



2017

**CAMPUS
CLEANUP**

TOOLKIT

Don't mess with Texas[®]

SMALL TRASH. BIG MESS.

Don't mess with Texas®

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OVERVIEW

Campus Cleanup was created as a student-focused effort to involve schools in cleaning up their campus and surrounding communities so they can see firsthand the negative effects of litter. This program was developed to inspire students to learn about their environment and take pride in their campus and community. It's a program that inspires students and faculty to work together to better their environment.

The first-ever Don't mess with Texas® **Campus Cleanup** took place on March 27, 2004. Hundreds of students from universities and colleges across Texas participated and were challenged to pick up litter on and around their campuses. The event showcased schools from across the state doing their part for their campus and their community. The event also presented a prime opportunity for mingling with fellow students and having a good time.

In its first two years, the program functioned as a cleanup challenge among Texas universities and colleges. Now, students of all ages have joined in on the fun.

We encourage participation to coincide with the 2017 Don't mess with Texas Trash-Off on April 8th, the single largest one-day cleanup event in the state. Trash-Off serves as Texas's signature event for the Great American Cleanup, the nation's largest community improvement program. How big is this event? In partnership with Keep Texas Beautiful and the Adopt-a-Highway Volunteer program, **1,359** Don't mess with Texas Trash-Off events were held across the state in 2016, featuring more than **34,191** volunteers. All told, **3,957** miles of highway were cleared of litter and debris, totaling more than **1.5 million pounds** of trash!



Research shows that Texans ages 16-34 are the most likely to litter. The Campus Cleanup program is available to any student or teacher in Texas interested in coordinating a cleanup event.

This year we can do more! We ask you to take the challenge and see the difference you'll make. Still undecided? Here are reasons to coordinate your own campus cleanup:

LEADERSHIP

Show your fellow students your commitment to a better environment.

IT'S ECOSMART

Demonstrate that your group is environmentally conscious.

EXPOSURE

Showcase your group or organization by hosting one of the best events ever.

BEAUTIFICATION

Beautify your community. Clean up the environment. **MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

DON'T MESS WITH TEXAS

Be part of a nationally recognized brand and litter prevention campaign. Show your true Texas spirit by organizing your Don't mess with Texas 2016 Campus Cleanup Event.

2017 CAMPUS CLEANUP PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES

What will your school do? Your school will organize and execute a cleanup event to fit your needs. To help, Don't mess with Texas provides participating schools with planning materials and promotional elements.

PLANNING AND REGISTRATION. Each school plans all the logistical details for its cleanup. Start planning at least one to two months beforehand. Remember, you need time to organize and deal with any potential setbacks to your event. Once you have the tentative date of your event, make sure to register your event online at the [Campus Cleanup](#) page.

DATE. We encourage schools to schedule their events on April 8th, 2017 to coordinate with statewide Don't mess with Texas Trash-Off events. The downloadable Campus Cleanup posters provided on [the website](#) have a write-in area for date, location and event details. Schools may schedule a second or separate cleanup anytime throughout the year.

CLEANUP LOCATION. Cleanups may be held on or off campus. The Campus Cleanup posters have write-in areas in which you can list meeting locations for volunteer trash bag pickup, provide cleanup instructions, and list giveaway items you create.

TRASH BAGS. Your school or organization is responsible for supplying large, sturdy trash bags to use during the cleanup. You must also make the necessary arrangements to properly dispose of trash bags once the cleanup is complete. If you're cleaning an area on campus, check with a school administrator about how to dispose of your trash. If you are cleaning a public area, check with your local city waste management division.



VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT. Your school/group is responsible for recruiting cleanup volunteers through pre-event publicity and outreach to campus organizations. Use the downloadable posters to help recruit volunteers and remind people of the event. Ask group members to post the cleanup on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and send emails to family, friends and coworkers. Tag your posts with #DMWT.

SAFETY. It is each school's responsibility to ensure that the proper equipment and safety precautions are taken at the cleanup for all volunteers.

CLEANUP RESULTS AND PHOTOS. Please note, Don't mess with Texas would like to hear about your event and help share your story. After your event is complete, please fill out the online [event reporting form](#) on the Campus Cleanup page. We would also love to have any photos or newspaper articles you can collect. All campuses that complete the online reporting form will be recognized on DontMessWithTexas.org and showcased on social media.

