

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
CENTER FOR TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH

Adopt-a-Highway Program History, Benefits and Successes

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Executive Summary

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) Travel Information Division (TRV) oversees statewide Adopt-a-Highway (AAH) program operations and management. The Statewide Adopt-a-Highway coordinator ensures program participation guidelines, volunteer safety, litter collection results and accomplishments are properly administered by 25 district AAH coordinators. There are approximately 3,300 2-mile Adopt-a-Highway sections in Texas comprising over 6,600 center-line miles of roadway.

Former Tyler District Engineer, Bobby Evans launched the first ever Adopt-a-Highway program in 1985 with the support of the District Public Information Officer Billy Black. A literature review was conducted to document the history of the Texas Adopt-a-Highway program including its origin and success. This is supplemented with information about operations including management, safety guidelines and program branding. A review was also conducted to learn why people volunteer to pick up litter and the health benefits that can result.

Adopt-a-Highway volunteers might be family members, business employees, church groups, civic and member organizations. Volunteer groups agree to pick up litter at least four times a year for a 2-year period. Each volunteer group appoints a group leader who works with the district Adopt-a-Highway coordinator to schedule when to clean up litter, pick up safety vests and litter bags from the district maintenance section, and where the group will meet before the cleanup. At this meeting, the group leader conducts a safety briefing to discuss the guidelines established by TRV and ensures all group members have reviewed the TxDOT YouTube safety video and safety tips card. Proper attire, use of sun screen and proper hydration is also discussed. Group members carpool to reduce the number of vehicles on site. Litter pickup is conducted to ensure group safety is always the top priority. After cleanup the group leader fills out an online form documenting the number of bags collected and their location on the site. TxDOT sources estimate that Adopt-a-Highway volunteer litter pickup saves Texas taxpayers approximately $3 million to $5 million a year.

The Adopt-a-Highway program has been implemented by forty-eight other states and other countries. Thus, what began through the efforts of one TxDOT employee has spread across Texas, the US and other parts of the world to make highways cleaner, safer, more scenic and enjoyable.

Chapter 1 The Adopt-a-Highway Program History

In the years after World War II, the US experienced a doubling of car sales between 1945 and 1955, increased recreational travel by highway, an increase in packaged and fast food and a corresponding increase in highway littering. Highway litter became a national issue that was discussed and debated to determine how to address the problem that was having a negative impact on the natural beauty of America. [Scenic Tennessee 2025]

The early beginnings of the Adopt-a-Highway volunteer litter cleanup program are traced to 1963 in the TxDOT San Angelo District. A young maintenance engineer, James R. “Bobby” Evans, was assigned to discuss the problem of littering along highways at schools and civic organizations. Bobby showed a film entitled ‘Money to Burn’ and talked about the negative impacts of litter but apparently with little success. [TxDOT 2025] This concerned Bobby because at that time, district maintenance workers picked up litter on rainy days when other work could not be performed. Bobby’s career advanced and he eventually became the Tyler District Engineer, never forgetting his concerns about the cost and impacts of littering. In 1984, Bobby was following a pickup truck and saw litter blowing out of the pickup bed and onto the highway roadside. He knew the amount of litter and the cost of litter pickup was increasing – something had to be done to engage the public about this problem. [C-SPAN 2018]

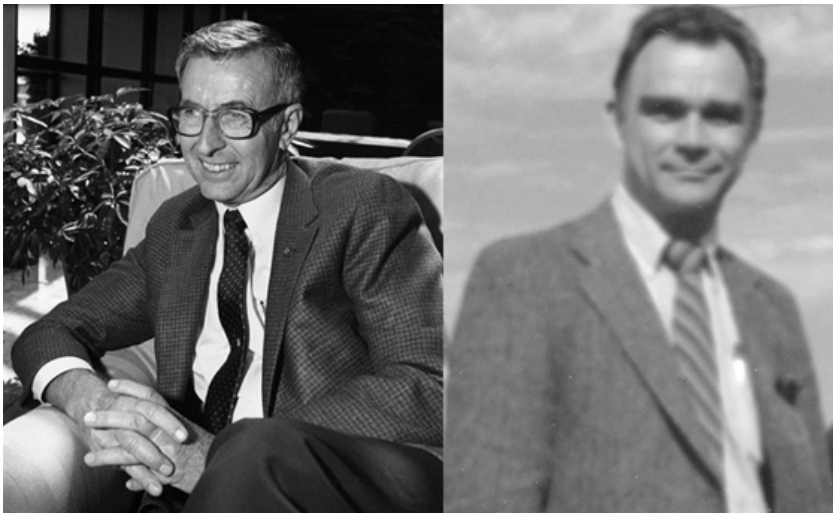


Figure 1.1 Bobby Evans – Tyler District Engineer (left) [Geoff Appold TxDOT] and Billy Black Public Information Officer (right) [Transportation News April, 1985]

Bobby assigned Billy Black, Tyler District Public Information Officer, to lead the effort to educate the public about the litter problem and to implement the Adopt-a-Highway program. Bobby and Billy developed the basic concepts of Adopt-a-Highway including community participation to pick up litter on a section of highway with recognition for the volunteer's efforts. Bobby contacted the Tyler Chamber of Commerce to discuss whether they could help get out the message. The Chamber of Commerce invited the district's spokesperson to give a talk about Adopt-a-Highway at a scheduled Garden Club meeting.

Billy was the spokesperson for Adopt-a-Highway and developed program guidelines including safety training for volunteers that included wearing a safety vest, clean-up cycles every 3 months and installing signs on the highway sections recognizing the volunteer group's names.

The first 'adoption' occurred following Billy's presentation to the Tyler Chamber of Commerce and Garden Club members. The Tyler Civitan Club stepped forward to adopt a section on U.S. 69 the first in a series of successes resulting in over fifty adopted highway sections within months (see Figure 1.2, and Figure 1.3). As with all Civitan Clubs Tyler's Civitan Club motto is "Builders of Good Citizenship".



Figure 1.2 Bobby Evans and members of the Tyler Civitan Club with the first Adopt-a-Highway sign. [C-SPAN 2018]



Figure 1.3 A modern photo of the Tyler Civitan Club at the first Adopt-a-Highway section located on U.S. 69 adopted March 9, 1985. [TxDOT 2025a]

Figure 1.4 shows the Henderson Rotary Club which adopted a section of U.S. 259, also in 1985. The Henderson Rotary Club's motto is "Service Above Self".



Figure 1.4 The Henderson Rotary Club shows the bags of litter picked up on their section of U.S. 259. [TxDOT 2025b]

Based on the Henderson Rotary Club records the group leader estimated an average of 95 bags of litter have been picked up annually since 1985 on their Adopt-a-Highway section.

The Adopt-a-Highway program in Tyler spread by word of mouth to adjoining TxDOT districts and eventually to employees of other states who had seen the signs and inquired about the program. Bobby indicated that the program format initiated by the Tyler District was used by other districts and states. Eventually, a national meeting on the Adopt-a-Highway program was held to discuss how to further support the concept and gain volunteer support from the public.

Over 30 years after the Adopt-a-Highway program began Bobby indicated he could not have envisioned the program started in Tyler, Texas to address roadside litter would eventually become an international effort. Forty-eight states and several countries including Canada, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand,and Australia have created their own Adopt-a-Highway programs customized for their specific needs. The following list provides basic information about some of the Adopt-a-Highway programs in other states and countries.

