



TRAINING HANDBOOK

*For Adopt-A-Park
and Adopt-A-Trail Volunteers*



**ADOPT
A PARK**
TRAINING HANDBOOK
UPDATED JANUARY 12, 2009

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Attachments:

Adoption Proposal and Agreement for Park and Trail Adoptions
Volunteer Service Agreement / Adult
Volunteer Service Agreement / Minor
Volunteer Hours Report Form
Advanced Tasks Request Form
Supply Request Form
Group Member Addition / Removal Form

This publication can be made available upon request in alternative formats,
such as Braille, large print, audio tape, or computer disk.
Requests can be made by calling (408) 793-4190.

About Our Programs

Our Mission

Adopt-A-Park: To protect and enhance San José's neighborhood parks and open spaces by ongoing volunteer support and special events, and to educate San José residents about the importance of parks and open spaces.

Adopt-A-Trail: To protect and enhance San José's open trails through ongoing volunteer support, and to educate San José residents about the importance of trails.

What We Are

Adopt-A-Park (AAP) and Adopt-A-Trail (AAT) are citywide volunteer programs that recruit and train residents to assist in the general care and maintenance of neighborhood parks, trails, and other parkland on City property. AAP/AAT also educates the public about creating and preserving clean and safe parks and trails for everyone.

Our Volunteers

AAP/AAT unites and supports all people interested in improving San José's neighborhood open spaces and trails. Our volunteers include:

- Individuals
- Senior Citizens
- Neighborhood Associations
- Youth Groups
- Schools
- Scouts
- Church Groups
- Businesses
- Hiking and Biking Enthusiasts

Areas to Adopt

You can adopt the entire park, trail or a particular area in a park, including:

- Sports Fields
- Playgrounds
- Exercise Courses
- Courts
- Flower Beds
- Trees and Shrubs
- Trails
- Undeveloped Park Land

What You Can Do

Volunteers can:

- Pick up litter
- Rake leaves
- Remove graffiti
- Report park hazards
- Sweep courts and pathways
- Pull weeds
- Care for ecosystems
- Plant native plants
- Report homeless encampments, illegal dumping, storm damage, injured or dead animals, mountain lions, and other hazards.

How Adopt-A-Park Works

Minimum Commitment

We ask for a minimum commitment of one year of service to your adopted park or trail. We also ask that volunteers perform tasks at their location a minimum of once per month.

Initial Adoption Process

- The group leader or individual must complete, sign and return the *Adoption Proposal and Agreement* form (found attached to this handbook, or available from AAP/AAT staff.) All group members must sign and return the *Volunteer Service Agreement / Adult* and *Volunteer Service Agreement / Minor* as appropriate by age of your group members. Minors are required to have a parent or guardian signature.
- AAP/AAT staff will process your forms and contact you with your notice of approval or denial.

Adopt-A-Park and Adopt-A-Trail Training

- Once your adoption is approved, AAP/AAT staff will train the group leader, group or individual in basic tasks and provide you with starter materials.
- Volunteers are required to read, understand, and abide by the Safety Guidelines in this handbook and must abide by all park and trail rules and ordinances.
- Once you are trained, you or your group will be considered active volunteers.

Active Volunteers

- ***Basic Tasks vs. Advanced Tasks:***
 - Basic Tasks are tasks that can be done at your park on a regular basis and do not need approval or supervision from AAP or Park Maintenance staff members and do not require special tools. These tasks include:
 - Litter removal
 - Sweeping courts and pathways
 - Minor pruning and weeding
 - Basic cleaning of graffiti
 - Reporting homeless encampments, illegal dumping, storm damage, injured or dead animals, mountain lions, and other hazards.
 - Advanced Tasks are tasks that will require approval and/or supervision from AAP or Park Maintenance staff, as well as special training, equipment that is not regularly stocked by AAP, and debris removal. These tasks include:
 - Planting projects or plant removal
 - Major weed removal or pruning
 - Painting over graffiti
 - Re-painting of park fixtures, walls or buildings
 - If you are interested in performing an advanced task at your park or trail, please fill out the *Advanced Task Request Form and Supply Request Form*

and return it to AAP/AAT staff via mail or fax no later than 4 weeks before the proposed project date.