ENGAGEMENT

- Schools have the option to develop a Campus Cleanup contest, scavenger hunt or any other type of challenge that encourages participation and litter pickup in their area.
- Creativity is key. We leave the logistics and planning open so that every school/organization can develop an event in which they can take ownership and that will fit the needs of their community.
- Your school must submit proof of participation to Don't mess with Texas. This will include an outline of the contest and event logistics, number of participants and/or paperwork necessary for approval.

Ideas can include:

- Creating teams to see who can collect the most trash.
- Competing with rival schools for the most trash collected. The winning amount can be evaluated by number of bags collected or weight of bags, if a scale is available.
- Creating a scavenger hunt for trash items that volunteers can collect in order to win, such as a soda can, cuplid, etc.
- Creating different award categories; for example, most unusual piece of litter.
- Enlisting the business community. Turn to local business owners and your chamber of commerce to support your efforts. Ask them to donate supplies, tools or refreshments and to help you promote the event to their employees, members or customers.

Questions? Please email:

campuscleanup@dontmesswithtexas.org

EVENT PLANNING TIPS

EVENT LOCATION

Your ultimate goal is to ensure your litter prevention efforts are visible to as many students as possible. You want all students—especially those not participating in the event—to recognize your hard work so they will rethink their littering behavior. Choose areas that have both a considerable level of student traffic and an accumulation of litter. Here are some ideas to help your group find the perfect event location for your school, along with some tactics to make a strong statement against litter.

- **SPORTING EVENTS.** If your school has a sporting event (official or intramural) on the date you've chosen, your group could clean the area around the stadium/field. Ask event organizers to make announcements about the cleanup during the game.
- **NEIGHBORHOODS/DORMS/APARTMENTS/GREEK HOUSES.** Clean your neighborhoods, either on or off campus. Post flyers on each dwelling's door informing residents their neighborhood was cleaned by Don't mess with Texas Campus Cleanup volunteers and thanking them for not messing with Texas in the future. Make sure flyers are posted securely so they don't become litter. One tactic is to place the flyer in a litterbag or trash bag and hang it on the doorknob.
- **ROADSIDES.** Choose popular streets that are safe and have wide sidewalks or pedestrian lanes. Check with your city government to ensure you can hold a cleanup on the selected streets. (As indicated on the Safety Tips page, only TxDOT contractors and Adopt-a-Highway groups may clean Texas highways.)
- **CAMPUS HOT SPOTS.** If your school's campus has significant student activity on weekends, you may want to clean a high-traffic area on or around campus grounds, like the student union, libraries or food service areas.
- **PARKS/COMMON AREAS.** Clean a popular recreational area such as a neighborhood park, jogging trail or creek.

The more creative, the better!

Your school is not limited to hosting a cleanup. We encourage you to tackle your litter problem with creative solutions like these:

- Visit large classrooms and pick up trash left by other students. You could even leave a litter-prevention message on the chalkboard with permission from instructor, etc.
- Ask participants equipped with trash bags to gather in a main parking lot and ask drivers as they come and go to throw the trash in their cars into your bags. This ensures that these items will not turn into future litter.
- Set up a table or booth on campus promoting litter prevention and your event.
- Ask your group members to post the cleanup on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter and send emails to family, friends and coworkers.
- You'll need rakes, gloves, garbage bags, and possibly other items depending on the scope of the cleanup. Have your supply volunteer ask local hardware stores for donations.
- See if any volunteers have pickup trucks for hauling trash and debris.

VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT TIPS

- Plan early to avoid last-minute logistical issues.
- Appeal to potential volunteers by emphasizing that Campus Cleanup is affiliated with Don't mess with Texas and participation may be listed on a résumé under volunteer activities.
- Identify existing organizations interested in environmental issues that promote campus pride or that have a community service requirement for its members. Email each organization's president with an offer to speak at a group meeting.
- Contact your school's chapter of the Panhellenic Council (governing body for sororities) and Interfraternity Council (governing body for fraternities) to encourage participation, if applicable.
- If your school has a volunteer center, contact organizers and provide details about the opportunity to participate.
- Send a call for volunteers to your campus newspapers, radio and TV stations.
- Publicize your need for volunteers in common areas around campus (kiosks or bulletin boards) or set up a recruitment table in a high-traffic area or activity fair.
- If you recruit media, let volunteers know media coverage is likely, providing an opportunity for positive exposure for their organizations and your school.
- Ask professors of relevant subjects—communications, biology, environmental science—for permission to display posters in their classrooms and/or outside their offices.
- Email interested students, groups and faculty with event information.
- Use social media or iPads/laptops to display the Don't mess with Texas website and/or campaign ads. Find us on [Facebook](#) at Don't mess with Texas Program, on [Instagram](#) at @DONTMESSTEXAS and on [Twitter](#) at @DMWT_Program. Tag your posts with #DMWT.
- Ask professors/teachers to award extra credit to their students who participate.

Here are some ideas to enliven your event and guarantee your volunteers have a great time:

- Stage a competition among different school organizations.
- Ask a local restaurant to donate food for your volunteers.
- Solicit local businesses to donate gift cards and other items or offer discounts.
- Create a promotional flyer to distribute at local businesses and throughout the neighborhood.
- Invite a local band to entertain the volunteers.
- Raise money for a local charity by asking for pledges for every bag of litter collected.
- Plan an assembly or pep rally to recognize students who collected the most litter.

Prepare your volunteers

- Make a checklist of the equipment you'll need, permits and permissions required, if any, and other important concerns.
- Make sure your volunteers know what equipment to bring (if any), and encourage them to be prepared for weather conditions by bringing sunscreen, bottles of water and appropriate clothing.

AND REMEMBER TO SAY THANK YOU!

REGISTRATION FORM

Please visit [the website](#) to register.

Please contact campuscleanup@dontmesswithtexas.org with any questions.

PUBLICITY IDEAS

All events have the potential for generating awareness and participation through dedicated publicity efforts. Here are some basic steps you can take to publicize your Campus Cleanup event.

- **CAMPUS CLEANUP POSTERS.** Posters can be downloaded from dontmesswithtexas.org. Place them on kiosks, outside classrooms, in administrative offices, and on bulletin boards around campus to publicize the event. You can also give them to organizations (e.g., student council, sororities or fraternities) to post if necessary. Make sure you have permission to post information in public places. *Please monitor the posters while they are up—you don't want them to become litter if they are hung improperly or moved by another posting.*
- **CAMPUS MEDIA.** Send information about the event to your [school newspaper](#), [radio station](#) or [TV station](#) to include in their event listings or announcements.
- **CLASSROOM PRESENTATIONS.** Ask instructors if you can speak during their classes or leave messages on chalkboards before class to inform students about the event.
- **MEETING PRESENTATIONS.** Ask organization presidents if you can speak during their meetings to spread the word and gather volunteers. Try to speak to organizations that participate in service activities or have environmental interests.
- **LISTSERVS.** Use this option sparingly and be strategic with your email lists. It's best to contact the president (or another appropriate contact) of applicable groups and let him or her decide if your message is something to send to the larger group.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA.** Post event details on Facebook and Twitter. Post pictures on Instagram of littered areas you are going to clean up. Use Vine and Snapchat to create videos for campus media. We encourage using social media during your event as well; share it with us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram using #DMWT.

SAMPLE RADIO LINERS

When securing space on your school's radio station feel free to write your own copy or use one of the liners below to spread the word and encourage students to participate in the event.

All media costs incurred must be handled by the campus organization planning the event, but we encourage you to reach out to your college radio station or local stations to request free media space.

5-second options

- Come join the [school] Campus Cleanup event at [location] on [date]. Don't mess with Texas.
- Join us for the Don't mess with Texas Campus Cleanup event on [date] at [school location].

10-second options

- Come get down and dirty for [school's] Campus Cleanup event on [date].
We'll be picking up litter and reminding people why you Don't mess with Texas.
- Pick up litter and pick up dates. Join us for the Don't mess with Texas Campus Cleanup event on [date] at [school location] as we help keep [city] beautiful.