1. North Carolina DOT – The Adopt-a-Highway program began in 1988 and requires participating groups to clean a 2-mile section of highway four or more times per year based on the amount of traffic along the route. Schools, social organizations, businesses, individuals and families are invited to adopt a highway section. Safety materials are provided and two signs are installed to recognize the volunteers performing the cleanup. The program has about 120,000 volunteers statewide and saves the state millions of dollars in litter pickup costs.

2. California DOT – Caltrans Adopt-a-Highway sections vary in length but are typically 2-miles long. A permit is issued to a group for a 5-year period and can include businesses, civic or social organizations, individuals and city, county, state or federal agencies. A group member must be at least 16-years old to participate. California began the Adopt a Highway program in 1989 and was the 20th state to initiate the program. Approximately 9,706 shoulder miles of roadway have been adopted to date.

3. Michigan DOT – The Adopt-a-Highway program began in 1990 and is similar in many ways to the Texas program. A 2-mile section of

roadway is adopted and cleaned by groups that have at least 3 people. Adopted sections are picked up 3 times a year prior to mowing seasons during date-ranges provided on the MDOT website. Group participants must be at least 12-years old. MDOT provides safety guidelines, safety vests and litter bags. About 2,900 groups pick up litter on 6,000 miles of highway.

4. Australia – Called ‘Road Watch - Adopt-a-Road’ volunteer roadside litter pickup is part of the Keep South Australia Beautiful (KESAB) program. About 100 schools, community organizations and businesses work in groups, similar to Adopt-a-Highway in Texas, to pick up litter on assigned sections of roadway and report their results. A 2-kilometer road section is adopted and cleaned four times a year by the adopting group. [KESAB 2025]

5. Alberta – Canada – The Adopt-a-Highway program volunteers pick up litter on a 3-kilometer to 5-kilometer section of provincial road for 3-years. Individuals, groups or companies can Adopt-a-Highway and are provided with a safety manual, safety vest, litter bags and gloves.

Chapter 2 will discuss the Texas Adopt-a-Highway program operations and management under the direction of the TxDOT Travel Information Division.

Chapter 2 Texas Adopt-a-Highway Program Operations and Management

The TxDOT Travel Information Division (TRV) has general oversight of the Adopt-a-Highway program statewide. TRV works with advertising agencies to support marketing and promotion. TRV also manages Adopt-a-Highway database operations, develops rules and guidelines for section adoption, safety of volunteers and other rules to ensure good management practices.

The following sections provide additional details about the roles of the TRV Statewide Adopt-a-Highway Coordinator and the 25 district Adopt-a-Highway Coordinators. The procedures are discussed for adopting a highway section and guidelines to ensure volunteers understand and use safe practices during the cleanup.

2.1 TxDOT Adopt-a-Highway Statewide Coordinator

The Statewide Adopt-a-Highway Coordinator reports to the Services, Projects, and Campaigns Section Director and works with 25 district Adopt-a-Highway coordinators to manage and operate the program. The statewide Adopt-a-Highway Coordinator's duties are divided into Program Administration and Marketing including [email communications with TRV statewide Coordinator]:

Program Administration

- Oversee the Adopt-a-Highway database development and enhancements. A new database was launched two years ago. Collaborate weekly with the IT department on enhancements, changes, and technical issues. Provide training and is point of contact coordinators with any database issues.
- Manage AAH documents including program guidelines, An 'Adopt-a-Highway - Get Started Kit', and curation of AAH presentations.
- Manage Adopt-a-Highway Awards applications, the judging process and the awards.

- Point of contact for all District Coordinator's questions and/or volunteer concerns

- Ensure safety and internal marketing materials are updated in a timely manner

Marketing

- Direct strategic marketing and communications for the Adopt-a-Highway (AAH) program including branding, digital marketing, social media, public and media relations.

- Proofread and provide creative collaboration on TV/Audio scripts, press releases, social media posts, web copy and other communications materials for distribution

- Create and distribute materials for the annual Don't mess with Texas Trash-Off

- Help plan and strategize Don't mess with Texas Trash-Off marketing/event

- Direct retention/recognition efforts through promotional items and awards

- Provide secondary support for the Don't mess with Texas campaign through ad agency, creative and project oversight

A new Adopt-a-Highway 'Get Started Kit' provides bilingual (English / Spanish) materials that are shared with the adopting group by the group leader include: 1) a Welcome Letter, 2) Adopt-a-Highway bumper sticker, 3) safety tips card, 4) an awareness poster to generate interest by others about Adopt-a-Highway, and 5) a postcard that discusses some of the benefits of Adopt-a-Highway and the application process.

TRV has developed online forms that are filled out by the leader of a volunteer group wishing to adopt a highway section. The forms include:

- The Adopt-a-Highway guidelines with information about eligibility, sign details and format,
- The online Adopt-a-Highway application,
- The online volunteer Pick up Report. The Report is completed after the roadway section has been cleaned; the Report captures information such as the number of volunteers present, number of bags of litter collected, date of collection and location of filled bags.

The volunteers can specify the section they want to adopt, but cannot choose a section along an interstate highway or other high traffic route. Sections that include features determined to present hazards to volunteers might result in the district coordinator declining approval of their preferred adoption section. Other options might be proposed by either the volunteers or the district coordinator.

The volunteers select a group leader who communicates with the district coordinator and others on their behalf. The following section discusses the job duties of the district coordinator and interactions with the volunteer group leader.

2.2 District Adopt-a-Highway Coordinators

District AAH Coordinators manage several responsibilities in their role as Adopt-a-Highway Coordinator. The functions that a District coordinator performs with regard to the Adopt-a-Highway program include:

- Manage new AAH group applications and set up the agreement
- Manage active agreements and send renewals prior to the expiration date
- Work with district maintenance sections to ensure that trash bags and safety vests are available for AAH group pickup
- Coordinate Adopt-a-Highway sections with the Maintenance Section
- Order signs for new AAH sections and set up system mapping
- Cancel ending agreements and coordinate with the Maintenance Section to remove signs
- Coordinate litter collection and ensure that filled litter bags are removed timely
- Promote the AAH Program and Trash Off Events with AAH Groups
- Answer public questions about Adopt-a-Highway by telephone or email
- Participate in community events to bring more interest to the AAH program
- Update the new AAH database and assist Office Managers with the AAH database
- Work with the Statewide AAH Coordinator on statewide branding and other activities as requested

In addition, each Adopt-a-Highway district coordinator has other tasks and programs not associated with Adopt-a-Highway to manage as part of their duties.

The district Adopt-a-Highway coordinator also works with each Adopt-a-Highway group leader to accomplish several tasks before and after a cleanup. These tasks are discussed in the next section regarding Adopt-a-Highway Procedures.

2.3 Adopt-a-Highway Procedures

District Adopt-a-Highway Coordinators work directly with each group leader selected by the volunteers who will pick up litter on their section. The group leader advises the district coordinator the date and time volunteers plan to pick up litter. The District Coordinator then checks maintenance work schedules and active work zones to ensure that the Adopt-a-Highway section is not within those limits. If there is a conflict another date and time will be chosen to pick up litter.