- At times, park staff will have advanced tasks that they wish to be completed in their parks. You may be contacted and given an opportunity to assist in the project.
- **Hours Tracking:**
 - Volunteers must keep track of hours spent volunteering on a monthly basis and report total hours to AAP/AAT on the *Volunteer Hours Report Form*. Hours are due by the fifth day of each month. The AAP/AAT office documents this information and tabulates total yearly hours, which helps the program in the following ways:
 - Justifies the need for more tools and supplies when submitting reports to City Council and Budget Office.
 - Accounts for total donated time to the City for annual statistic reports.
 - Confirms the growth or decline in volunteer participation.
 - Assists students that are required to perform community service hours.
 - Helps the office provide volunteer awards and recognition.
- **Adding or removing member from your group:**
 - New members that join your group must sign and return the *Volunteer Service Agreement / Adult* or *Volunteer Service Agreement / Minor* as appropriate by age *prior* to performing *any* tasks in the park
 - Group leaders are responsible for training new members in their tasks and program guidelines.
 - Group leaders must inform AAP/AAT staff of any group members join or leave the group by completing the *Group Member Addition / Removal Form* and returning it to AAP/AAT staff via mail or fax. (We suggest returning this with your *Volunteer Hours Report Form* the same month that group members are added or removed.)
- **Supplies:**
 - AAP/AAT provides you with tools and supplies to assist you in your duties. This helps you do your job, and keeps our parks and trails clean! The following tools and supplies are available:
 - Bags and gloves (provided at your training session)
 - Litter sticks (“garbage picker-upper”) (while supplies last)
 - Gardening tools, such as rakes, hoes, and brooms
 - Painting supplies, such as paint, graffiti solvent, rollers, brushes, and pans
 - Safety equipment, such as goggles and masks
 - All tools - except bags and gloves - are available on a check-out basis. Volunteers must check out additional supplies as needed. *For basic tasks, please fill out the Supply Request Form and return it to AAP/AAT staff via mail or fax no later than 2 weeks before you need them. For advanced*

projects, please return a completed Supply Request Form with your Advanced Tasks Request Form.

- You will be required to sign the *Tool Check-Out Form* for tools provided to you. Please return checked-out tools when you resign. This helps the City save money!

Recognition

Adopters receive:

- An official Certificate of Adoption.
- An AAP/AAT T-shirt (while supplies last).
- An invitation to the Annual Recognition Event.
- For park adoptions only: An adoption plaque with the adopters name on it, which will be posted at the adopter's site after 60 volunteer reported hours. This will reinforce a sense of responsibility and pride in the volunteers. (This will occur on a first come first serve basis, and will remain posted as long as the group/individual is an active volunteer.)

Retirement

When you are no longer able to volunteer in your park or on your trail, we ask that you send a letter of resignation to AAP/AAT staff.

Upon receipt of your resignation letter, and as a thank you for your service, AAP/AAT staff will:

- Send a retirement certificate and letter to the group leader or individual
- Remove your plaque from the park and mail it to you (if applicable).

Special Note

Updated news, program information and current AAP/AAT forms can be downloaded at www.sjadoptapark.org! Please download or request updated forms and handbooks from AAP/AAT staff at least once a year to ensure that you have the most current information on hand.

Safety Guidelines

All volunteers are required to follow these guidelines while performing tasks at any park.

Do's

- Do lift all objects with your legs, not your back.
- Do wear light or bright colored clothing, hard soled shoes, and sturdy work gloves.
- Do use sunblock or wear a hat.
- Do contact Parks Division staff at (408) 793-5510 immediately if you notice a safety hazard such as a broken swing. Special note: concerns/hazards needing immediate attention after hours and/or weekends call City of San José's Call Center at (408) 535-3500.
- Do tie bags tightly before placing in trash receptacles.
- Do wear gloves at all times.
- Do handle sharp objects with care – children should NOT pick up broken glass.
- Do work during park hours.
- Do work with a partner whenever possible.
- Do carry small first aid kit.
- Do make sure that all volunteers in your business or organization are familiar with these safety precautions.
- Do have at least one adult supervisor for every five minors.
- *Additionally for trail volunteers:*
 - *Do be alert for stinging insects and snakes.*
 - *Do be cautious of poisonous plants, such as poison oak.*