15-second options

- Enjoy lots of easy pickups at the Don't mess with Texas Campus Cleanup event on [date] at [school location]. Show your Texas pride by picking up litter and keeping our campus beautiful.
- Come get dirty at this year's Don't mess with Texas Campus Cleanup event at [school location] on [date]. Help us pick up litter, and you might even pick up a date. Don't mess with Texas.

MEDIA RELATIONS TIPS

One week before the event

Use the included media advisory and press release describing the who, what, when, where, why and how of your Campus Cleanup event. Distribute the advisory to media outlets (TV, radio, print and online) on your campus and in your city, inviting them to cover your event. Reporters should receive the media advisory a week before the event and the press release the day of the event. If you plan to use student media outlets, make sure you contact the necessary representatives. Begin posting on social media as soon as the details of your event are finalized.

- Identify the spokespeople who will represent your group in any interviews, both before and during the event. Make sure you also have contact information for someone at your school who can talk about its litter problem.
- Give your spokespeople a copy of your news release and the litter fact sheet included in this toolkit. Make sure they're informed and comfortable speaking about the cleanup activities.

Day of the event

- Distribute the press release to media outlets.
- Bring copies of the news release to the cleanup.
- When reporters arrive, introduce them to your spokespeople, give them a news release and litter fact sheet. Make sure they get all the information they need for their story.
- Use talking points for topics to cover during interview.

Remember to say “Thank you”

Celebrate your achievements and say thanks to your volunteers and partners for a job well done. Consider hosting a picnic or thank you celebration after your activities are completed, and include local officials and others who helped you along the way.

After the event

- Notify Don't mess with Texas if you received media attention at your cleanup by emailing campuscleanup@dontmesswithtexas.org.
- Fill out the online [event reporting form](#).

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

(School Name) Students to Tackle Litter Problem During State’s Annual Don’t mess with Texas Campus Cleanup

(YOUR CITY NAME) – More than **(number)** of **(school name)** students will pick up litter on **(date)** as part of the annual Don’t mess with Texas Campus Cleanup.

(School name) is one of many Texas campuses participating in a statewide campus cleanup, a student-focused program that is part of the Don’t mess with Texas® litter prevention campaign.

Volunteers from **(list student groups)** will be cleaning **(list areas)** on **(day)**. **(Describe other event details here, such as cleanup duration, interesting/unusual activities.)**

TxDOT established this event based on research showing that Texans ages 16–34 are the state’s most frequent litterers. This habit is not only ugly, but expensive—it costs millions in taxpayer dollars to pick up the more than 435 million pieces of litter discarded on Texas roadways each year. **(Any information about your school’s litter cleanup budget could go here.)**

[Quote from school representative here.] Example:

“I was kind of embarrassed to know people my age are the main group trashing Texas highways,” said **(name)**, **(title)** of **(organization)**. “I think the Don’t mess with Texas Campus Cleanup will make our volunteers and the students who see us picking up more aware of how littering affects our area.”

SAMPLE MEDIA ALERT

(School) Volunteers to Remove Litter From (Area) During Don't mess with Texas Campus Cleanup

- WHAT:** More than **(number)** **(school name)** students will be picking up litter on and around campus as part of the annual Don't mess with Texas Campus Cleanup. **(School name)** is one of several Texas campuses participating in the statewide program on **[day of the week]**, a student-focused program that is part of the Don't mess with Texas® litter prevention campaign.
- WHEN:** **(Date)**
- WHERE:** **(First location and start time)** **(Second location and start time)**
(Address) **(Address)**
- VISUALS:** **(Description of what group is doing here so TV reporters and print photographers know this is an event that would provide compelling visuals. Include anything unusual. An example: "Volunteers will be picking up litter around dorms and other student housing areas and leaving large yard signs that say "Don't mess with Texas.")**
- WHY:** Don't mess with Texas established this event based on research showing Texans ages 16–34 year olds are the state's most frequent litterers. This habit is not only ugly, but expensive—it costs millions of dollars to pick up the nearly 435 million pieces of litter discarded on Texas roadsides each year. **(Any information about your school's litter cleanup budget could go here.)**

TALKING POINTS

Your event

- State the name of your school, the name of your group and what you do, and how many volunteers you have.
- Explain why you chose your specific pick-up location.
- Tell why your group/school decided to get involved in the campus cleanup.
- Tell specifics about your event, for example, whether a contest or scavenger hunt will be held.

