

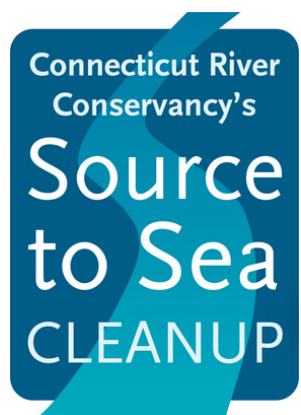


Updated June 2025

Connecticut River Conservancy's **Source to Sea Cleanup** **Group Leader Guide**



Welcome.



What is Source to Sea?

Source to Sea Cleanup is a powerful and effective community event spanning the length of our 410-mile watershed in NH, VT, MA, & CT. Each fall, thousands of volunteers of all ages and abilities come together to do their part and spend a few hours making the water cleaner, the river banks safer, and the wildlife happier.

How to use this guide



Welcome and thank you, Group Leaders, for organizing a local cleanup as part of Connecticut River Conservancy's Annual Source to Sea Cleanup! This event is only successful because of leaders like you. Please review ALL the information in this document - and the additional information on our [website](#) - before Cleanup day.

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BEFORE



THE CLEANUP

Step

1



CHOOSE YOUR SITE

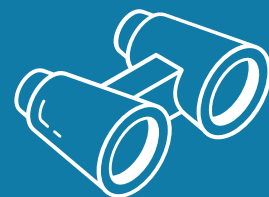
Visit our [website](#) to explore the locations available near you.

Once you've decided on a site, simply click on its listing to access a detailed description. To proceed with adopting the site for your event, click the 'Adopt This Site' button and complete the form.

This step allows you to register yourself and designate any co-leaders to your event. During this process, you have the option to set your event as either Public or Private.

If you have a specific site in mind that isn't currently listed on our map, you can submit a [Report a Trash Site form](#). Once your suggested site is approved, it will be added to the map of adoptable sites. You can then proceed to adopt it and register your event following the same steps outlined above.

For further assistance or if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out using our [Help form](#). We are here to help address any inquiries or concerns you may have.



SCOUT YOUR SITE

Before cleanup day arrives, it's essential to thoroughly assess your chosen site to ensure readiness and safety. Follow these steps to prepare effectively:

1

Survey Potential Hazards: Take a careful walk through the area to identify any potential risks such as steep banks, slippery surfaces, or patches of poison ivy. Note these hazards so you can plan accordingly and ensure the safety of all volunteers.

2

Assess Trash Levels: Estimate the amount of trash present and consider whether it matches the expected number of volunteers. This assessment helps in planning logistics and ensures that the cleanup efforts are appropriately scaled to the site's needs.

3

Bring Trash Bags: It's always a good idea to bring along some trash bags during your scouting trip. If there's not enough debris to engage a full group on cleanup day, take the opportunity to collect what you can by yourself. Moreover, if you encounter areas where individuals might be residing, consider offering your bags as a means for them to dispose of unwanted items to be collected during the cleanup. It is your choice if you would like to tackle this site or make CRC aware of its location.

By taking these proactive steps beforehand, you'll be well-prepared to lead a successful and safe cleanup event.



MAKE A TRASH PLAN

General Trash and Recycling:

Your local Department of Public Works (DPW) is eager to assist with your cleanup efforts! We encourage you to reach out to them ahead of time to confirm that they can accommodate your trash disposal needs on Cleanup day. Many municipalities not only cover any associated fees but also offer assistance in collecting larger items. You may use our Trash Coupon (see [Resources](#) > Forms to Print) at drop-off to easily communicate your partnership with the Source to Sea Cleanup.

It's important to separate recyclable materials from general trash to ensure they are handled appropriately.

Dumpsters:

Thanks to the generous support of our sponsor, USA Waste, dumpsters can be made available at locations where there is expected to be a significant volume of trash on Cleanup days.

To arrange for dumpster placement, please contact [Maddie Hart](#) at least one week in advance.