Don'ts

- Don't overexert yourself. Be sure to take breaks, drink liquids, and dress appropriately for the weather.
- Don't bring small children or pets along on projects unless they can be closely supervised.
- Don't leave children or pets locked in the car at work locations.
- Don't stomp on bags. Injuries may occur from broken glass or sharp objects.
- Don't pick up materials you suspect might be hazardous, such as needles, or drug paraphernalia. Call your local fire station immediately (408) 277-8900(non-emergency dispatch) and give the precise location of the material.
- Don't pick up dead animals
- *Additionally for trail volunteers:*
 - Don't enter the river environment, which includes creek bank and creek areas.

SPECIAL NOTE: For emergency assistance, please dial 911 or (408) 277-8911 from a cell phone.

Teachers and Group Leaders

- Students must be supervised at all times.
- Review safety rules carefully with students before they begin the cleanup project.
- Tie bags tightly before placing in trash receptacles; do not stomp on them.
- Wash paint brushes in the sink; do not pour excess paint down the drain.
- Report any safety hazards to AAP/AAT staff.
- Add any additional safety precautions you feel appropriate.

Students and Youth

- Stay within sight of your teacher or group leader.
- Work with a buddy.
- Don't pick up trash near the street or curb.
- Don't pick up any sharp objects, such as broken glass.
- Report any broken equipment, such as swings, to your teacher or group leader.
- If park workers are present doing their job, don't run in front of them or get too close when they are working with a machine.
- Wash your hands thoroughly when you complete your work.
- Don't run, throw objects, or engage in horseplay.
- Breaking sprinkler heads, writing on walls, or destroying park equipment is NOT being a friend to the park! It costs EVERYONE – including your family – money!

Additional Safety Information

Lyme Disease

Lyme Disease is transmitted to animals and man through the bite of a tick. There are several different ticks that carry Lyme disease, but the most common in the western part of the United States is the western-blacklegged tick. The ticks vary in size, anywhere from a sesame seed to the size of a grain of sand. Ticks do not jump like fleas. They must crawl onto you. Ticks on your clothing do not pose a threat, as long as they are removed before they can reach your skin. A tick must feed on you for at least 12 hours to transmit the disease, so prompt removal of ticks is important. If you see one on your skin, pull it out with tweezers slowly without twisting, and without squeezing the tick. Save the tick. Your doctor may want it for testing. See a doctor for expert advice.

How to avoid tick bites

- Wear light colored clothing. Dark ticks are more easily spotted against a light background.
- Tuck long pants into socks to prevent ticks from getting to your skin.
- Apply repellents according to label instructions. Applying repellent directly on clothing is most effective.
- Stay on trails to avoid the most common tick habitats.

For more information contact:

Lyme Disease Foundation, Inc.
1 Financial Plaza, 18th Floor
Hartford, CT 06103
(800) 525-2000

Poison Oak

Poison Oak grows along side trails, in forests and wooded areas. Poison Oak causes your skin to itch, and you will definitely want to scratch. There is no immediate cure. You can only wait for the process to run its course and treat the symptoms. The symptoms are non-contagious rashes and non-poisonous blisters. Contaminated clothing should be washed thoroughly. Calamine lotion is the traditional remedy.

Other treatment options include:

- Epsom Salts dissolved in water, applied with a paper towel.
- Apple Cider Vinegar, applied with a paper towel. Smells, and will sting, but works.
- The inside of a banana peel.

West Nile Virus

Who can be affected?

Humans and animals, including birds, can be affected by West Nile Virus. The majority of the infected have mild or no symptoms. The elderly and those who have weakened immune systems are most at risk.

How does West Nile Virus spread?

West Nile Virus is usually spread to humans and animals through the bite of an infected mosquito. Female mosquitoes acquire the infection by feeding on a bird with the virus. It is then transmitted via the mosquito's saliva when it bites a human or animal.

