



CLEANUP CHRONICLES



BUILDING
A CITY WE
LOVE

Sep 2023

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Upcoming events

As we are entering fall, we still have a number of upcoming events to participate in, including City led cleanups, as well as repair cafes, free swaps and drop off events as part of Circular Economy Month.

Cleanups

From now until the end of November, we will be hosting several cleanups that we would love to have you participate in! Please find the event and sign up details below, and sign up early so we know how many volunteers we can anticipate. You can also visit our [city calendar](#) for a full list of all the upcoming cleanups

1. [Oct 7](#) - Chinatown Cleanup
2. [Nov 4](#) - Chinatown Cleanup

Annual Volunteer Appreciation Event

Our Annual Volunteer Appreciation Event is coming up on the evening of Thursday November 2nd. Invitations will be sent to active Adopt-a-Block volunteers, City led cleanup volunteers and Neighbourhood Cleanup Party Hosts that have participated in 2023. Look out for the email invitation, and let us know if you haven't received one by October 15.



Volunteer Profiles

Every newsletter we would like to feature a few of our dedicated volunteers. This issue we would like to introduce Stuart, James and Joyce. If you (or your business, family, group, school etc.) would like to be profiled in an upcoming newsletter, please email us.

Stuart and Nugget



Q: What made you interested in becoming a volunteer with Neighbourhood Cleanup Programs?

A: I love the city where I was born and raised. My street and the ones that I've been accustomed to use during my regular runs have become increasingly littered with trash and cigarette butts. I learned that COV had an Adopt a Street program, and committed to do my civic duty while walking my dog, Nugget.

Q: What do you enjoy most about volunteering?

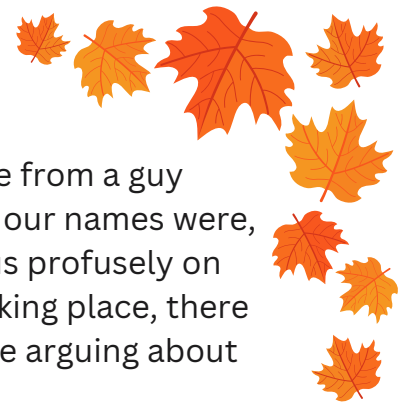
A: I enjoy trying to make a difference in my community. I've got to know my neighbors who would stop to ask me what I was doing with a bucket and gripper. I've receive multiple compliments and thank you's for my efforts. It's a great feeling.

Q: Are you involved in any other volunteer activities?

A: Nugget is a therapy dog, and we are volunteers at Mount St. Joseph hospital for over five years. We see the seniors in long-term care, patients in acute care, geriatrics, medicine, emergency, and not forgetting the countless overworked administrative staff, nurses, and doctors.

Q: Any funny or interesting volunteer related stories you wish to share?

A: After our pet therapy shift, Nugget and I were doing a perimeter trash clean-up around the hospital (where we collected 564 cigarette butts in addition to an abundance of litter) when we heard a shout from nowhere,



"Hey, you guys are awesome!" I looked around and the voice came from a guy from a 3rd floor apartment across the street. The guy asked what our names were, said he's been watching us do this on various days, and thanked us profusely on behalf of the neighborhood. With the rather loud conversation taking place, there were other people looking at us and thought perhaps that we were arguing about something.

Q: Anything else you might like to share with other volunteers?

A: I believe doing a street clean-up is something not common to most people but definitely needs the message conveyed: littering is not cool. It's been too easy to say, "It's not my responsibility"; however, I have learned that taking ownership of doing what's right is empowering. Leading by example has to start with doing. Hopefully community clean-up initiatives will become a regular practice by all.

James McCracken

Q: What made you interested in becoming a volunteer with Neighbourhood Cleanup Programs?

A: I was interested in volunteering to do park cleanups because I think it is a great way to give back to and care for the community I live in. It's also a great example of showing my dedication to caring for the environment and is something I would like to continue in university and as a career.

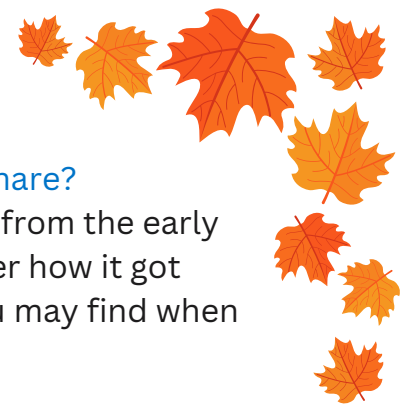
Q: What do you enjoy most about volunteering?

A: The sense of accomplishment I get when I see the amount of trash we have collected and how much better the park or neighbourhood looks. It makes me feel great about the work we are doing.

Q: Are you involved in any other volunteer activities?

A: I also volunteer with SPES (Stanley Park Ecology Society) in their DIRT Program (Dedicated Invasive Removal Team). This organization goes to different areas of the Park (mainly trails) and maps/removes invasive plant species that have taken over.





Q: Any funny or interesting volunteer related stories you wish to share?

A: An interesting find during a clean up was discovering an ID card from the early 90s! I found this extremely interesting because it makes me wonder how it got there and how long it has been there for. You never know what you may find when volunteering for organizations like this.

