



## "Adopt" Programs

### Background of "Adopt" Programs

PITCH-IN CANADA established and started promotion of its "Adopt" program of public and private properties in 1972.

Community spirited citizens were urged to maintain those areas within their community which were being neglected in an effort to raise environmental consciousness, encourage beautification and promote tourism and economic development.

Since the 1970's communities throughout Canada have become increasingly interested in benefiting from PITCH-IN volunteers who are prepared to show their civic pride.

In 1990 PITCH-IN CANADA developed the Civic Pride Waste Management Program for local communities. The adoption of streets, park areas, vacant lots and other areas became an integral part of this year-round program aimed at enhancing the visual appearance of the community and managing waste.

### Tips for Establishing an "Adopt" Programs

If your community is considering establishing an organized "Adopt" Program, then PITCH-IN CANADA encourages you to consider the following:

<p><b>Assign responsibility of the program to one municipal department</b></p>	<p>It is important that your "Adopt" program be coordinated. Departments which could assume responsibility for the program could include Engineering, Roads, Parks &amp; Recreation or Public Works.</p>
<p><b>Determine which areas of the community are "up for adoption"</b></p>	<p>now and in the future... to ensure there is no overlap between volunteers and the community's maintenance staff.</p>
<p><b>Arrange for the collection and proper disposal of waste</b></p>	<p>Organize "drop-off" spots and arrange for separation of recyclables as dictated by your community's recycling program.</p>
<p><b>Obtain a commitment</b></p>	<p>Have the group sign a "Commitment Form" which spells out which areas they will maintain and how often. Most programs require volunteers to clean-up an area in spring, summer and fall. Depending on your local weather conditions, a winter clean-up may also be included. Ensure that the group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ designates a contact person who will ensure that minors are supervised by adults</li> <li>▪ reports any injuries including when, where and how the injury occurred and what action was taken, if any</li> <li>▪ abides by the Safety Rules and uses supplies and equipment supplied</li> <li>▪ avoids picking up hazardous materials</li> </ul>
<p><b>Have Voluntary Group sign a Liability Waiver and Release</b></p>	<p>Volunteers should acknowledge and assume the potential risks, agree to abide by the safety regulations, and release your community of any liability, claims and any other form of indemnification. Each community should consult with their legal counsel and have them draft an appropriate and legally binding Release and Waiver Agreement.</p>
<p><b>Address the safety of volunteers</b></p>	<p>Provide them with equipment or supplies (possibly donated by local businesses) and safety tips.</p>

	<p>Equipment might include litter pickers, gloves, vests, garbage bags and portable signage which can be placed alongside roadways while groups clean-up.</p>
<p><b>Provide Third Party Liability Insurance</b></p>	<p>Make sure it covers both injury to volunteers and/or others as well as property. In most instances this can be included as a rider in the community's insurance policy. Each community should consult their insurance carrier BEFORE introducing an "Adopt" program.</p>
<p><b>Provide Recognition for your volunteers</b></p>	<p>This can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ providing them with special PITCH-IN garbage bags imprinted with the "Adopt" or Civic Pride or PITCH-IN and your municipal logo so that taxpayers in your area are aware of the contribution made by the volunteers</li> <li>▪ erecting permanent signs along roadways, in park areas or any other area adopted by volunteers. Such signs could feature the Adopt &amp; Civic Pride logo, the "Adopt" Program name and the name of the group which has adopted the area (mount the name of the group as an independent attachment so that the sign can be re-used if another group takes over in future)</li> <li>▪ arrange for media publicity</li> <li>▪ invite them to be recognized annually at a Council meeting or organize an annual BBQ or civic banquet for volunteers, members of your Council, the media and corporate sponsors</li> </ul>