Symptoms

Most infected people experience minor symptoms or do not experience any symptoms at all. Mild symptoms may include but are not limited to: fever, headache and body soreness, skin rash on the torso, and swollen lymph nodes. Symptoms of mild illness generally last a few days. Severe symptoms of the West Nile Virus include: headache, high fever, neck stiffness, stupor, disorientation, coma, tremors, convulsions, muscle weakness and paralysis. Severe symptoms may last several weeks, although neurological effects may be permanent.

Protection against the West Nile Virus

- Place mosquito netting over infant carriers when outdoors with babies
- Consider staying indoors at dawn and dusk
- Install or repair tight fitting windows and door screens to prevent mosquitoes from coming indoors
- Wear long sleeve shirts and pants whenever you are outdoors
- Spray clothing with repellants containing *permethrin* because mosquitoes may bite through thin clothing even if it covers your skin. *DO NOT apply repellents containing permethrin directly to exposed skin*
- Routinely check and eliminate any standing water in your yard. Water an inch deep can still produce hundreds of mosquitoes

Source: Santa Clara County Vector Control District, West Nile Virus pamphlet, 1-800-314-2427.

Task Guidelines

Litter Removal

- Always wear work gloves.
- Work only during daylight hours.
- Work with a partner whenever possible.
- Do not work under potentially dangerous weather conditions, such as rain or heavy winds.
- Don't overexert yourself. Be sure to take breaks and drink plenty of fluids.
- Don't lift with your back, lift with your legs!
- Don't pick up materials that you suspect might be hazardous, such as needles, bloody objects or drug paraphernalia. Call your local fire station (311 or (408) 277-8900 from a cell phone) or the AAP office immediately at (408) 793-4190.
- Don't pick up litter close to the edge of curbs unless oncoming traffic is clearly visible.
- Tie bags tightly before disposal.
- Do not stomp on trash bags. Stomping may cause sharp objects to puncture the bag.
- Recycle whenever possible. Separate recyclables (glass, plastic, and aluminum) and take home for curbside pick-up or take to a drop-off center.
- If trash cans are full, place your filled bags next to the cans. If you are planning a major clean-up and are anticipating filling up a large pile of bags, please submit an *Advanced Task Request Form* to arrange for bag pickup.

Graffiti Removal

- **Before** painting over graffiti, check with the appropriate City of San José staff for approval (You can do this by submitting an *Advanced Task Request Form*.)
- Try to clean off the graffiti **before** you attempt to paint over it. Graffiti can often be wiped off with Formula 409 or a commercial graffiti remover. Volunteers must go through training before using graffiti remover.
- A coating, called "universal sealer," should be applied over **felt pen, lipstick, or grease pencil tags**.
- Let the sealer dry before attempting to paint over it.
- **Do not** paint over **ceramic tile, unpainted brick, plumbing, or light fixtures**.
- Check color of paint to be sure it matches. City staff can help match paint.
- To remove graffiti from **trees**: spread dirt or mud over graffiti or mix baking soda and water and use a soft bristle brush to clean off. You may also use water-based saddle-brown paint to cover over graffiti.
- To remove graffiti from **signs or poles**: spray cheap hair spray, rubbing alcohol, or nail polish remover over area and wipe clean.
- To remove graffiti on **walkways**: wire brush area with baking soda mixed with water. **Never** paint on **walkways**.
- Post area worked on with "Wet Paint" signs.

- **Do not** clean paint brushes, rollers, buckets, or other supplies at site.
- To clean up **paint spills** use: sand, kitty litter, or sawdust.
- Dispose hazardous materials at a hazardous waste collection site.
- **Never** clean brushes or rinse paint containers into a street, gutter, storm drain, or stream. Chemicals that are poured into a storm drain will flow directly to the Bay without being treated.
- Recycle excess *water-based* paint, or use it up. Dispose of any excess liquid in the sanitary drain (located in your house) **not** in the storm drain.
- Reuse left over *oil-based* paint. Dispose of excess liquid at household hazardous waste collection sites or events.

Sources: City of San José, Anti-Graffiti Program, City of San José, General Services Department, City of Sunnyvale, "Paint Safe Use and Disposal".

