



# Adopt-A-Highway



## THE MISSION

The Vernon County Adopt-A-Highway Program provides individuals, families, businesses, organizations, and public agencies with a unique opportunity to gain prominent recognition while beautifying the environment within their own communities. By collecting roadside litter, participants foster community pride and save tax payer dollars.

## Why participate in the Adopt-A-Highway Program?

There are over 285 miles of roadways in the unincorporated areas of the County. Unfortunately, every day, people carelessly litter those roadways by throwing gum wrappers, cans and paper out their vehicle windows. Large bulky items such as tires and old furniture are also purposely dumped by the side of the road.

What can we do? It's simple. We're asking for your help! By taking part in the County's Adopt-A-Highway Program, our overall reach is greatly extended. Participants get personal satisfaction by knowing that they are truly supporting their community.

## Is it easy to participate? YES.

We welcome individuals, families, businesses, public agencies, and organizations. We simply ask you to adopt a section of roadway in an unincorporated area for a period of at least two years. Participating groups demonstrate the importance of a clean environment by spreading the word and setting the example that littering is unacceptable.

## What are the benefits?

Self satisfaction coupled with the ability to help ensure the beauty of our diverse landscape rank high among the numerous benefits! The program increases public environmental awareness, reduces littering, expands tourism, and creates a partnership between citizens, community and government.

## Do I have to sign an agreement? YES.

A designated representative from your group must sign the Adopt-A-Highway Agreement. The purpose of the agreement is to ensure that the group acknowledges the hazardous nature of the work and is willing to accept responsibility for any liability resulting from their activities. The agreement also outlines the commitments made by the participants and Vernon County to help guarantee the program's success.



## Is a permit necessary? YES.

Approved permits are necessary for all activities conducted in the road right of way. We issue permits to all participants free of charge because we appreciate your contribution to our communities.



The permit issued to each individual, family, business, or group participating in the County's Adopt-A-Highway Program outlines the type of work that will be done and the specific location to be adopted. The permit may not be transferred to another group. Participants must read and understand the permit and the permit must be displayed at your adopted location each time your group picks up litter.

## How do I get started in the Program?

It's Easy! To find out more about the program or to discuss a potential location for adoption, simply call the Highway Department. If you have a particular section of highway in mind and that location is available for adoption, all you have to do is fill out and return the completed Adopt-A-Highway Application.

When your application is received, you will be invited to attend a meeting to finalize your participation in the program. At that time, you will receive the free permit and necessary supplies, and go over the safety rules and regulations.



## But, there's more! We commit to the following incentives:

**We will pay for and install** two recognition signs at the beginning of your adopted stretch of highway in each direction of traffic.

Each sign will prominently display your name. Participants may also choose, at their cost, to provide us with customized recognition panels that incorporate logos or insignias.



**We will acknowledge** your contribution to the Adopt-A-Highway Program in a press release.

**We will provide** your group leader with safety training information before your volunteer time begins. We will also lend you safety gear,

**We will provide** trash bags as well as free trash collection and disposal.

**We will issue** the necessary permit free of charge.

## In Return:

**You commit** to litter pickup along a two-mile section of roadway in an unincorporated area (pavement not included).

**You commit** to reviewing and following all safety and permit requirements before each clean up begins.

**You commit** to picking up litter a minimum of two times a year, or more, if needed.

**You commit** to notifying the Highway Department within 24 hours of a collection to report that the litter pick up has been completed.

**You are encouraged** to sort litter when picking up, taking recyclable materials to the recycling center. The group may keep any money collected from their recycling effort.

## Safety First and Foremost

Common sense and personal responsibility are "musts" for each program participant. Locations are selected to reduce risk; however, everyone must realize that they are working in potentially hazardous surroundings. While we want our roadways to be litter free, your safety comes first. We ask that you protect yourself and others by taking the following precautions:

### CLOTHING:

- Put the safety vests on when you arrive at your adopted location.
- Wear light-colored clothing and long pants

### VEHICLE SAFETY

 at the location:

- Carpool whenever possible.
- Park vehicles off roadways and shoulders. Never park on a bridge.

### PERSONAL SAFETY

 at the location:

- Exit and enter your vehicle on the side away from traffic.
- Always face oncoming traffic. Be alert.
- Do not enter drainage facilities.
- Do not run, throw objects, or engage in horseplay or any other activity that may distract drivers or interfere with motorists.
- Always be cautious when crossing roadways.
- Drink water to prevent dehydration. Be careful not to overexert yourself.

### WORK CONDITIONS:

- Do not work on holiday weekends or 24 hours preceding a holiday weekend.
- Do not work when it is raining or foggy.

- Avoid working when other conditions reduce visibility for drivers.
- Do not work when the road is wet or icy.
- Stop working before dusk.
- Do not touch hazardous substances such as powders, chemicals, weapons, sharp objects or dead animals. When in doubt, contact the Highway Department.
- Be alert for stinging insects and toxic weeds.
- Do not consume alcoholic beverages or drugs before or while participating in your clean up effort.

**REMEMBER: Always be prepared.** Be sure to have a first-aid kit on hand and always have transportation available.



## Vernon County Highway Department

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E-mail: [vchd@vernoncounty.org](mailto:vchd@vernoncounty.org)

To learn more about the Adopt-A-Highway Program, call the Vernon County Highway Department or send us an email.

For access to the application form and terms and conditions, you can log onto [vernoncounty.org](http://vernoncounty.org) and click on the Adopt-A-Highway tab.

Completed forms can be mailed, faxed or emailed to the Highway Department.

## Highway Department Mission Statement

### Our VISION is:

To have a Highway Department recognized as being totally committed to the public.

To build and maintain the roads and bridges necessary to enhance the lives and the livelihood of the citizens of this county.

### Our MISSION is:

To provide the citizens of Vernon County with outstanding service.

To cultivate public trust through integrity.

To efficiently maintain and expand the roadway infrastructure in the county.

### Our GUIDING PRINCIPLES are:

- ◆ Integrity and Credibility
- ◆ Respecting all members of this community by listening to their requests, then responding quickly and appropriately
- ◆ Recognizing each employee's loyalty, importance, and dedication to the mission of the Vernon County Highway Department
- ◆ Creating an environment that employees are proud to work in, knowing that each one has a role in the success of the Highway Department
- ◆ Fiscal responsibility and accountability to the citizens of this county
- ◆ Forming partnerships to improve our community
- ◆ Recognizing that the Highway Department works for the citizens of Vernon County