



FRIENDS
OF THE
KAW



Kansas River

Do-It-Yourself Cleanup Toolkit

We all play a part in taking care of the Kansas River and our watershed. You can do your part by using this guide to host a riverbank cleanup!

Cleanups are simple, but following a few important guidelines will ensure your cleanup goes smoothly. Check out the following pages for planning and safety tips. For more information, go to www.kansasriver.org or email Friends of the Kaw at info@kansasriver.org.



PLANNING YOUR CLEANUP

Choose a location and get permission to work there.

- Most of the land on the banks of Kansas creeks and rivers (including the Kansas River) is private property. Contact landowners before working on private property and local government officials for permission to work on public land.
- Choose a location that is accessible and easy to find. Does it have enough parking? Can you clean it up safely? Consider other things volunteers might need, like a restroom or a good cell signal.
- Be sensitive to the ecosystem and only work in areas where you won't cause damage. Do you see a tire that can't be removed without harming the riverbank? Leave it and call your local waste management office for help. See kansasriver.org/do-it-yourself-cleanup-toolkit for a list.

Decide how to dispose of the trash and recycling.

- Plan ahead and decide how you will transport the trash and recycling and where you will dispose of it. Call your local waste management office for suggestions, if needed. Check the Friends of the Kaw website at the link listed above for resources for disposal and recycling in the counties along the Kansas River.
- Not everything you find will be recyclable. For example, plastic that is very dirty or has liquid in it can not be recycled. Most city recycling divisions have a list of what can and cannot be recycled by their facilities. Call your local office for more information or if you have questions.



Set a time and tell your volunteers when and where to meet.

- Two hours is plenty!
- Give your volunteers an address, if possible. If not, point out the important landmarks or provide the GPS coordinates.

Gather your supplies

- At a minimum, you will need trash bags and gloves. Some cities and counties provide free trash bags for volunteer cleanups. Check with your local waste management office..
- A good first aid kit is also important.

Scout the area before your cleanup.

- Check for hazards and look for large accumulations of trash.



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Riverbank Cleanup Tips and Information



- Check the weather and water levels if you'll be near a river. Links to NOAA and the US Geological Streamflow pages can be found at kansasriver.org/river-access-map.
- Prepare a rain plan. If you work near a river, be sure conditions will be safe throughout the entire cleanup.

Consider using a waiver.

- If your business or an organization hosts your cleanup, you might want volunteers to sign a waiver. Go to the cleanup toolkit webpage for a sample you can adapt.

WHILE YOU'RE THERE

- Set up a visible and accessible location with supplies. Use this space for volunteers to check in, sign the waiver (if using), restock supplies, or take a break.
- Establish the area that you will clean up. Set boundaries for your volunteers so they avoid hazards or don't accidentally trespass on private property.
- Talk to your volunteers! Do a quick group orientation so everyone knows the safety rules, where to clean up, and what to do in an emergency.
- Watch the weather and implement a weather plan if needed.
- Take pictures!

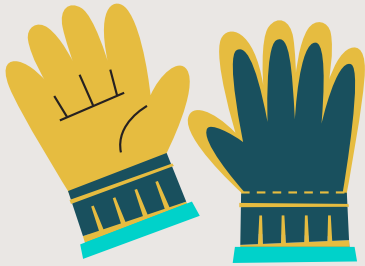


WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED

- Dispose of the trash and recycling. Call your local waste management office to collect any items you couldn't pick up.
- Celebrate! Cleanups are hard work, but also fun. Thank your volunteers and celebrate with them.
- Tell us how it went! Complete the form at bit.ly/FOKCleanupReport and we'll add your information to the list of cleanups in the Kansas River watershed. At the end of the year, we'll announce how much trash was collected and where. Be sure to tell us the organizer's name and contact information so we can send them a "Volunteers Get It Done" sticker as a thank you.
- Post on social media with #litterfreekaw or tag Friends of the Kaw (on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter) and share your success!

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Riverbank Cleanup Tips and Information



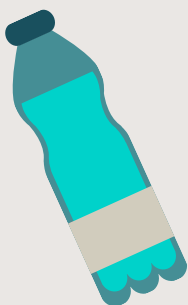
SAFETY TIPS

- Wear gloves!
- Never open a closed container to dump the contents. It might contain something other than what's on the label. Keep it sealed and throw away the entire container.
- If you find something that can't go to the landfill or can't be removed safely, leave it and call the professionals. This might include very large items or hazardous waste. Hazardous items might include needles, sealed drums, chemical containers, live ammunition, or leaky batteries.
- Watch for animals hiding in containers or large items (like tires). If you see a wild animal near trash you want to clean up, leave it alone and come back another time.
- Always wear a life jacket near the water.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Watch for poison ivy and other hazards.



WHO TO CALL

- Always get landowner permission before cleaning private or public property.
- Call the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks Game wardens if you see a dangerous situation involving wildlife. Go to the Friends of the Kaw's cleanup toolkit webpage for the phone number for each county's Game Warden.
- Go to the Friends of the Kaw website for information on reporting pollution - kansasriver.org/get-involved/identify-and-report-pollution/.
- ALWAYS call 911 for emergencies.



COMMON TRASH

There are a few common things you can expect to find at almost every cleanup:

- Plastic bottles
- Aluminum cans
- Styrofoam (cups, coolers, food containers)
- Fishing lines and lures
- Tires
- There's always a ball or two.

Visit www.kansasriver.org for more information!