Weed Abatement

- Before removing weeds, check with the appropriate staff for approval.
- Contact the Adopt-A-Park office to coordinate in advance for pick-up of clippings.
- Wear protective gear: safety glasses/goggles, safety vests, long pants and long sleeves, sturdy work shoes, and work gloves.
- Do not use power equipment. It is against City policy.
- Do not work under potentially dangerous weather conditions, such as rain or heavy winds.
- Do not spray or use any chemicals. It is against City policy.
- Don't over exert yourself. Be sure to take breaks and drink plenty of fluids.
- Small children should not use weeding tools. Volunteers must be at least 12 years old to use weeding tools.
- Be cautious around thorny or poisonous bushes, such as poison oak or stinging nettle.
- Do not bag weed clippings unless specified by park staff (to ensure that clippings are recycled).
- On a pathway or trail:
 - Do not block pathways and trails.
 - Be cautious and respectful of pedestrians, cyclists, and other trail users.
 - Post appropriate "work ahead" signs on both ends of work area.

City of San José Park and Trail Ordinances

As an Adopt-A-Park Volunteer, you have no authority to enforce the following park and trail ordinances. They are provided as information only, and we do not recommend you approach park or trail users who are violating any ordinances. If you notice a violation of these ordinances, please call (408) 277-8900 for non-emergency and (408) 277-8911 for emergencies.

Park

“Park” means all grounds, buildings, improvements, and areas dedicated to use by the public for park, recreation or open space purposes and over which the city has acquired right of use for such purposes. (S.J.M.C. 13.44.014)

Vehicle

“Vehicle” means any wheeled device or conveyance, whether propelled by motor, animal or human power. The term “vehicle” excludes city service vehicles, baby strollers and wheelchairs. (S.J.M.C. 13.44.018)

Vehicles - Operation and parking procedures and restrictions.

No person shall stop, park, or leave standing or unattended any vehicle, trailer or boat in any park or recreation area of the city, except in an area or space designated for parking of such objects by the Director of the Department of Recreation, Parks and Community Services, or upon any portion of any street or highway upon which the parking of such objects is permitted, or in excess of the time prescribed therefore by any city ordinance, resolution of the city council, or permit issued by the director. No person shall stop, park or leave standing or unattended any vehicle, trailer or boat in any area or space designated for parking of such objects by the director so that any part of such object is within the right-of-way of any street or highway within the limits of any park or recreation area of the city. The director is hereby directed to post signs giving notice hereof in such and so many portions of city parks and recreation areas as may be affected hereby.

No person shall operate a vehicle, except as authorized by the director, in any public park or recreation area within the city except upon any publicly owned street or highway which is open for public vehicular traffic within such park or recreation area. No person shall operate any vehicle on any road, street, trail or highway in any city park or recreation area at a speed greater than the speed limit established by ordinance or resolution of the city council and posted on such road, street, trail or highway, or if no speed is posted, at a speed greater than fifteen miles per hour.

The Director may designate areas, paths, roads or trails in any city park or recreation area where the riding of bicycles, motorcycles, minibikes, or like vehicles may be permitted. No person shall ride or take any bicycle, motorcycle, minibike or like vehicle upon or in any area, path, road or trail in any city park or recreation area unless such activity is permitted by notices posted by the director. (S.J.M.C. 13.44.100)

Dog Ordinance

Dogs must be on a leash and kept under control at all times. Dog owners are required to immediately clean up and remove any and all excrement left by their dog. (S.J.M.C. 7.08.590 / 7.08.410b)

Smoking Prohibited Where

No person shall ignite or smoke any tobacco or tobacco product, or any other material, on any park trail, bridle path, park restroom, or in any fire risk area, nor in any area additionally designated by the Director of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services. (S.J.M.C. 13.44.130)

Intoxicating Beverages—Prohibitions and Conditions

No person shall consume any intoxicating beverages in any area of any City park or facility where prohibited or in violation of any limitation. (S.J.M.C. 13.44.140)

Amplified Sound Restrictions

No person shall in any City park operate or allow to be operated any loud-speaker or sound amplified device, unless such operation is permitted by the Chief of Police under Section 10.16.030 and Section 10.16.040 of this code and follows the conditions set by the Director of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services. (S.J.M.C. 13.44.150)

Powered Models—Operated Restrictions

No person shall operate in any park any model airplane, boat, car, rocket, or other device that is powered by a rocket motor, an internal combustion engine, or other power source, except in an area and at such times as are designated for such use by the Director of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services. (S.J.M.C. 13.44.160)

Golf

No person shall hit any golf ball or use any golfing equipment in any City park except in an area designated for such use by the Director of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services. (S.J.M.C. 13.44.170)

Doing Business Prohibited-Exception

No person shall practice, carry on, conduct or solicit for any occupation, business of profession in any City park, or sell or offer for sale therein any service, merchandise,

article, or anything whatsoever, unless pursuant to a contract with or a permit issued by the City of San José.

