



Safety Guidelines

1. Before an adopting group applies to adopt a stream, or before any program activities are initiated, the group's Designated Representative should survey the stream on the days and during the hours the group intends to perform cleanups to determine if stream conditions are safe and appropriate for the ages and abilities of the group's members. If, at any time, the adopting group feels the adopted section of stream has become unsafe for litter pickups, the group's Designated Representative should call the Prince William Soil and Water Conservation Office (PWSWCD) and the Adopt-A-Stream Program contact will work with the group to identify a safer stream section or a different stream.
2. The Designated Representative for the adopting group must conduct at least one safety meeting per year to review PWSWCD-supplied safety information. No one may participate in a cleanup unless they have attended a safety meeting within the last 12 months. The Designated Representative may conduct the safety meeting immediately before a cleanup; however, this meeting must be held in a safe, appropriate area. At the safety meeting, a member of the group or the site clean up captain should review these following safety guidelines with all volunteers:
3. Individuals under 18 years may participate in a stream cleanup only if supervised by an adult. Adopting groups must provide at least one adult supervisor for every six children under 18 years old.
4. Adopting groups should avoid working on steep slopes or in confined river stretches with limited ingress/egress.
5. Adopting groups shall not work on Class One rapids or greater.
6. Adopting groups, using boats for cleanup events, must abide by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) Boating Regulations. For a copy of the Boating Regulations contact VDGIF at (804) 367-1125 (press 10 to get an agent).
7. Cleanup participants must wear a bright orange safety vest (*or, if appropriate a life-jacket*) at all times. Participants must also wear gloves.
8. Always work in groups of two or greater.
9. Cleanup participants must not drink water from any stream. Refreshments should be provided by the Designated Representative and/or project organizer or participants may bring their own.
10. Cleanups must be scheduled during daylight hours and during fair weather. Remember to

schedule a “rain-date” ahead of time.

11. Cleanup participants are encouraged to take breaks and drink fluids to avoid overexertion.
12. Do not pick up materials that appear to be hazardous or unsafe. Contact the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality at 1-800-592-5482 to report the materials.
13. Applicants to whom a District Adopt-A-Stream Program Designation and Agreement are issued shall at all times indemnify and save harmless the Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and all Commonwealth employees, agents and officers, from responsibility, damage, or liability arising from the exercise of the privileges granted under designated programs. **All volunteers shall sign a liability release form prior to participating in any cleanup activities.** Liability forms must include the following language: *Adopt-A-Stream Program volunteers shall at all times indemnify and save harmless the Prince William Soil and Water Conservation District, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and all Commonwealth employees, agents and officers, from responsibility, damage, or liability arising from the exercise of the privileges granted under designated programs.*
14. Adopting groups shall provide volunteers with emergency phone numbers, as well as a means to contact the appropriate authority in case of an emergency (*a cell phone or the location of the nearest pay phone*), and first aid kits.