PREPARE SUPPLIES

DIY Supplies:

You can gather most of the cleanup materials you need right from your own home. We encourage you and your group members to bring the following items:

- Gloves: rubber or work gloves are recommended to protect your hands.
- 2 waste bags or buckets: one for collecting trash and another for recyclables, helping to keep things organized.
- Shovels or “nifty-nabbers” are optional items to assist you.
- First Aid kit: it’s a good idea to have basic medical supplies on hand in case of minor accidents.
- Hand sanitizer: while optional, it’s helpful for keeping hands clean during and after the cleanup.

CRC’s Supply Order Form:

For groups of 5 or more participants, CRC offers the option to [order supplies](#). To ensure availability, please submit your order at least 2 weeks prior to your cleanup date.

Supplies can be picked up at our Greenfield office located at 15 Bank Row, Greenfield, MA, or we can arrange to ship them directly to your designated cleanup location. This makes it convenient for you to gather all the necessary materials and focus on making your cleanup effort successful and efficient.



RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS

After you register your event, you will receive a unique link that you can start sharing with your community. Volunteers can join groups beginning in early August.

Encourage friends, family members, and colleagues to join your initiative! Their participation will significantly contribute to the success of the cleanup.

Having volunteers sign up online will streamline the organization of cleanup day for both you and your volunteers. It allows for better coordination and ensures that everyone is prepared and informed.

Boost the visibility of your cleanup effort by promoting it through flyers distributed in local businesses, community centers, and public spaces. Utilize social media platforms to reach a broader audience, sharing updates, inviting participation, and showcasing the impact your cleanup will make in the community.





DURING 
THE CLEANUP

REPORTING/DISPOSAL OF SHARPS

If your group encounters needles or other sharps during the cleanup, it's crucial follow these procedures:

1

Leave in Place and Report using our [HazMat Form](#)

- Leave the needles or sharps in their current location.
- Immediately report their exact location to a trained professional such as local police, fire department, health department, or another designated authority. These professionals have the training and equipment to safely handle and dispose of hazardous materials.

2

Dispose of Safely if Necessary

- If you must move or handle the sharps due to safety concerns (e.g., they pose an immediate risk to others), use gloves and tongs to carefully place them in a sharps container or a puncture-resistant container, ie: coffee can with lid, laundry bottle with lid.
- Ensure that all handling is done with extreme caution to prevent accidental needle sticks or cuts.

3

Proper Disposal

- Never dispose of needles or sharps in regular trash bins. Use designated sharps containers or follow local guidelines for proper disposal.
- Locate proper disposal locations near you through local health departments, pharmacies, or medical facilities that accept sharps.

4

Report Other Hazards

For any other hazardous or volatile materials encountered during the cleanup, print out the [CRC HazMat report form](#) to document and report these substances. This ensures that appropriate measures can be taken to handle and dispose of such materials safely. You can also upload the information after the cleanup using our online [HazMat form](#).

State Emergency Response Contacts

New Hampshire

Contact local emergency services or the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services for guidance on hazardous materials.

<https://www.epa.gov/epcra/state-emergency-response-commissions-contacts#nh>

Vermont

For immediate assistance with hazardous materials, contact Vermont's Agency of Natural Resources or local emergency responders.

<https://www.epa.gov/epcra/state-emergency-response-commissions-contacts#vt>

Massachusetts

Reach out to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection or local emergency services for assistance regarding hazardous materials.

<https://www.epa.gov/epcra/state-emergency-response-commissions-contacts#ma>

Connecticut

Contact the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) or local emergency management authorities for guidance on hazardous material incidents.

<https://www.epa.gov/epcra/state-emergency-response-commissions-contacts#ct>

By following these steps and contacting the appropriate authorities, you help ensure the safety of your group and the community while responsibly managing potentially harmful materials encountered during the cleanup effort.