The Director of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services may issue a permit or may enter into and execute any contract for and on behalf of the City of San José without prior approval of the City Council to allow such doing of business in a City park by a nonprofit organization.

Water Pollution Prohibited

No person shall throw, discharge, or otherwise deposit or cause or permit to be placed into the waters of any fountain, pond, lake, stream, bay, pool, or any body of water in or adjacent to any City park, or any tributary stream, storm sewer, sanitary sewer, or drain flowing into such waters, any substance, matter or thing, liquid, solid, or gas, which materially impairs the usefulness of such water for persons or the habitability of such water for any animal, bird, fish, or reptile which drinks, swims in, or otherwise uses said water. (S.J.M.C. 14.44.190)

Littering Prohibited

No person shall deposit, drop, or scatter any garbage, trash, or rubbish, including, but not by way of limitation, any glass, paper, cans, ashes, leaves and cuttings, furniture, appliances, or concrete in any City park except in a receptacle designed and placed to receive the same; nor shall any person import into or deposit in any City park or any other place any such, garbage, trash, or rubbish. (S.J.M.C. 13.44.230)

Rules and regulations - Compliance required

No person shall disobey or fail to observe any rule, regulation or lawful direction promulgated or made by the Director of the Department of Recreation, Parks and Community Services pursuant to the following authorization, of which such person has actual notice, however given, or of which reasonable notice has been given by appropriate sign or notice in a park.

Important Phone Numbers

The following are services provided by the City of San José, which may be of assistance to you:

City of San José Information Line

535-3500

For general information and referral on City services.

Park and Trail Concerns, PRNS

793-5510

To report maintenance concerns such as graffiti and broken sprinkler heads, and hazards such as broken swings and illegal dumping. You may email your park concerns to park.concerns@sanjoseca.gov.

Special note: hazards/concerns needing immediate attention after hours and/or on weekends call City of San José call center at 535-3500, for emergency assistance dial 911 or from a cell 277-8911.

Parks Division, PRNS

793-5500

For information on neighborhood and regional parks, picnic reservations, air jumper requests, dog parks, skateboard parks, special park use (i.e. reserve wedding sites).

Homeless Encampments

277-4937

To report homeless encampments contact officer William R. Miller of the Environmental Design Detail, Police Community Services Division.

Animal Care & Services, PRNS

578-PAWS (7297)

To report stray, injured, dead animals, or barking dogs.

Adopt-A-Street, Department of Transportation

975-3728

Volunteers maintain City-landscaped parcels.

Anti-Graffiti and Litter Program, PRNS

277-3208

To report graffiti or to volunteer to remove graffiti (except at parks). To assist with litter pick-up in your neighborhood, sign-up for the Anti-Litter Program.

City Wide Sports Program, PRNS

871-3821

For general information on adult sport leagues.

Department of Transportation

535-3850

To report illegal dumping on public property or any street related problem.

Environmental Enforcement, Environmental Services Department

945-3000

To report the dumping of pollutants into the storm drain system.

Citizen CPR and First Aid Classes

277-4084

Classes are available to the general public and have a nominal fee.

Gang Hotline

293-4264

To leave anonymous information about gang activity.

Code Enforcement

277-4528

To report problems, such as weeds and litter on private property.

Crime Prevention, Police Department

277-4133

To learn about programs that educate residents about crime prevention and safety measures.

For more information on ADOPT-A-PARK
call (408) 793-4190 or visit www.sjadoptapark.org



Printed on recycled paper.

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The City of San José prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or handicap in its programs or activities. If anyone believes he or she has been discriminated against in any department activity, program or facility, a complaint may be filed with the City's Affirmative Action Office or the Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.