Once a pickup date and time is agreed on, the group leader sets a time and location that the volunteers will meet to discuss safety guidelines and tips and to plan other aspects of the cleanup. The group leader will also coordinate with local district maintenance office to arrange a meeting time to pick up safety vests and litter bags. The vests and bags are provided by TxDOT at no cost to the volunteers.

The group leader will identify a location away from the Adopt-a-Highway site for volunteers to park their cars, meet and travel to the site. The safety meeting will be conducted and all volunteers will put on their safety vests and other safety gear before traveling to the Adopt-a-Highway site. In this way all volunteers are visible to motorists the moment they step out of the carpool vehicle at the site and not have to check if they've brought all the items needed. Carpooling to the site is preferred so that the minimum number of vehicles are parked near the right of way fence and away from the roadway.

Volunteers should not try to stuff as much litter into a litter bag as possible or try to smash or compress litter that has been placed in the bag. This can tear a hole in the bag or possibly cause an injury if the bag contains sharp or jagged objects.

Filled bags are piled at predetermined locations and will later be picked up by TxDOT maintenance workers. Bags are often stacked at the Adopt-a-Highway signs at either end of the section. Heavy objects should not be placed in a bag; mark the object with a tied bag at the fence line so that maintenance workers can remove them properly.

Prior to the litter pickup, the group leader and volunteers will work out a plan detailing how volunteers will form smaller working groups to clean the site. Motorists' attention might be drawn to a large group of individuals working in a cluster which can result in unsafe driving due to distractions. Volunteers should not wave to motorists even if they honk and should not clown around which can be distracting to both motorists and the cleanup volunteers.

Volunteers should only perform cleanup on one side of the roadway at a time. Volunteers cross the roadway only when necessary and should not run. Litter should not be picked up in the median between highway roadbeds such as the main lanes and the frontage road. Vehicles should not be parked in a median, on the roadway or shoulder, on a ramp or other traffic lane. The next section provides more details on safety guidelines for Adopt-a-Highway volunteers.

2.4 Adopt-a-Highway Safety Guidelines

The TxDOT Adopt-a-Highway Safety Guidelines are available in two YouTube videos and in a Safety tips card for volunteers. These materials are reviewed by the group leader with the volunteers prior to each pickup. The guidelines and tips from these resources are itemized in the lists and commentary below.

1. YouTube video Texas 'Adopt-a-Highway: Essential Safety Tips for Volunteers. July 2, 2024 3:29

    - **Wear the correct safety clothing**
        - Wear a high visibility ANSI Class 2 vest provided by TxDOT. Wear the vest the entire time that you are conducting litter pickup on your 2-mile stretch.
        - A good pair of gloves will protect you from sharp or dangerous objects, the sun, and plants like poison ivy.
        - Hats and sun screen should always be worn.
        - Only wear closed-toed shoes. Shoes should be sturdy and comfortable; two miles is a long way to walk.
        - Wear light colored clothing for visibility and dress appropriately for the weather.
    - **Stay safe on the highway**
        - Park your car on the side of the road. Never park in the middle of a traffic lane. Car pool if possible to reduce the number of cars on site.
        - Don't wear head phones while performing litter pickup.

    - When you begin cleanup, open all traffic control signs to the open position. When finished move all traffic control signs to the closed position.
    - Stay within the highway right of way and never move into the road or side of the road to pick up trash. Keep 5 feet away from the highway while conducting litter pickup.
    - Always face traffic while performing litter pickup, never perform litter pickup with your back to traffic.
    - Children aged 7 to 18 can help pick up trash as long as they are under adult supervision. One adult is needed for every 3 children under 15. Larger groups of 15 to 18 year-olds must be supervised by at least one adult.
    - Never lean on guard rails or over bridges.
    - Never pick up litter in tunnels, under bridges or on overpasses.
    - Watch your step and avoid falling on slopes or hills.
- **Stay Healthy**
    - Never put anything in your litter bag that could be hazardous to your health. This can include needles, broken glass or liquid filled bottles.
    - If you see something dangerous put it gently on the guardrail post and contact your TxDOT representative.
    - Watch out for snakes and other animals. Always have a first aid kit on hand.
    - At least one volunteer should be Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and first aid certified in case of an emergency.
    - At least one volunteer should have their cell phone on hand with the number for the nearest hospital and driving directions.
    - Remember to stay hydrated. Water should always be available to all volunteers.
    - If you feel dizzy or tired, sit down and rest.

2. YouTube video Texas ‘Safety First: Video for Adopt-a-Highway Groups’. 2012 7:33 The following are additional safety tips:

- **Wear the correct safety clothing**
    - Wear a long sleeve shirt, jeans or pants and safe footwear
    - Leather gloves and a hat and sunglasses are a good idea
- **First Aid**
    - Give a safety tips card to each member of the group which contains TxDOT contact information and safety guidelines

- Cleanups can only be held during daylight hours.
- It is suggested that cleanups are held on weekends in the early morning hours when there is less traffic.
- Weather is a big factor in cleanups. During hot weather, you may want to schedule your cleanup in the morning while it is still cool. During cold weather, you might want to schedule the cleanup later in the day.
- Volunteers should take a water break every hour. Dehydration can set in quickly. Sports drinks or juice are good options. Avoid soft drinks because they can cause dehydration.
- Keep your energy up with snacks like fruit, if the cleanup lasts all morning.
- Alcoholic drinks are not permitted at any time. Violation will lead to automatic dismissal.
- The roadside might contain hazards like loose rocks, plants, insects and animals. Many animals make the roadside their home, and most will be frightened of you and run away. Take precautions however, especially with snakes.
- Insects like scorpions, wasps and ants may be along the roadside or hiding inside litter. Be cautious when picking up litter. Ants like to build nests in cardboard boxes and scorpions like cool, damp places.
- Poison ivy and poison oak can cause a skin rash. Tall grass is a favorite home to ticks and chiggers.
- The cleanup team should be aware of any allergic reactions that team members have to plants or insect stings.

- **Parking – Carpool**
  - Park your car as close to the right-of-way fence line as possible on flat, firm ground. Watch for glass, animal bones or other debris.
  - Remember to lock your car.
  - Cars are not allowed in the median of a divided highway. Do not park or drive in the median between the main lanes.
  - Do not walk across the highway.
- **Cleaning**
  - Divide your group into small teams of twos or fours depending on how many volunteers you have. Place these teams at different points along the 2-mile section.
  - Do not pick up litter at construction sites.

- If the weather turns bad quickly, abandon the cleanup and reschedule. Let your TxDOT contact know what has happened.
- Never pickup animal bones of any kind.
- Flag hazardous items by tying a white rag to the woven wire fence at the location of broken glass, needles or similar objects. A TxDOT worker will dispose of them properly.
- Children should work close to the fence line and supervised by an adult.
- Each cleanup team member should be given at least 2 cleanup bags depending on the size of the group and amount of litter.
- Don't squeeze bags to fit in more trash. Don't drag the bag you could rip a hole in it.
- If the bag is too heavy, tie it off and leave it on the roadside.
- As bags fill, form a pile of two or three. This will make pickup easier at the end of the clean-up.
- Use good lifting techniques when picking up filled bags. Lift with your legs, not with your back.
- At the end of the cleanup, place all of your filled litter bags at the base of the Adopt-a-Highway sign.
- Fold up the safety signs and return any unused litter bags to the Maintenance Section within a week of the pickup.
- Count the number of filled litter bags and report this number to your TxDOT contact on the following business day. TxDOT uses the number of filled litter bags collected to show how the program is making a difference.

