form 5). Each participant must undertake a full safety induction every six months.

4.3 Site Safety Plan and Risk Management Process

The preparation of a site specific safety plan is a prerequisite to undertaking an Adopt-a-Spot activity.

As each Adopt-a-Spot site could contain areas where added caution needs to be exercised, the plan should address these areas and develop methods to minimise risk.

A site safety plan "template" will be provided by KQB to each Adopt-a-Spot group. The site safety plan should address the issues raised in these safety guidelines as well as:

- how the work is to be performed and in what sequence
- positioning of advance warning signs
- methods of crossing the road
- places for safe drop off of participants
- places for parking

4.4 Pre-Work Safety Refresher

Because the period between Adopt-a-Spot clean-up activities could be a few months, and because of the possibility of first-time participants, the Group Leader is required to arrange a pre-work safety refresher immediately before each activity.

The refresher shall cover the safety requirements contained in these guidelines, what to do in the event of an accident and other details contained in the site specific safety plan. The group leader must record the date that each participant undertakes the safety refresher in the safety induction register (Form 5).

4.5 Interference with Others

Participants shall not stop, direct or interfere with traffic or legitimate users of the road corridor or interfere with road construction or maintenance activities being undertaken by Main Roads, the local government or any authorised contractor. Such activities shall take precedence over Adopt-a-Spot activities. Participants shall not trespass or interfere with the rights of private landowners.

4.6 Pets

No pets are allowed in the work area during Adopt-a-Spot activities.

4.7 Drugs and Alcohol

Participants shall be free from the influence of alcohol or illegal substances during any part of an Adopt-a-Spot activity.

Persons who are using prescribed medication that may cause drowsiness, disorientation or other debilitating effects shall not participate in roadside activities.

4.8 Radios, CD players, etc

The use of compact disc, tape players, radios or other devices that may impede hearing are prohibited during Adopt-a-Spot activities. This requirement is to ensure that participants remain alert to any noise that may signal danger.

4.9 Safe Parking

Vehicles must be safely parked well clear of the road carriageway. Do not use emergency hazard lights when parked.

Car-pooling or shuttle bus type services are recommended to reduce the number of vehicles parked beside the road.

When leaving the Adopt-a-Spot work site in a vehicle, use caution when re-entering traffic.

4.10 Direction of Work Flow

Work should progress in a direction opposite to the flow of traffic (if applicable).

Working towards the oncoming traffic will allow the maximum time possible to take corrective action in the event of a vehicle leaving the carriageway or losing control. This will also make the task of the working party supervisor easier. Stay alert at all times.

Work should be carried out on one side of the road at a time. Groups should not be split. This will assist the working party supervisor in monitoring the safety of the group.

4.11 Road User Aggression

Road workers are sometimes targeted by passing motorists who throw objects at them as well as yell verbal abuse at them. A distinction between road workers and Adopt-a-Spot participants wearing similar vests may not be obvious to some motorists.

Group Leaders, working party supervisors and all participants should be conscious of the possibility of road user aggression and be prepared to deal with such aggression.

4.12 General Hygiene

Due to the dusty nature of Adopt-a-Spot work, it is recommended that participants strictly observe hygiene standards and wash their face and hands at the completion of activities and before consuming food.

4.13 Flora and Fauna

Be alert for poisonous plants and stinging insects.

Be alert for places where snakes may be located.

Listen for possible swarms of bees. Commercial beehives are sometimes placed beside roads - if a beehive is suspected of being in the area, leave the area immediately.

4.14 Crossing Roads

The crossing of roads should be addressed in the site safety plan for the particular work site. Do not attempt to cross a busy road on foot.

Use caution when crossing roads and use pedestrian crossings, signals, underpasses or footbridges where provided. Exercise caution near merging lanes, exit and entry ramps and road intersections.

5. Accidents

In the event of an accident, medical assistance should be rendered at the earliest opportunity. Contact the Keep Queensland Beautiful Program Manager concerning any accident or incident, as soon as possible.

Serious accidents requiring medical attention should be reported to the KQB and Main Roads or local government contact officers immediately.

The Adopt-a-Spot Group Leader shall provide a written incident/hazard report (Form 4) to KQB as soon as practicable.

The Adopt-a-Spot Group Leader shall keep a permanent, written record of all incidents and hazards (minor or major).

6. Activity Times

6.1 Daylight Hours

Activities shall occur only during normal daylight hours and shall cease when visibility or safety is affected (for example – during fog, rain or electrical storms).

Restrictions on Adopt-a-Spot work times may be applied to certain sites during peak hour traffic or regional and state public holidays or associated long weekends, due to increased traffic flows during these times. This issue should be discussed in advance with Keep Queensland Beautiful and the road authority representative.

6.2 Wet Weather

Participants should exercise caution during or after wet weather, as surfaces and slopes may become slippery.

