



ADOPT-A-SPOT | Program Overview & Safety Guidelines

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Adopt-a-Spot program supports and encourages volunteers to help keep our City beautiful by picking up litter in public spaces while building community, fostering environmental stewardship, and growing civic pride. Volunteers can either choose their own spot to adopt or choose from a list of pre-selected public spaces including sidewalks, gutters, storm drain inlets, and parks.

The removal of litter from these areas helps prevent pollution from reaching our creeks, bays, and the ocean and is particularly important prior to, and during, winter storms to ensure proper storm water drainage and help prevent flooding.

The Program has been designed to empower individuals, business owners, community organizations, faith-based groups, and schools to play an active role in maintaining the beauty, cleanliness, and safety of our neighborhoods. Volunteers can perform their Adopt-a-Spot activities at any time that suits their schedule, and the Program is a great way for Novato middle and high school students to fulfill their community service hours!

The City of Novato will provide:

- Safety gear (vest, gloves, and first aid kit)
- Plastic bucket, trash bags, and trash grabber
- Collection of full trash bags and large debris (please dispose of smaller amounts in your trash bin at home)

We ask that you:

- Carefully review the Safety Guidelines.
- Complete and sign Program Application and City of Novato Volunteer Services Agreement & Release
- Always adhere to the Adopt-A-Spot Volunteer Guidelines
- Ensure any additional volunteers working with you have a signed Volunteer Service Agreement & Release form on file with the City, have been briefed on safety guidelines, and have been provided safety gear
- Care for items provided (e.g. safety gear, buckets, grabbers, gloves, weed bags)
- Keep track of volunteer hours completed and submit these once a month to Program Coordinator
- Communicate regularly with Program Coordinator to share successes and challenges

SAFETY GUIDELINES

All Adopt-a-Spot volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in a safe and courteous manner, and to follow all applicable laws while participating in activities on public property.

The long-term success of the Adopt-a-Spot Program depends on all volunteers exercising common sense, acting responsibly, and adhering to the guidelines below when carrying out volunteer activities.

General Safety

- Remain aware of your surroundings at all times, and look out for vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians
- Wear safety vest, appropriate clothing, footwear, and gloves, as well as sunscreen, hat, and eye protection (if necessary)
- Bring plenty of water and snacks, and stay hydrated!
- Have a first aid kit available
- Call 911 for emergencies

Traffic Safety

- When working in or around a gutter, work from the sidewalk
- Cross streets at signals or crosswalks (do not cross mid-block)
- Always avoid working in the roadway

Working Near Waterways

- Always work with a partner near water
- Watch for poison oak and blackberry thorns
- Watch your footing on slopes and shorelines
- Never allow children to work on steep slopes or near shorelines without adult supervision

Debris Removal

- Never pick up sharp objects with your hands
- Separate collected materials into garbage and recycling
- For smaller quantities of garbage and/or recyclables, please take materials home for disposal
- For large quantities of garbage and/or recyclables, contact Program Coordinator when finished with activity and advise location, type of materials and quantity to be collected by City staff
- Never touch hazardous materials (e.g. automotive fluids, solvents, paint cans) or medical waste (e.g. hypodermic needles). If found, report these items to the Program Coordinator for collection

PROGRAM CONTACT

City of Novato – Sustainability Coordinator

Gretchen Schubeck | sustainability@novato.org | (415) 899-8950