3. The Adopt-a-Highway Safety Tips Card is also distributed to all volunteers and is bilingual: English and Spanish. The following tips are listed which repeat some of the tips listed in the videos but might differ in wording.

   - DRESS FOR SAFETY
     - Wear safety vests and wear gloves
     - Use closed-toe shoes or boots
     - Light colors, long sleeves and hats protect against sunburn.
   - STAY ROAD SMART
     - Set up traffic signs before cleanup and remove them after.
     - Carpool to limit vehicles.
     - Stay at least 5 feet from the pavement, facing traffic.
     - Work in pairs and cross roads only when necessary.

- STAY HEALTHY
    - Flag hazardous items and notify TxDOT.
    - Watch for wildlife, plants and herbicides.
    - Carry water, sunscreen, first aid and a phone.
    - Stay hydrated and take breaks.

The next Chapter will discuss Texas Adopt-a-Highway Groups.

Chapter 3 The Texas Adopt-a-Highway Groups

Volunteering to Pick Up Other People's Litter

One of the encouraging aspects of the Adopt-a-Highway program is that it is still a very strong program, with excellent participation and a very positive public image after 40 years. There are several types of groups that volunteer to clean Adopt-a-Highway sites. Table 3.1 provides a summary of the types and percentages of groups that volunteer.

Table 3.1 Types and Percentages of Volunteer Groups that Clean Adopt-a-Highway Sections in Texas

Adopt a Highway Section Type	Percentage of Sites	Comments
Business	23.5%	Large national, regional and small local businesses
Civic	12.1%	Lions Clubs, Rotary Clubs, League of Women Voters, Habitat for Humanity
Family	21.2%	Families, Husband and Wife teams, Individuals
Government	5.7%	Military, State Agencies, City, County, Fire, Police, Sheriff
Other	15.4%	Clubs, Professional Organizations, Sports, Home Owners Associations
Religious	4.7%	Churches, Church Youth Groups, Church Fraternal Organizations
School	16.3%	Elementary, Middle School, High School, College, Sororities, Fraternities, National Honor Societies
Scouts	1.2%	Boy and Girl Scout Troops
	100%	

The reasons why people volunteer to pick up litter can include:

1. Opportunities for young people (up to high school and college age) to participate in community service. As young people work with adults to pick up litter on an Adopt-a-Highway site, they learn about:

    - Organization and team work with people of all ages,
    - Communication skills, staying in the present and keeping eyes and ears open while working along a highway. This means leave head phones, ear buds at home and only use a cell phone when necessary.

- Thinking about clothing and foot wear as protection from sharp thorns, insects, the sun and broken glass – what to wear and what not to wear.
- Looking after each other during the cleanup, taking responsibility for personal and the group's safety including how to respond to wildlife, noxious plants and other hazards,
- Taking pride in making their community a better place to live,
- Improving health by getting exercise, learning about hydration and the effects of summer heat, improved mental health by getting outdoors and enjoying nature and being with other people.

2. Opportunities for families to remember a loved one who possibly died in a car crash or from another cause. [TAPS 2021]

    - Time to connect in a meaningful way with family and friends,
    - Bereavement is a lonely time and can be accompanied by isolating oneself. Getting together with a group to pick up litter can lead to other activities to help the healing process.
    - Accomplishing something that benefits the community and is also making a public statement about a lost loved-one.
    - If the person was killed in a car crash, picking up litter along the highway might create a connection in a positive way both physically through exercise, emotionally and mentally.
    - The Adopt-a-Highway sign with the person's name on it is important. The Missouri DOT has announced the end of the Adopt-a-Highway program in Missouri which will be replaced with a new program. This will include taking down the Adopt-a-Highway signs including those honoring a loved one who died. One family's reaction is related in a news broadcast in which a member discusses what the Adopt-a-Highway sign with the family member's name has meant to the family for the past 20 years. [KFVS 12]

3. Opportunities for religious groups, civic organizations and community groups to serve.

    - Church members and members of church youth groups or serving ministries find ways to make their community a better place to live. Picking up litter is one of the ways to create a cleaner, better looking place for people of all social and financial classes to live. This also provides opportunities for church members to meet members of the community and perhaps find other ways to serve.
    - Civic organizations such as Lions Clubs, Rotary Clubs and other groups see community service such as litter cleanup

as a character building activity that demonstrates the basic reason for their club and their membership.

Towns and cities find litter pickup as a way to take positive action to address an issue that affects everyone. Volunteers see litter pickup as a way to improve the value of their homes and other property and increases self-esteem and civic pride.

4. National, regional and small businesses all see the value of giving back to the community.

    - Litter pickup not only serves the community and their customers but helps keep the right of way of highways leading to their town neat and clean, which is their 'front yard'. This increases tourist trade and sales to motorists driving through their town who are more inclined to stop and buy gas, eat at a restaurant or shop if the town looks neat and clean.
    - Bobby Evans indicated that during a trip to South Dakota with his wife, they were both impressed how clean and neat the highways and towns were which had no litter.
    - Michigan DOT coordinates the mowing season with Adopt-a-Highway litter pickups so that litter has been removed before mowers go to work on the right of way. This helps ensure that large pieces of litter aren't chopped up into many smaller pieces and also makes the mowed right-of-way look nicer.
    - When a person mows their own front yard, they pick up any litter before they mow since they know that the mower will shred paper and other litter resulting in a worse looking front yard than before they mowed. A clean, well-mown 'front yard' does make a difference for businesses in a town.

5. Sports, health and fitness groups know that exercise improves physical fitness, mental health and improves a person's ability to live in the moment.
    - Many people don't live in the moment, but worry about the past or are anxious about the future – two points in time when we can't actually do anything.
    - We can only take action in the present. This includes picking up litter and being mindful of our personal safety and of the group's safety which is important and helps people stay in the moment. [Mind Andover 2023]

6. Environmental groups know that what is thrown out on the side of the road will be transported by wind, water and other forces to other properties, local waterways and other natural habitats. In addition, bags from fast food restaurants which still contain food will attract wildlife to the roadside and a possible crash with a passing vehicle.

7. Government includes military from all branches, state and county agencies, law enforcement officers and volunteer fire fighters. Law enforcement officers have had more encounters in recent years with discarded meth amphetamine lab waste which is often thrown onto the roadside or in ditches by bad guys who want to get rid of the evidence.

    - In addition, guns, knives and other weapons are occasionally found on the roadside.
    - When these situations occur, Adopt-a-Highway groups should contact 911, the State Department of Public Safety (DPS) or local police to report what has been found.
    - Law enforcement officers also find opportunities for community service through litter pickups, which gives an opportunity to connect with fellow officers and other first responders such as fire department, volunteer fire department and emergency medical services employees.

The next Chapter will examine the Adopt-a-Highway survey that was sent to Group Coordinators.

