

It's My Park | Working With Volunteers

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A successful It's My Park project is not just about how much gets done, but the kind of experience people have while doing it. We recommend the following best practices to keep up engagement throughout the project and create interest so people will want to come back.

Incorporate Relationship Building

- At the beginning of the project, welcome people. Tell them a little something about the park. This could be history, fun facts, how the park gets used, and things about the community. Also let them know why you love the park and what motivates you to volunteer. This can be very inspiring!
- Ask volunteers what types of tasks they'd prefer to take on (if there are options).
- At the end of the project (or anytime throughout!), thank the volunteers for joining. A welcoming environment is more likely to bring people back, so avoid negative language if someone is late or needs to leave early.
- Inform the group of any upcoming projects.

Be an Educator

- Explain the scope of today's project — the goal, how much work will likely get accomplished in the given timeframe, and why the project is needed.
- Describe the tools that will be used and how to use them for effectiveness and safety.
- Explain how to perform each task and divide people into groups.
- Share key safety information, including how to handle needles and other hazardous materials.

Effectively Lead

- Explain the project goals and provide clear instructions on what you would like the volunteers to do.
- Demonstrate how to do each task and check on volunteers throughout; provide additional guidance as needed.