Don't mess with Texas

- Don't mess with Texas Campus Cleanup is part of the Texas Department of Transportation's litter prevention programs.
- Campus Cleanup is a student-focused program to show youth firsthand the negative effects of litter.
- Research shows that Texans ages 16-34 are the most likely to litter.
- 435 million pieces of litter are discarded on Texas roadways each year.
- Schools, shopping malls, gas stations and fast food restaurants contribute to roadway litter.

PRE-EVENT CHECKLIST

Answering these questions will help ensure the success of your Campus Cleanup event.

Location: Who will secure and handle logistics?

- What area(s) will you be cleaning?
- Do you need permission or permits to clean this location?
- Is it safe for volunteers to clean this location?

Volunteers: Who will recruit and organize?

- What are your strategies to recruit volunteers?
- When and how will you notify volunteers of event logistics?
- When and where will volunteers meet the day of Campus Cleanup?
- Should volunteers wear a designated t-shirt or outfit?
- What else should volunteers be told to bring (gloves, water, signs, trash bags, sunscreen)?
- How will volunteers need to be organized to effectively clean the area?

Event logistics: Who will handle these items?

- Who is the point person at the event? Will he or she review the safety tips with volunteers?
- What date will the event be held?
- What time will the cleanup begin and end?
- Are the date, time and meeting information clearly marked on the posters?
- Where will volunteers check in before the event?
- Are the posters being used to promote the event?
- How many trash bags will you need?
- Where should volunteers put their filled trash bags for counting?
- Can you divide the litter for recycling? If so, how will this be handled?
- How will you dispose of the litter once it's collected? **Note:** If you are cleaning an area on campus, check with a school administrator about how to dispose of your trash. If you are cleaning a public area, check with your local city waste management division.
- Who will take photographs of the event? What kinds of pictures should they take?
- Who will be the designated spokespeople if media are present? Do these individuals have the information they need for media interviews?

DAY OF EVENT

EVENT DAY CHECKLIST

- Trash bags
- Copy of permit to clean (if needed for your location)
- Extra gloves
- Sign-in sheet
- Giveaway items you designed (stickers, cups)
- Trash can for your registration/sign-in table
- Receptacle to recycle water bottles and/or sort recyclables from litter collected
- Water
- First aid kit
- Digital camera
- Copies of news release and litter fact sheet
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Safety vests
- Safety signs
- Any donated items including gift certificates, coupons, etc.

DON'T FORGET TO SAY THANK YOU!

CLEANUP SAFETY TIPS

Safety is your number 1 priority!

- Do not overload bags.
- Participants must have adequate supervision by one or more adults for minor participants of a group who are 15 years of age or younger, with at least one adult for every three children who are 7 to 14 years old.
- Children under the age of 7 should not be allowed on the side of roadways. If on a campus or off a traffic roadway, one adult must be present per child under the age of 7.
- Stop work/cleanup during inclement weather.
- Conduct a rollcall before and after event to make sure all volunteers are accounted for.
- Carry a cellphone and don't use earphones.
- Have the phone number of group or event organizer, in case of an emergency.
- Notify appropriate authorities of any heavy/large objects. Do not attempt to pick them up yourself.
- Be mindful of your surroundings such as overgrown vegetation or bushes, stickers, poison ivy, insects, snakes, etc.
- Keep within designated cleanup boundaries of the campus, park and/or roadway.
- Pick an area/time that is not in the middle of heavy foot traffic.
- Know the phone number and the driving route to the nearest hospital.

Attire

- Volunteers should wear gloves to protect hands from sharp objects. Leather gloves are suggested.
- We encourage volunteers to wear hats, long sleeves and long pants. They will protect against the sun and any poisonous plants or insects you might encounter.
- Wear light-colored clothing.
- Wear closed-toe, comfortable shoes. Leather shoes or boots with good soles are recommended. Make sure shoelaces are tied at all times.