Chapter 4 Adopt-a-Highway Group Survey

A survey was conducted of Adopt-a-Highway groups using an online Qualtrics™ survey link that was distributed by TxDOT to the group leaders. The survey was developed by the CTR work team and reviewed by TxDOT to provide suggestions and additions to improve the information collected. A blank survey is contained in Appendix A and consists of 26 questions. The following commentary provides tables and dialogue that summarize the responses.

4.1 Summary of Survey Responses

The Adopt-a-Highway survey link was first distributed by TxDOT to Adopt-a-Highway group leaders on November 13, 2025 with a 2nd distribution just after the Thanksgiving Holiday on December 2, 2025. The first distribution resulted in 74 individuals opening the survey and 69 individuals taking the survey. As of January 9, 2026 106 individuals have opened the survey with 92 taking the survey. The number of responses for specific questions might vary since individuals who took the survey did not necessarily answer all questions – though sufficient data was provided to make the survey responses useful. Table 4.1.1 provides a summary of the number of surveys received from the different Adopt-a-Highway Group Types.

Table 4.1.1 List of AAH Groups and Numbers of Surveys Received

Group Type	Number of Surveys	Percentage of Total Responses	Statewide Percentage for Groups of this Type
Business	16	17.4%	23.5%
Civic	17	18.5%	12.1%
Family	23	25.0%	21.2%
Government	2	2.2%	5.7%
Other	8	8.7%	15.4%
Religious	7	7.6%	4.7%
School	9	9.8%	16.3%
Scouts	2	2.2%	1.2%
Blank	8	8.7%	
Totals	92	100%	100%

The number of surveys received allows us to estimate results with a 95% confidence level and a 10.1% margin of error. The results of the survey will be presented to give a general indication of question responses for the sample received. Of these groups, 84 Groups clean one site, 6 clean two sites, 1 cleans three sites and 1 cleans four sites. Table 4.1.2 provides a summary of the number of surveys based on the amount of time the Groups has been cleaning Adopt-a-Highway sites.

Table 4.1.2 List of AAH Groups by Years of Service

Number of Years Cleaning Adopt-a-Highway Site(s)	Number of Groups	Percentage of Groups
< 1 year	13	14.1%
1 – 3 years	28	30.4%
4 – 6 years	17	18.5%
7 – 10 years	20	21.7%
11 – 15 years	2	2.2%
16 – 20 years	4	4.3%
21 – 25 years	5	5.4%
> 25 years	3	3.3%
	92	100%

Over 44% of AAH Groups have been cleaning sites less than or equal to 3 years. Over 84% of AAH Groups have been cleaning sites less than or equal to 10 years.

The number of members among groups varies widely as does the number of volunteers who show up at the site. Business Groups tend to have the largest number of volunteers which can exceed 100 people per Group though the number who show up during a cleaning is 20 or less. The median number of volunteers in a group regardless of group type is 15 and the median number of volunteers who show up for a cleaning is 10. The average number of volunteers are much larger due to the Business Group sizes which skews the average. The average group size for all group types is 41 while the average number of volunteers who show up is 15. Table 4.1.3 summarizes the number of bags of litter collected by Group type.

Table 4.1.3 AAH Group Types, Bags of Litter per Cleanup & per Year

Group Type	Bags / Cleanup	Avg. Bags / Group	Bags / Year	Avg. Bags / Year / Group	Estimated Statewide Bags / Group	Estimated Statewide Bags/Group /Year
Business	378	23.6	1,532	95.8	14,860	60,227
Civic	203	12	740	43.5	3,869	14,104
Family	192	8.4	742	32.3	4,717	18,227
Government	149	75.5	298	149	11.250	22,499
Other	89	13.9	314	44.9	5,213	18,391
Religious	118	16.9	427	61	2,124	7,686
School	138	15.3	497	55.2	6,777	24,408
Scouts	30	30	30	30	930	930
Blank	22		122			
Total	1,319		4,702		49,739	166,472
Est tons (20 lbs. / bag)	13.2		47.2		497	1,665

Approximately 1,319 bags of litter are collected for all group types during each clean up. Groups might have more than one site and may clean sites from 2 to more than 4 times per year. The number of bags of litter cleaned per year for all groups is 4,702.

These values were used as an estimate to calculate the total number of bags of litter cleaned by all groups of each group type based on the TxDOT Adopt-a-Highway database for all sites statewide. Based on these calculations 49,739 bags of litter are estimated to be picked up during each cleaning cycle and a total of 166,472 bags are picked up per year by all Adopt-a-Highway groups. The litter bags used by TxDOT can carry 20 lbs. of contents when full. This value was used to calculate the pounds and tons of litter collected in Texas by AAH.

Using the 20 pounds of litter per bag average, it is estimated that across the state, Texas Adopt-a-Highway Volunteers pick up approximately 490 tons of litter per clean up cycle or a total of 1,660 tons of litter per year.

Each survey taker was asked to indicate how effective the Adopt-a-Highway program is in keeping AAH sites clean. The responses to this question were evaluated based on the Group Type and the number of years that each Group has served in cleaning AAH sites. Not every Group indicated what Group Type they were categorized as; therefore a 'blank' Group Type was added when assigning the effectiveness ratings. The following two tables summarize effectiveness rating responses by Group Type: Table 4.1.4 and Years of Service Table 4.1.5.

It is noted that 87 of 92 Group Types (94.6%) rated the Adopt-a-Highway program either Very Effective or Effective.Of the five Groups that rated the effectiveness of the Adopt-a-Highway program at lower levels, three rated the program effectiveness "Neither Effective nor Ineffective", one rated the effectiveness "Somewhat Ineffective" and one rated effectiveness as "Ineffective."

Tables 4.1.4 and 4.1.5 summarize by Group Type or Group Years of Service by the number of comments about volunteering to clean an AAH site each has received from Business Owners, Residents, Family and Friends, TxDOT employees or in cases that the survey taker is not aware of comments from these groups.

Table 4.1.4 AAH Group Assessment of the Effectiveness of the Adopt-a-Highway Program

Group Type	Very Effective	Effective	Neither Effective / Ineffective	Somewhat Ineffective	Ineffective	Very Ineffective	Total
Business	5	9	1	1	0	0	16
Civic	9	8	0	0	0	0	17
Family	16	6	0	0	1	0	23
Government	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Other	3	4	1	0	0	0	8
Religious	2	5	0	0	0	0	7
School	6	3	0	0	0	0	9
Scouts	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Blank	2	5	1	0	0	0	8
Totals	43	44	3	1	1	0	92

Table 4.1.5 AAH Group by Years of Service and Assessment of Effectiveness of the Adopt-a-Highway Program

Group Years of Service	Very Effective	Effective	Neither Effective / Ineffective	Somewhat Ineffective	Ineffective	Very Ineffective	Totals
<1	7	7	0	0	0	0	14
1 – 3	9	16	0	1	1	0	27
4 – 6	6	10	1	0	0	0	17
7 – 10	12	6	2	0	0	0	20
11 – 15	2	0	0	0	0	0	2
16 – 20	3	1	0	0	0	0	4
21 – 25	3	2	0	0	0	0	5
> 25	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
Totals	43	44	3	1	1	0	92

Table 4.1.6 Number of Comments from Members of the Community about the Group's Service Working on an AAH Site

