

Roadside and Stream Cleanup

Removing litter and other pollutants from the environment is crucial for keeping it clean. Litter on the roadside is likely to wash into local creeks and streams during a rainstorm. Our best shot at removing litter from the environment is before it reaches large bodies of water. Local cleanups of roads and streams help accomplish this goal. Here are some ways you can help!

Cleanup or report litter on campus

If you notice litter in an area of an NIH campus, report it to the waste contractor to have it removed. For example, call 301-496-7990 to report litter on the Bethesda campus. If you are comfortable, you could remove the litter yourself and place it in the nearest trash receptacle.

Organize a roadside cleanup near your campus with your IC Green Team

Similar to the program in our Featured Article by NIEHS, you could organize an Adopt-A-Highway program to clean up a section of road near your campus. Adopt-A-Highway programs exist in [Maryland](#), [North Carolina](#), [Montana](#) and many other states that are home or near to NIH campuses. These programs typically ask a group to adopt a 1 mile stretch of road and clean it at least 4 times per year. Many programs also provide training, safety vests, trash bags and tips for picking up trash and recyclables. Your IC Green Team is a great place to start looking for volunteers to help with a cleanup!

Organize or join an Adopt-A-Highway or Support-A-Highway program with a local organization

If you are a member of an organization outside the NIH that is interested in cleaning their local environment, introduce them to the Adopt-A-Highway or Support-A-Highway cleanup programs. While the main goal of these programs is to clean the environment, they also incentivize groups to participate through recognition by placing signs along the 1 mile stretch of adopted road. You can also check if a cleanup is already planned for your area and contact the organizing group about joining their effort.

Contact a local watershed organization to join a stream cleanup

There are many organizations dedicated to maintaining the cleanliness of specific watershed areas. These organizations often hold volunteer stream cleanups or provide an outlet for planning your own cleanup. Look into these organizations for opportunities at removing litter from your local waterways! For example, the [Anacostia Watershed Society](#) and the [Alice Ferguson Foundation](#) hold cleanup activities for the Anacostia and Potomac watersheds, respectively.