



World Cleanup Day Event Organizer Kit





September 20, 2024 is World Cleanup Day, and this is the first year it is officially recognized on the United Nations calendar of days. This year's theme is "Make Room for Life" and Ducks Unlimited Canada is joining the international effort to keep our wildlife habitat pristine – thanks in part to the generous support of Unsmoke Canada and the Great Outdoors Fund.

Unfortunately litter including single-use plastics and cigarette butts pose a threat for wildlife in terrestrial and marine habitats. Debris being ingested by animals like ducks can potentially have negative effects on their health by creating choking hazards, puncturing or obstructing their digestive tract, or causing illness. If left untouched, plastics can break down and cause a much less obvious threat. Microplastics are being found in the digestive system and even tissue of various species and more research is required to understand how this may be impacting the health and population status of our wildlife.

We are looking for volunteer organizers in communities across Canada to join this effort. To support our effort, we've created a guide on how to set up a successful cleanup event.

- STEP 1** Pick a location and time between Friday September 20 and Sunday September 29.
- STEP 2** Register your event on WorldCleanUpDay.org and then visit ducks.ca/worldcleanupday to send us the link so we can help promote the event.
- STEP 3** Promote your event within the community (*promotional materials can be [found here](#)*)
- STEP 4** Review this guide to ensure a safe and successful event.
- STEP 5** Promote your accomplishments! Send us the number of volunteers that came out and the weight of the garbage you've removed. ***If possible, please also provide the weight of cigarette butts removed and separate them for disposal.***

Picking your location and time

- + Most cleanups happen in public areas and it is best to contact the party responsible for the maintenance or management of the property (often a municipality or conservation authority) to seek permission, a permit if needed, and any additional guidance. As a bonus, this may result in additional resources or support for your cleanup event. If the event is happening on private property, it is clearly necessary to seek permission for the cleanup from the property owner.
- + Determine a "meeting point" for volunteers.
- + It is best to assess the site first to understand size, accessibility, parking, safety considerations, and the amount of debris needing to be cleared.
- + Picking a day and time that is convenient for your volunteers will improve turn out. A cleanup typically takes 1-2 hours depending on the size of the area and the number of volunteers, so make sure you pick a time that allows for successful completion during daylight hours.

Checklist for event day

- Gloves and/or litter grabbers. We recommend avoiding single-use plastic if possible.
- Garbage bags and clear recycling bags as well as a plan for how to dispose of the garbage after the event (*see next page*)
- Scale for weighing the waste collected
- Hand sanitizer
- Waivers for participants (*DUC can provide a template*)
- List of volunteers that includes a box for 'check in' and 'check out' to ensure no one is left behind
- First aid kit
- Camera – to inspire others. Consider a before-and-after photo of your cleanup. When posting photos on social media, be sure to tag Ducks Unlimited Canada, Unsmoke, Great Outdoors Fund and WorldCleanupDay.org
- Safety brief – review basic safety tips, cleanup boundaries, and process for end meeting point and time with volunteers

Safety tips

- + Use personal protective equipment (PPE) or a litter grabber when picking up litter. Advise volunteers what you're able to provide and what they need to bring (this could include gloves, boots, reusable water bottles for hydration, etc)
- + Make sure that volunteers do not handle hazardous materials including broken glass or debris with sharp rusty edges or potentially biohazardous materials like syringes, chemicals and dead animals. Instead record the location and advise the municipality's waste management department.
- + Be careful around bee hives, wasp nests, and noxious weeds such as poison ivy and giant hogweed.
- + Make sure cleanups should take place during daylight hours.
- + Be mindful of safety hazards including unstable or uneven ground and fast-moving water.
- + If collecting litter near a roadway or parking area, consider using safety pylons and bright coloured clothing.
- + Make sure all volunteers 'check in' and 'check out' to ensure no one is left behind.
- + Know the phone number for emergency services.
- + This event is for volunteers 19+ years of age.

Waste disposal tips

- + Volunteers with trucks might be willing to take waste and recycling bags to a disposal facility after the event.
- + Some municipalities might be willing to help with waste disposal if notified in advance.
- + Some dumpster rental companies have a complimentary program for non-profit work and volunteer cleanups.
- + For cigarette butt disposal, TerraCycle has partnered with Unsmoke Canada on a free recycling program. Organizers can just print a label on the bag/bin and ship them free of charge for proper disposal.
[More information is available here.](#)

Social media accounts and tags



- + Website: ducks.ca
- + Hashtag: #DucksUnlimitedCanada
- + [Facebook](#)
- + [Instagram](#)
- + [X](#)
- + [YouTube](#)



- + Website: unsmoke.ca
- + Hashtag: #UnsmokeCanada
- + [Facebook](#)
- + [Instagram](#)
- + [X](#)
- + [Youtube](#)



- + Website: thegreatoutdoorsfund.org
- + Hashtag: #TheGreatOutdoorsFund
- + [Facebook](#)
- + [Instagram](#)
- + [X](#)
- + [YouTube](#)



- + Website: worldcleanupday.org
- + Hashtag: #WorldCleanupDay
- + [Facebook](#)
- + [Instagram](#)
- + [X](#)
- + [YouTube](#)