7. Safety Equipment

7.1 Safety Signage

Portable, corflute volunteer road safety warning signs will be provided by KQB as part of the Adopt-a-Spot program.

These safety signs shall be erected by responsible members of the registered Adopt-a-Spot group prior to any work commencing.

These should be erected at the start of the clean-up area, facing on-coming traffic, and immediately prior to the recognition sign (if erected).

7.2 Additional Signage

Official Adopt-a-Spot recognition signs (supplied by KQB / local authority) and the road safety warning signs are the only signs which may be displayed. Additional signs, posters or other material may not be displayed during or between clean-ups.



Recognition signage is supplied after 4 clean ups.

7.3 Safety Vests

High-visibility safety vests should be worn **before** arriving at the work site and must be worn at all times (when on the site). Safety vests must be worn as the outer-most garment.

The safety vest must be secured at the front (ie buttoned up or “Velcro”) to ensure the upper body is completely covered.

Safety vests remain the sole property of KQB. These items which are listed on the supply checklist forwarded to each group remain with the Adopt-a-Spot Group for the duration of their involvement in the program.

7.4 Personal Protective Equipment

All participants in an Adopt-a-Spot activity are collectively and individually responsible for ensuring the safety of themselves and others.

The Group Leader has the final say in approving or rejecting a participant, including if that person's personal protective equipment is considered unsuitable.

Personal protective equipment includes:

➤ **Clothing**

Clothing should not be worn that may impair vision, restrict movement or unnecessarily divert the attention of passing motorists. Clothing should be light-coloured to assist in recognition.

➤ **Shirt**

Because of the sun exposure on the back of the neck through bending associated with litter collection or tree planting/maintenance, a shirt with a collar is recommended. A shirt with long sleeves is also recommended.

➤ **Hat**

A broad brimmed hat with chinstrap is preferred in preference to a cap. However, any head protection is better than nothing.

➤ **Sun block**

Sun block is recommended and organisers are encouraged to make arrangements for the complete group.

➤ **Insect repellent**

Insect repellent is another handy item that is recommended.

➤ **Gloves (provided by KQB)**

Protective gloves must be worn when collecting litter. Please remember that gloves may not ensure full protection from sharp objects.

➤ **Footwear**

Footwear with substantial soles and uppers shall be worn at all times. Shoes with open toes, backs or sides, thongs and sandals are strictly not permitted.

➤ **Eye protection**

Depending on the road surface, eye protective glasses (eg sunglasses or spectacles) may be required.

➤ **Water**

Carry a supply of drinking water and be conscious of heat exhaustion and overexertion.

8. Suitable Areas

Please note: These restrictions may be relaxed or tightened by the road authority, depending on traffic conditions at the specific sites. The Adopt-a-Spot Group Leader and/or working party supervisors may tighten restrictions, but not relax them.

8.1 Off Limits Areas

In environments with built up footways, footpaths and kerbing, activities are restricted to an area between the back of the kerb and the property line.

In environments without built-up footpaths and kerbing, activities shall not occur closer than three (3) metres from the road edge.

Where open drainage exists, collection may occur only up to the drain edge on the footway side. Adopt-a-Spot activities shall not occur in central road medians unless specific, prior written approval is given by the road authority.

Participants shall not collect litter on the road surface, paved or gravel shoulders, in tunnels or in any area that could pose a danger.

Litter may be collected from pedestrian footways on bridges, but not on the vehicle carriageway areas.

8.2 Private Property

KQB may only give approval to collect litter, land rehabilitation or graffiti removal in approved areas under the road authority's control.

Litter on adjoining land is outside the scope of the Adopt-a-Spot program and neither KQB nor the road authority endorses entry onto such land in any way.

Permission to enter onto other land must be independently sought (in writing) from the landowner.

9. Litter Collected

9.1 Litter Bags

Please use biodegradable plastic bags to collect litter.

It is recommended that Adopt-a-Spot group working parties use smaller bags to collect litter, as they are easier for group members, particularly children, to carry around. As the smaller bags are filled, they can be deposited in larger or heavy duty bags (these bags should be strong enough to be dragged along the ground, to avoid lifting). Once full, all litter bags should be tied and placed at the agreed location for collection, or loaded for transport to the agreed disposal point.

9.2 Collected Litter and Full Bags

Because of possible injury, do not attempt to compress litter.

Full bags may be disposed of in either of two ways by prior agreement:

1. With the prior approval of the relevant local government, full bags may be collected by the Adopt-a-Spot group and disposed of at an approved rubbish disposal point; or
2. By liaison with the KQB program manager and by prior arrangement only, full bags may be tied and left on the roadside at predetermined locations. By arrangement, these will be collected and disposed of by a maintenance contractor. Where a prearranged pick-up location has not been nominated, the bags should be placed in a visible area at least 3m from the road edge. An area should be selected which is not susceptible to damage from traffic pulling off the road.