Road Safety

- Only registered Adopt-a-Highway groups can pick up on state maintained roadways; high-traffic areas and high-speed highways are TxDOT's .
- Do not stop or park vehicles on roadways. Park vehicles clear of roadway.
- Arrange carpools to pick-up sites to reduce the number of vehicles that must be parked.
- Stay out of the street or roadway. Only cross the roadway when necessary. Always walk facing traffic and with a partner.
- Always work facing traffic. Never turn your back to oncoming cars. If you can see an out-of-control vehicle coming your way, it might be possible to avoid danger.
- Work in pairs and avoid walking alone.
- Never walk on guardrails. Do not lean over any railings.

ALWAYS THINK SAFETY FIRST!

Health Concerns

- Do not pick up anything that could be hazardous to your health or looks like medical waste. This includes needles, syringes, glass, animal carcasses, urine bottles or heavy objects.
- Always have a first aid kit available, and one or two volunteers should be familiar with CPR and general first aid techniques in case of an emergency.
- Sunscreen and insect repellent are good items to keep on hand.
- Keep a list of any allergies that volunteers have in case of an emergency.
- Drinking water should be available to volunteers at all times.
- Wash your hands after cleanup.
- Have transportation ready in case of an emergency.

Don't mess with Texas®

LITTER FACT SHEET



LITTER ON TEXAS ROADWAYS

Thanks to efforts like Campus Cleanup, the 2013 visible litter study indicates that since 2009, litter accumulation has decreased by 34 percent on Texas roadways.

According to the 2013 visible litter study, 435 million pieces of visible litter accumulate on Texas roadways annually. Combined with microlitter—litter smaller than two square inches—there are 1.102 billion pieces on Texas roadways.

You can be fined \$500 every time you litter in Texas. If what you toss weighs more than 5 pounds, you may have to pay up to \$2,000.



LITTER CLEANUP COSTS THE U.S. MORE THAN \$11 BILLION EACH YEAR.

Millennials ages 16-34 have a much higher incidence of littering than older adults.

In 2013, most total litter—71 percent—consisted of microlitter that is not easily seen on roadways, such as cigarette butts, straws and gum wrappers.

AT 31 PERCENT OF TOTAL LITTER, CIGARETTE BUTTS COMPOSED THE LARGEST PORTION OF TRASH.

Litter cost Texas taxpayers \$37 million in 2013.



1 IN 4 TEXANS ADMITS TO LITTERING IN THE PAST YEAR.

At 24 percent, tire debris was the second largest component of litter and is pervasive across all areas of Texas.



THE MOST COMMON FORMS OF LITTER ARE FOOD/ORGANIC MATERIAL AND SMALL PIECES OF PAPER—RECEIPTS, GUM WRAPPERS.

EVENT REPORTING FORM

The Texas Department of Transportation would like an accurate record of all 2017 Campus Cleanup results. Please fill out the online [event reporting form](#).

We'd love to hear any interesting stories from your event. Please also email digital photos to us. We'll be posting selected event photos on [dontmesswithtexas.org](#) and on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). If you have articles from your campus newspaper, please forward them to catherine.cromer@txdot.org.

How long does litter take to decompose?

TYPE OF LITTER	TIME TO DECOMPOSE
PAPER TOWEL	2-4 WEEKS
ORANGE/BANANA PEELS	UP TO 2 YEARS
WOOL SOCKS	1-5 YEARS
CIGARETTE BUTTS	1-5 YEARS
PLASTIC COATED PAPER, LIKE A CANDY WRAPPER	5 YEARS
PLASTIC BAGS	10-20 YEARS
NYLON FABRIC	30-40 YEARS
LEATHER	UP TO 50 YEARS
ALUMINUM CANS AND TABS	80-100 YEARS
DISPOSABLE DIAPERS	450 YEARS
FISHING LINE	600 YEARS
GLASS BOTTLE	1 MILLION YEARS

Source: nps.gov/tuma/forkids/upload/HowLongDoesLitterLast.pdf

For more information, refer to the 2013 Visible Litter Study conducted by Environmental Resources Planning, LLC for the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), located at dontmesswithtexas.org/research.php.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

CONTACT INFO

Please email campuscleanup@dontmesswithtexas.org

For more information about the Don't mess with Texas campaign and its programs, please visit dontmesswithtexas.org.

Don't mess with Texas® is a registered service mark and trademark owned by the Texas Department of Transportation.