Joyce Mah

Best Health Magazine has done a profile on Joyce Mah – activist, avid traveller and one of our Adopt-a-Block volunteers. Check out her story and some photos here:

[Why One Woman Is Picking Up Garbage Wherever She Goes | Best Health \(besthealthmag.ca\)](http://besthealthmag.ca)

New Equipment Cleaning Instructions – Neighbourhood Cleanup Party

To prevent the spread of germs or diseases, after your cleanup is complete, all pickers and equipment must be cleaned and ready for the next group to use. This ensures the safety of both participants and staff. Please refer to the following instructions before packing up any equipment. Failure to return clean equipment could result in future cleanup equipment requests being rejected.

Make sure you have the following with you before you start your cleanup:

- quat/simple green/sanitizing spray for the picker ends/handles
- bucket or container with water (eg: you could reuse empty yogurt containers or other old containers for this if you do not have a bucket)

* Participants (or organizers) are responsible for sourcing the above equipment

After your cleanup is complete

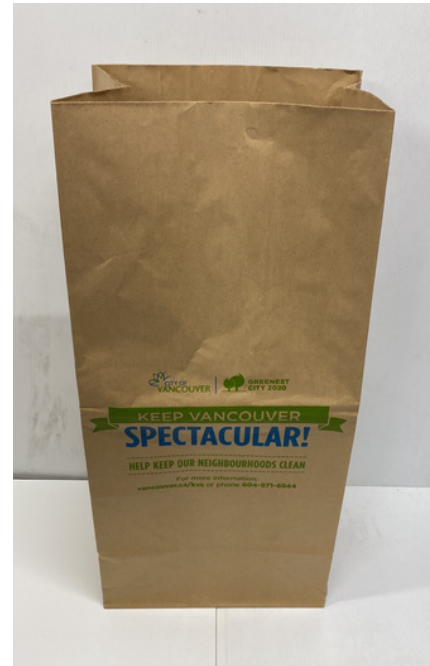
1. Please return all unused bags and gloves so we can pass them onto the next recipient.
2. Please rinse out picker ends in a bucket/container with water to get rid of any mud/dirt.
3. Please spray the picker ends and the picker handle with a sanitizing spray to kill off any germs/bacteria that could remain on the pickers.
4. Let the pickers dry out to prevent rusting and to prevent the duffle bag from getting wet and muddy.

Fall Odds and Ends

Leaf Bags

Are you interested in getting free paper leaf bags (while quantities last) for your fall leaf removal? If so, the City of Vancouver has partnered with City Farmer to hand out free leaf bags for residents. You can visit City Farmer, located at 2150 Maple St, anytime Monday/Wed-Saturday from 9am-4pm to pick up your leaf bags. Please call (604) 736-2250 prior to arrival so staff know to expect you.

Alternatively, you can arrange to pick up the leaf bags at the Solid Waste Programs office located on the 14th floor of 450 SW Marine Dr. Please email cleanup@vancouver.ca at least a week prior to pick up so the team can have sufficient time to prepare your order.



Garbage Bags

We will be transitioning towards one-size garbage bags after finishing our current inventory. The new bags are drawstring style and will be sized in between the existing small and large bags. For our Adopt-a-Block volunteers, we also offer reusable buckets as an alternative to bags.

Adopt a Catch Basin

Fall and winter months could mean heavier rain or snow. With falling leaves and other debris of city life, clogged catch basins can lead to flooded streets and trash washing into adjacent waterways.

Fortunately, we benefit from a small army of 'adopters' who give their time and energy to keep neighborhood catch basins clear. Adopt a catch basin and help keep your neighbourhood a vibrant, safe, and healthy space. Visit the [Adopt a catch basin](#) webpage to learn more information and to adopt today!

Call for Volunteers

We are seeking community-minded folks to assist us with our popular reuse and recycling drop-offs, and new free swap events. If you have an interest in reuse initiatives, please connect with us at reduce.waste@vancouver.ca to find out more.



Circular Economy Month and Waste Reduction Week

What is Circular Economy Month?

Circular Economy Month is Canada's first-ever public awareness campaign dedicated to educating and empowering Canadians to support an economy that delivers on the most important values of Canadians: protecting the planet and prioritizing people.

Circular Economy Month events in Vancouver

The City of Vancouver's Solid Waste Programs branch has organized a number of activities and events for Circular Economy month that residents can get involved in. From our Zero Waste Action Booklet suggesting actions to reduce waste in our lives, to free swaps in community centres around the city, Vancouver residents have many opportunities to learn about the importance of waste reduction and take concrete action towards making our city a cleaner and safer place.



- **October 2-29** - Zero Waste Action Booklet: complete these zero waste actions to reduce waste in October and receive a prize! (link to come)
- **October 14, 10am-1pm** - Reuse & Recycling Drop-off event and Frightful Free Swap at Kitsilano Secondary School parking lot: drop-off items that aren't accepted in curbside recycling, donate items that can be reused, and stop to swap Halloween items.
- **October 14, 10am-1pm** - Free Swap at Hastings Community Centre
- **October 18, 5pm-7pm** - Free Swap at Thunderbird Community Centre
- **October 21, 11am-2pm** - Free Swap at Douglas Park Community Centre
- **October 21, 12pm-3pm** - Free Swap at Dunbar Community Centre