9.3 Hazardous Objects

Do not touch potentially hazardous materials such as powders, chemicals, weapons, ammunition, dangerous objects or dead animals.

If an object cannot be accurately identified as being safe - do not touch it!

If considered necessary, determine the location of the suspect materials using fixed road furniture or objects as a reference (for example – “between the third and fourth guidepost east of the 100km/h sign”) and report all potentially hazardous situations and objects to your Group Leader.

The Group Leader shall record the hazard on the incident/hazard form (Form 4) and report the hazard and its location to the KQB program manager.

Further information can be found in the *Hazardous Substances Code of Practice*. For further information visit the Department of Industrial Relations website at www.dir.qld.gov.au.

9.4 Hypodermic Syringes (Sharps)

Caution should be exercised if a hypodermic syringe is found. **For this reason, do not pick up a pile of rubbish by hand where the contents are not known.**

If a syringe is found, the decision to leave or remove it is the decision of the registered Adopt-a-Spot group. This decision should be made prior to the litter collection day so that adequate preparations may be made.

If a registered Adopt-a-Spot group decides that syringes will be collected, KQB will provide 1 sharps container and 1 pair of heavy duty gloves for collection. **Gloves must be worn.** Please note the sharps containers are single use, which means once the lid is fastened it cannot be opened again.

Prior to the clean up, contact the nearest needle exchange centre, hospital or medical centre to confirm they will accept sharps containers from your group.

You can find out where your nearest needle exchange centre is by calling the Clean Needle Helpline on 1800 633 353.

It is recommended that a responsible person in the group be given the role of collecting sharps and safely storing the sharps container for transportation to the needle exchange centre.

The recommended procedure is:

1. Place the opened sharps container on the ground (for extra stability you can place the container on its side)
2. Do not hold the container with your hands when transferring the sharp to the container - this will help to prevent accidental needle stick injury
3. With gloved hands, carefully pick up the syringe at the plunger end
4. Place the syringe into the container with the sharp end first
5. When collection of sharps is complete, securely fasten the lid onto the container
6. Safely store the sharps container, ready for delivery to the disposal facility

There are a number of methods available for the legal disposal of used sharps containers. The preferred method is to give the used container to the nearest needle exchange centre, hospital or medical centre.

If the group chooses not to collect the sharps, please discuss this with the KQB program manager.

9.5 Recyclables

Some areas may have a local recycling bin or centre where recyclable items can be deposited. Adopt-a-Spot groups may choose to collect and store recyclable items separately and deposit them at their nearest recycling centre.

Any decision to separate recyclables should be taken prior to commencing clean-up activities.

9.6 Lost Property

Any item of value found during an Adopt-a-Spot activity shall be surrendered to the nearest police station (for example – wallet, purse, camera, money, etc).

An obligation to report a specific matter lays in common law. In this regard, the reporting of such occurrences relies on Adopt-a-Spot group participants being good citizens.

The Group Leader should be advised of any such finds and make a written record in the activity report of what action was taken.

10. Communications

10.1 Contact Names

A name and telephone number for a KQB and either Main Roads or the local government contact officer will be provided to the registered Adopt-a-Spot group.

10.2 Communications with KQB and the Road Authority

The Adopt-a-Spot Group Leader shall liaise with the KQB Program Manager to initiate contact with the road authority, prior to the intended Adopt-a-Spot activity date.

Prior contact with the road authority will ensure that:

- If required, full heavy duty litter bags can be collected as soon as possible after a clean-up to prevent accidental damage and vandalism;
- The activity is coordinated with any closures and verge mowing programs;
- The activity does not occur directly after herbicide treatment;
- The activity does not conflict with any planned works by the road authority;
- There is no road construction or changes to traffic conditions on the particular road section.

10.3 Reporting Requirements

At the completion of each Adopt-a-Spot activity, the Group Leader shall complete an activity report (Form 3) for KQB, including details of abnormal occurrences (for example, valuable or unusual items found).

Where relevant, the Group Leader shall also submit an incident/hazard report (Form 4) that will include details of any accidents or injuries sustained during the Adopt-a-Spot activity, and details of any hazardous objects found in the area.

10.4 Requests Dealing with Other Issues

It is envisaged that some groups will identify a range of issues that are not the direct responsibility of KQB. The group leader needs to convey matters such as this to KQB who will make the request to the appropriate Minister or council Mayor. Groups are not permitted to liaise directly with Main Roads or local Council, unless otherwise discussed.

Please direct enquiries to:

Keep Queensland Beautiful
PO Box 3260, South Brisbane Qld 4101
T: 07 3040 2999
F: 07 3259 8211
E: info@keepqueenslandbeautiful.org.au
W: www.keepqueenslandbeautiful.org.au

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