Group Type	From Business Owners	From Residents	From Family and Friends	From TxDOT Employees	Not That I'm Aware of	Totals
Business	4	6	7	5	7	29
Civic	4	12	6	5	4	31
Family	6	17	17	6	4	50
Government	1	2	1	0	0	4
Other	2	4	5	0	2	13
Religious	1	7	4	3	0	15
School	4	5	8	3	1	21
Scouts	1	1	2	1	0	5
Blank	1	3	3	1	3	11
Totals	24	57	53	24	21	179

Table 4.1.7 Number of Comments from Members of the Community about the Group Categorized by Years on Site

Number of Years Cleaning Site	From Business Owners	From Residents	From Family and Friends	From TxDOT Employees	Not That I'm Aware of	Totals
< 1	4	9	9	7	1	30
1 – 3	7	13	15	2	10	47
4 – 6	5	9	10	3	3	30
7 – 10	6	18	13	8	2	47
11 – 15	0	2	1	1	0	4
16 – 20	0	1	1	0	2	4
21 – 25	1	3	2	1	1	8
> 25	1	2	2	2	1	8
Blank	0	0	0	0	1	1
Totals	24	57	53	24	21	179

Tables 4.1.6 and 4.1.7 showed approximately 74.9% of Groups received comments from Business owners along their route, from residents, or family and friends about their cleaning efforts. Approximately 13.4% of Groups received comments from TxDOT employees. Approximately 11.7% of Groups were not aware of comments about their cleaning efforts.

Survey takers were asked if litter on their site(s) was “about the same”, “had increased” or “had decreased” since they first began cleaning the site. Literature indicates that AAH sites that had been mowed just before the Group cleans the site typically have more pieces of litter than sites that have not been previously mowed. This occurs for two reasons, 1) tall grass (not mowing before a clean-up) can hide litter reducing litter survey counts and 2) mowing can chop up litter into more, smaller pieces increasing litter counts. Other factors that can affect whether litter has changed over time include increases in traffic volume, increases in population, construction projects within the vicinity of the AAH site, a new landfill or garbage truck route along the AAH site road and related factors. In addition, TxDOT’s ‘Don’t mess with Texas’ campaign can change littering behaviors which leads to less litter along highways.

In Table 4.1.8, all 92 Groups answered the question whether litter amounts on their site(s) had changed over time, 7 Groups indicated that litter had “increased”, 56 Groups indicated that litter amounts were “about the same” and 29 Groups indicated that litter amounts had “decreased”.

Table 4.1.8 Group Type Response Whether Litter on Your Site has Increased, Remained the Same or Decreased over Time?

Group Type	Litter has Increased	Litter has Remained about the Same	Litter has Decreased	Totals
Business	0	10	8	18
Civic	0	14	5	19
Family	2	13	8	23
Government	0	1	4	5
Other	2	3	2	7
Religious	2	4	1	7
School	1	7	1	9
Scouts	0	2	0	2
Blank	0	2	0	2
Totals	7	56	29	92

The fact that litter had decreased over time on 29 routes (31.9%) is encouraging. Table 4.1.9 shows whether the route on which litter increased, remained the same or decreased is an FM, RR, or RM road, SH, US, Loop or Spur.

Table 4.1.9 Types of Routes that have Increased, Remained the Same or Decreased in Litter over Time

Change in Litter	FM	RM	RR	SH	US	Loop	Spur	Total
Increased	5	0	0	1	1	0	0	7
Remained The Same	26	1	0	13	11	3	2	56
Decreased	14	0	1	5	6	2	1	29
Total	45	1	1	19	18	5	3	92

The next section discusses building the Adopt-a-Highway Program. This includes how AAH Groups first learned about the Adopt-a-Highway Program and whether Groups tell others about AAH.

4.2 Building the Adopt-a-Highway Program

The survey asked respondents how the Group first learned about the Adopt-a-Highway Program. Table 4.2.1 summarizes the different ways in which a group member first learned about AAH which led to forming a Group.

Table 4.2.1 How Groups First Learned about Adopt-a-Highway Program

How the Group Learned about AAH	Number of Groups	Comments
Saw an AAH sign	33	AAH Section signs
Participated in another state's AAH Program	1	Michigan
Informed about AAH	3	
Another Group told us	2	
Saw Info online	7	
Seeking service project	2	Found through Google
A Family member	2	Daughter / Son
Learned at School	5	School Group, Teacher or Principal
Learned at Church	2	
Business manager	5	…or Marketing Team
TxDOT employee / ad	3	
Predates our Group	4	
Total	69	

By far, Adopt-a-Highway site signs are the medium through which one or more members of Groups learned about the Adopt-a-Highway Program and formed a Group. Online advertising is the 2nd most common source of information about Adopt-a-Highway and School or Business (place of work) (tied) is the 3rd most common source of information.

The survey asked Groups who they have talked to about the Adopt-a-Highway program and the circumstances of these opportunities. Table 4.2.2 summarizes who was told and the circumstances.

Table 4.2.2 Methods Groups have used to Communicate to Others about the Adopt-a-Highway Program

How the Group has Communicated about Adopt-a-Highway	Number of Group Reponses	Comments
Told Friends or Family	67	
Presented at an event	8	
Motorist stopped to talk at our site	16	
Social media posts	4	Posted photo of my sign
Company newsletter	2	Article about our Group
High School Group	2	
Sports Team	3	Wrestling, softball, biking
City Council Meeting	1	
Church Group	2	
Civic Group	1	
Neighborhood New Resident Orientation	1	
Total	106	

The most common communication opportunity is Group members talking to their friends and family members. Interestingly, the 2nd most common opportunity is when motorists stop while Group members are working on the site and ask about Adopt-a-Highway or why Group members are picking up litter. Group members also make presentations about the Adopt-a-Highway Program at school, club, church or other meetings.

Communicating with others about Adopt-a-Highway is an opportunity to gain new Group Members or to establish a new Group and a new AAH site. Table 4.2.3 summarizes how Groups have had success in attracting new members or starting new AAH sites.

The Groups were also asked what challenges they faced when preparing for cleaning a site or when working on the site. Table 4.2.4 summarizes the responses from the survey.

Table 4.2.3 Successes by Adopt-a-Highway Groups in Adding New Members or Starting New Sites

Group Type	A new member joined our Group after learning about AAH from us	A new member joined another Group after learning about AAH from us	A new Group was started after learning about AAH from us	Route on which the New Group Adopted a site	We are not aware of a new individual or Group being added due to our efforts	Totals
Business	1				14	15
Civic	3				13	16
Family	4		3	US 287 N, SH 18, Route not named	17	24
Government			1	US 87	1	2
Other			1	US 276	4	5
Religious			1	Route not named	7	8
School		1			8	9
Scouts		1			1	2
Total	8	2	6		65	81

Table 4.2.4 Challenges Identified by Groups When Coordinating and Performing Adopt-a-Highway Site Cleanups

Group Type	Scheduling with Group members	Scheduling with TxDOT	Weather	Transport to site	Volunteer Recruitment / Retention	Tall Grass / Mowing over litter	Safety Concerns				No Challenges	Total
							Traffic Ignores Site Signs	Traffic Speed / Vol.	Traffic Veering off Road	Other Safety Issues		
Business	10		8	1	5	3			1	2	3	33
Civic	8	1	9	2	6					3	3	32
Family	8	1	6		1	2	1	1		7	8	35
Gov't	1										1	2
Other	4	1	2	1	2	2		2		2	2	18
Religious	4		3		1	3				2		13
School	8		5	2	2					1		18
Scouts	2		1		1	1		1		1		7
Blank			1			1				1	1	4
Total	45	3	35	6	18	12	1	4	1	19	18	162

Table 4.2.4 indicates that the challenge faced by 48.9% of Groups is "scheduling the time for cleanup" with Group volunteers. The 2nd highest percentage is "Weather" which is considered a challenge by 38.0% of Groups. The 3rd most prevalent challenge is "Safety" which 26.6% of Groups identified including general safety concerns and named concerns such as high traffic volume, traffic speed and other issues.