ENCOUNTERING HOMELESS ENCAMPMENTS

If you discover living spaces or encounter individuals experiencing homelessness during your cleanup efforts, it's essential to approach the situation with sensitivity and respect. THE DECISION IS UP TO YOU if you would like to tackle this site or make CRC aware of its location. Follow these guidelines:

1

Do Not Disturb Active Homes:

Respect the privacy and dignity of individuals residing in homeless encampments. Avoid disturbing or entering active living spaces.

2

Announce Your Presence:

If you notice tents or makeshift shelters, announce your presence clearly and respectfully. For example, say, "Hello, the cleanup crew is here!" This announcement helps to ensure that everyone is aware of your presence and intentions.

3

Introduce Yourself and Explain:

Take a moment to introduce yourself and your group members. Briefly explain the purpose of your cleanup initiative and assure them that your presence is not intended to cause harm or disruption.

4

Offer Assistance:

Inquire if there are specific items they would like removed. Respect their decisions regarding which items are considered waste and can be safely disposed of.

By approaching individuals with empathy and understanding, you can help foster positive interactions and potentially connect individuals with local resources or support services.



Tally Your Trash

Submitting a tally of the trash you find is one of the most important parts of the Source to Sea Cleanup. Your data helps show the scope of the trash problem so we can focus solutions where they're needed most.

We recommend assigning a volunteer or two to handle the tallying, while others do the pick up. This can be a great job for youth groups or anyone who has mobility issues or for any reason would rather not pick up trash. Volunteers have two options for tallying their trash.

1

Fill out a Paper Tally:

Record the types and amount of trash using a printed [tally sheet](#). This data should be entered into our website following the Cleanup. [Enter your data online](#) when your Cleanup is over.

2

Use the Clean Swell App:

Complete a digital tally using the free [app](#). Make sure your location services are turned on so the app can detect that you're collecting trash in the Connecticut River region and be counted toward CRC's trash goals.



AFTER



THE CLEANUP



SHARE YOUR IMPACT

Trash Tally:

If you are using CRC's Paper Tally:

- [Enter your data online](#) for efficient processing (preferred), or
- Scan and email your tally to cleanup@ctriver.org, or
- Mail your completed tally sheet to us at the following address:
CRC, 15 Bank Row, Greenfield, MA 01301.

For CleanSwell App users:

- Your data is automatically saved upon submission in the CleanSwell app; no additional steps are needed.

Waivers:

- Volunteers who registered online have already submitted their waivers electronically.
- For walk-in participants, please return any paper waiver forms to us:
CRC, S2S Cleanup, 15 Bank Row, Greenfield, MA 01301.

Photos & Stories:

- You can share your photos and video clips with us through social media or our [photo submission form](#).
- If posting on social media, please include photographer credit, names of individuals in the photos, and the location where the photos were taken.
- Don't forget to use the hashtag #SourcetoSeaCleanup and tag Connecticut River Conservancy to help us track and celebrate your efforts.

Congratulations on a successful cleanup!

Your dedication and hard work have made a meaningful impact. As you wrap up this year's event, here are a few important things to keep in mind:

1

Take Action:

Your participation in the cleanup is just the beginning. Stay informed about trash laws and environmental regulations in your state. Explore ways you can contribute year-round to prevent trash from polluting our rivers and waterways. Every small action counts towards making a significant difference.

2

Stay Tuned:

Stay connected with CRC by signing up for our [eNews](#). Receive timely updates about upcoming Cleanups, news articles, community events, and important state-specific action alerts related to river conservation. Your continued engagement helps us maintain momentum in our efforts to protect and preserve the 410-mile long Connecticut River and its watershed.

3

Donate:

Support our ongoing efforts to safeguard the Connecticut River watershed by [making a donation today](#). Your contribution directly funds vital programs that promote clean water, habitat restoration, and environmental education initiatives. Together, we can ensure a sustainable future for our rivers and communities.

Thank you once again for your commitment to environmental stewardship. Your participation in the cleanup and continued support are invaluable to our mission. Let's keep working together to keep our rivers clean and healthy for generations to come!