Volunteer Recruitment / Retention is another concern expressed by 19.5% of Groups. One Civic Group indicated that its members are all retired and in their 60s and 70s. They plan to contact 4H and other youth organizations to bring younger members into their Group. A review of the youngest and oldest members of each Group provided in the survey, resulted in twelve Groups reporting Youngest members in their 60s – 70s and Oldest members in their 70s. Increased recruitment of younger members is needed to ensure long term service on the sites these Groups clean.

Five Groups indicated they have met with other Adopt-a-Highway Groups to discuss experiences and share ideas. However, 79 Groups indicated that they have not met with other Adopt-a-Highway Groups. Reasons given for not meeting with other Groups include: 31 responses, "We are not sure how to contact other Groups", 32 responses "Our Group members are too busy with other time commitments to meet with other Groups" and 29 responses, 'We are unsure what benefits would be gained by meeting with other Groups."

In Table 4.2.2 only four Groups indicated they communicate by posting photos or information about their site cleanups through social media. However, in a later question specifically regarding use of social media to post photos or information, twenty-six Groups indicated they posted photos of their Adopt-a-Highway site cleanups on Social Media. Forty Groups indicated they interact with the public about their Adopt-a-Highway cleanups on Facebook, thirteen Groups indicated they use Instagram, two groups indicated they use Linked In. Thirty-eight Groups indicated they were not aware of anyone from their Group using social media to share information with the public about their Adopt-a-Highway site cleanups. Thus, social media is a major communications link with the public about Adopt-a-Highway Groups and their clean-up activities.

Table 4.2.5 summarizes the Benefits that Adopt-a-Highway Groups gain by volunteering to clean one or more Adopt-a-Highway Sites.

Table 4.2.5 Benefits Adopt-a-Highway Group Volunteers Gain by Volunteering to Clean Sites

Benefit	Business	Civic	Family	Gov't	Other	Religious	School	Scouts	Total
Cleaner Roadsides	15	9	24	2	6	7	9	2	74
Social Bonding	7	9	9	1	3	3	7	2	41
Cost Savings	6	4	7	1	1	5	2	1	27
Litter Awareness	10	8	16	2	2	4	7	2	51
Physical Activity	10	7	19	2	3	5	5	1	52
Organizational Recognition	4	6	4	1	1	4	5		25
Stress Relief	5	1	14	1	2	3	1	2	29
Safety Education	4	2	5	1	1	2	5	1	21
Accomplishment	1		3			1			5
Personal Litter Prevention		1							1
Make World a Better Place			1						1
Memorial to a Loved one			3		1				4
Wildlife Protection		1							1
Team Mentoring	4	5	10	1	1	3	8	1	33
Advertising	1								1
Meet New Friends		1							1
Total	67	54	115	12	21	37	49	12	367

“Clean Roadsides” was selected by approximately 80.4% of Groups and was the most often selected benefit of volunteering to clean Adopt-a-Highway Sites. “Physical Activity” (56.5%) and “Litter Awareness” (55.4%) were essentially tied as the 2nd most selected benefits of volunteering to clean Adopt-a-Highway Sites. “Social Bonding” among volunteers of the Group was ranked 3rd at 44.6% and “Team Mentoring” was ranked 4th at 35.9% of Groups.

The next Chapter provides a summary and conclusion for the Adopt-a-Highway Report.

Chapter 5 Summary and Conclusions

In Chapter 1, a history was presented about the Adopt-a-Highway program that celebrated 40-years of successful operation on March 9, 2025. Bobby Evans, the former Tyler District Engineer and Billy Black, the former Tyler District Public Information Officer worked together to formulate Bobby's idea of a volunteer program to pick up litter along Tyler District roadsides. The Tyler Civitan Club was the first group to adopt a highway and was followed in the coming months by about 50 other groups including the Henderson Rotary Club. The Adopt-a-Highway program has grown beyond Texas' borders and has been implemented in forty-eight other states and in other countries. This broad recognition and deployment of the Adopt-a-Highway program nationwide and internationally has resulted in greater contributions to cleaner highways.

In Chapter 2 TxDOT's oversight of the Adopt-a-Highway program including the duties and responsibilities of the Statewide Adopt-a-Highway Coordinator were discussed. The Statewide Coordinator works with each of the 25 District Coordinators who manage local operations and work with the volunteer group leaders. The Operations and Management Guidelines and Safety Guidelines were discussed.

In Chapter 3 the types and number of groups were evaluated using a database provided by the Statewide Adopt-a-Highway Coordinator. The eight types of organizations based on the numbers of different volunteer groups are categorized as: 1) Business, 2) Civic, 3) Family, 4) Government, 5) Other (types), 6) Religious, 7) School, and 8) Scouts. The importance of having the name of the group and particularly the Name of a Loved One who has died shown on an Adopt-a-Highway sign was discussed based on a TV news broadcast from Missouri.

In Chapter 4 the results of an Adopt-a-Highway survey is discussed. Various statistics are presented including the amount of litter collected by each Group Type during each cleanup and for the year.

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Appendix A – The Adopt-a-Highway Survey

Adopt-a-Highway Volunteers

The purpose of this survey is to obtain information about Adopt-a-Highway volunteer group experiences for the Texas Department of Transportation – Travel Information Division. The survey is being conducted by the University of Texas at Austin – Center for Transportation Research. The Adopt-a-Highway program celebrates its 40th anniversary this year and the Don't mess with Texas campaign celebrates its 40th anniversary next year. The survey will take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. Adopt-a-Highway group leaders, or their appointees, are asked to answer the following questions about the volunteer group you lead to help us better understand the reasons your group volunteers to pick up litter, and the benefits this produces both personally for volunteers, your community and for the state of Texas. We are also interested to know facts about how much litter you pick up in a typical clean-up and other related information. The information you provide is anonymous and cannot be traced to you, your location, email address or any other personal identifying information. Once you complete the survey the results will be uploaded to a secure, online database at the University of Texas – Austin for further evaluation with surveys from other group leaders. Thank you for your time and participation. We appreciate your contribution to this effort.

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Q1 How many Adopt-a-Highway Sections does your group clean?

One (1)

Two (2)

Three (3)

More than Three (4)

Q2 How many volunteers are in your group?

Please type a number (not text) for your entry (1)

_____

Q3 Of the number of volunteers in your group, how many volunteers typically participate in a site clean-up?

Please type a number (not text) for your entry. (1)

_____

Q4 What is the age range of the volunteers in your group? Please use numbers (not text) for your entry.

Youngest volunteer's age (1)

_____

Oldest volunteer's age (2)

_____

Q5 How long has your volunteer group been involved in cleaning Adopt-a-Highway sites. Please enter the number of years and months in the

following fields. (We realize individual volunteers might come and go over time, we are interested in knowing the number of years and months your group has been cleaning AAH sites.)

Years (1)
_____

Months (2)
_____

Q6 How effective do you think the Adopt-a-Highway program is at reducing roadside litter?

Very Effective (1)

Effective (2)

Neither Effective or Ineffective (3)

Somewhat Ineffective (4)

Ineffective (5)

Q7 Have you received positive comments about cleaning your Adopt-a-Highway section(s)? Check all that apply.

Yes, from residents of the community. (1)

Yes, from business owners on the route we clean. (2)

Yes, from Texas Department of Transportation employees (3)

Yes, from family or friends. (4)

Not that I am aware of. (5)

Q8 Please click the choice from the list below which best fits your volunteer Group Type.

Business (for example a restaurant, hardware store, gas station, online sales, expedited shipping, or national chain store.) (1)

Civic (for example Lions Club, Rotary Club, 4H, Local Garden Club, or other type of group that are advocates for character building, civic duty etc.) (2)

Family (a group of family members, In remembrance of a loved one, a husband and wife team, an individual etc.) (3)

Government (a town, city, county, state, or federal government agency) (4)

Religious (a church, church youth group, or other related religious organization) (6)

School (junior or senior high schools, trade schools, colleges and universities, and other educational organizations). (7)

Scouts (youth groups that support good citizenship, civic responsibility and development of good character traits) (8)

Other (a group that does not fit any of the other group types) (5)

Q9 Please provide the City, County and highway route for each of the Adopt-a-Highway sites your group cleans. For example, Austin Travis RM 2222. Type 'Rural' if outside a city.

	City (1)	County (2)	Highway Route (3)
AAH site 1 (1)			
AAH site 2 (2)			
AAH site 3 (3)			
AAH site 4 (4)			

Q10 For each Adopt-a-Highway site you entered, could you please provide the highway route, average number of bags of litter / cleaning session and average number of bags of litter collected in a year.

	Highway Route (1)	Average bags of litter / cleaning session (2)	Average bags of litter collected per year (3)
AAH site 1 (1)			
AAH site 2 (2)			
AAH site 3 (3)			
AAH site 4 (4)			

Q11 Do you think that littering on your Adopt-a-Highway site(s) has decreased, remained about the same or increased over the time you and your group have cleaned the site(s)?

The amount of litter has decreased on our site(s) over time. (1)

The amount of litter has remained about the same on our sites over time. (2)

The amount of litter has increased on our sites over time. (3)

Q12 How did your group first hear about Adopt-a-Highway, which led to joining together and adopting a site?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q13 How many times per year does your group clean each of your Adopt-a-Highway site(s).

One time per year (1)

Two times per year (2)

Three times per year (3)

Four times per year (4)

More than four times per year. (5)

Q14 What challenges, if any, does your group face in the Adopt-a-Highway Program. Click all that apply.

Scheduling the time for our clean up among our volunteer group members. (1)

Scheduling the time for our clean up with TxDOT. (7)

Safety concerns when on the site. (2)

Weather limitations. (3)

Volunteer recruitment / retention. (4)

Transportation to clean up site(s). (5)

We have not faced any challenges I am aware of. (6)

Q15 Please provide additional information regarding the answers to the previous question.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q16 Have you or other volunteers in your group ever told others about the Adopt-a-Highway program? Check all that apply.

Yes, individuals from our Group have told family or friends about Adopt-a-Highway (1)

Yes, we have made a presentation about Adopt-a-Highway volunteering at an event. Please provide the name of the group you presented to in the following text box. (2)
_____

Yes, a motorist saw our Group Adopt-a-Highway sign and stopped to talk to our Group about why we were cleaning the site and what is Adopt-a-Highway. (3)

Yes, (describe a different opportunity not listed above. (4)
_____

No, we have not had an opportunity to talk to others about Adopt-a-Highway. (5)

Q17 To your knowledge has another Adopt-a-Highway group been formed, or has an individual joined a Group after they heard about Adopt-a-Highway from your Group?

Yes, the new Group picks up litter on highway route (please type the route and number in the space provide (e.g., RM 2222) (1)
_____

Yes, a new individual joined our group after hearing about Adopt-a-Highway from us. (2)

Yes, a new individual joined another group after hearing about Adopt-a-Highway from us. (3)

Not that I am aware of. (4)

Q18 Does your Group of volunteers ever meet with other Adopt-a-Highway groups to share 'lessons learned' or socialize?

Yes, we have met in person with one or more other Adopt-a-Highway Groups. (1)

Yes, we have met online using Zoom or Teams with other Adopt-a-Highway Groups. (2)

Not that I am aware of. (3)

Q19 Does your group ever interact with other Adopt-a-Highway Groups using social media or post photos and discussions after you completed a

cleanup for anyone to view? If so, could you please also indicate which platform(s) are used?

We interact with other Adopt-a-Highway groups through social media to exchange ideas and keep in touch. (8)

We post photos and discussions about our cleanups for the general public to view. (9)

Facebook (1)

Instagram (2)

WhatsApp (3)

TikToc (4)

Linked In (5)

Other social media site not listed above (6)
_____

Our group does not use social media to post about Adopt-a-Highway that I'm aware of. (7)

Q20 If you have met with other Adopt-a-Highway groups in person, online or through social media, how have these meetings benefited the groups?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q21 If you have not met with other Adopt-a-Highway groups in person, online or through social media, please indicate the reasons why you think this is the case. Choose all answers that apply.

Everyone is busy with other time commitments. (1)

We are not sure what benefits would be gained by meeting with other Adopt-a-Highway groups. (2)

We really don't know how to contact other Adopt-a-Highway groups, else we might meet with them. (3)

Q22 What benefits do you think your group's volunteers gain by participating in Adopt-a-Highway? Please check all that apply.

Cleaner more attractive roadsides (1)

Cost savings for taxpayers (2)

Social bonding with other group members. (4)

Increased awareness of littering issues. (5)

Recognition from the organization our group represents. (6)

Physical Activity / Exercise (7)

Stress relief and mental well-being (8)

Educational experience about safety and working outdoors. (10)

Opportunity for youth involvement and mentorship. (11)

Other benefits not listed above. (16)
_____

Q23 Please list the benefit you think is most important and why you think it is most important? Consider the benefits you checked from the list any and additional benefit(s) you might have added that were not listed.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q24 Is there any additional information or other resources that would make litter clean-up more efficient or enjoyable for your group?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q25 What advice would you give to a new Adopt-a-Highway group before they began a clean up on their section?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q26 Please provide any additional comments you'd care to share regarding how the Adopt-a-Highway program can be improved. Note - this is the last question of the survey. When you hit Next, the survey will be uploaded to the survey database. If you want to review your answers, hit Previous to arrive at the pages you want to review. When you want to submit the survey, hit Next on each page including this page. Thank you for your time in taking this survey.

_____

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