

Wilkes Cleanup Procedures & Best Practices

(from the 2017 experience)

21 TASKS

Necessary to Organize a Cleanup

November 15, 2017

Cleanups are the work of many hands. Numerous tasks must be performed to orchestrate one event. In the past, it seems like no one person knew *exactly*, what the others were doing or how they did it. The events were successful because the volunteers responsibly fulfilled their tasks with faith that others would do the same. However, that is “no way to run a railroad” or a *cleanup*. Therefore, I have recorded *my understanding* of how it has been done in the past, was done in 2017 and could be done in the future. This is intended as a guide for the next effort and should be amended afterwards, by *those who did it*. I have listed our 2017 experiences in small fonts to illustrate why these procedures are recommended.

1. **An “official coordinator” needs to submit an “Application”** (“East Portland Reuse, Recycle, Clean-up Program”) to EPNO. *But only* if you have enough capable volunteers committed to helping, see Paragraph 11 below. The “coordinator” is responsible to the entire project, which is outlined below. (2017 Experience: David Ashton (davidashtonco@outlook.com) is the administrator of the program and can help with the application. Carry Goble has done it in recent years.)
2. **Reserve drop boxes¹** (dumpsters) with a recycling company. (2017 Experience: We used ECR at 122nd & San Rafael. It’s dispatcher was Brendan Jamieson at 503-253-0867 who was very helpful. It is my understanding that ECR is less expensive than other such companies used in the past, partly because they are located close by and have their own drop-off point, at that place. Heiberg for example, is located in Milwaukee. Also I hear, many such companies just don’t want that business. Trucks driving far distances is just not profitable.)
3. **Reserve school parking lot.** Reserve the *Margaret Scott Elementary School* parking lot **BOTH** (A) on the web at... <http://reynoldssd7.tandemcal.com/> and (B) in person with the school secretary (Kim at 503-255-2031). (Double-check with the school secretary because in 2017, she told us that school was not in session on that Friday, but in fact it was. It was a potential disaster in that multiple big trucks were headed towards the parking lot full of cars. Fortunately Brendon Jamison was able to prevent that.)
4. **Arrange a date and time** for the boxes to be placed in the parking lot *so as to avoid parked cars* and school children. In 2017, this was done on the Friday before the Saturday Clean-up. That has to be coordinated with the company **and** the school. Double check with each, see paragraph 8 below.

¹ In 2017 we used 6 foot tall boxes (instead of the 8 feet) for safety reasons. The boxes for metals and yard debris were 8 ft.

5. **Print fliers Announcing the Cleanup.** They can be produced at EPNO by a volunteer, but don't ask an EPNO employee unless necessary. If an EPNO employee does it, there will be a charge. Alternately, they can be produced professionally at WCG's expense. If made at EPNO, use colorful paper which is more eye-catching, the paper is by the copier. In the past, Alice and Jim Blatt have distributed the announcements throughout the neighborhood.
6. **Print handouts** for the "customers" that (A) publicize WCG, (B) describe items that cannot be accepted and (C) request contributions. Hand them to the "customers" before they dump their stuff. There should be at least 100 such handouts.
7. **Reserve supplies** (vests, gloves, tents, etc.) from EPNO, then (A) PICK THEM UP on the Friday before the Saturday Cleanup, (B) take them to the school and (C) set them up. (2017 Experience: Jim Blatt has always done it so efficiently that I didn't even know it happened. In case he's not there, it needs to be remembered and performed by someone.)
8. **Have a knowledgeable person present when the boxes are delivered** to show where they should be placed. There are particular places that work best. Jim Blatt has always done that. (2017 experience: Luckily I got to the school early, discovered cars in the parking lot, talked to school secretary who declared that they could not be moved until 4:30, called Jamison and through his extra efforts, stopped the trucks and rescheduled the delivery. He had to pay overtime for that and for that, we owe him big time.)
9. **Ask the school office what else is going on that day.** (2017 Experience: parents brought kids to soccer practice, couldn't get in, we didn't know anything about it so I investigated. Finding no soccer going on anywhere, I assumed there was no game. I told the mother that. The game began an hour later.)
10. **Have a first aid kit.** (2017 experience: a kid from the soccer game was injured so they asked us for a band aid, which we had, because it was included in the EPNO supplies.)
11. **Have enough (MORE) volunteers.** (2017 Experience: The company dispatcher Brendon Jamison said that we needed a volunteer TO GUARD AGAINST UNACCEPTABLE ITEMS **AT EVERY** box. If there was no volunteer for a box, that box should be closed. That means that we needed a minimum of 6 *volunteers in the field* at all times. Much of the time we did not have that many and, unacceptable objects got through. If someone is not attending to the metals box, for example, people will drop amazingly heavy objects on the ground and leave.

INVITE ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEERS. Our membership in *The Rovers*² entitles us to ask; but they *too* are all volunteers. (In prior years, help was obtained from the police cadets and high school students. Shirley Larson got the girls soccer team from Parkrose High School to help on our *movie in the park* event. The Russel N.A. invited men from the homeless shelter to help. That, according to Ron Glanville, was more than they needed.

In 2017 we had 10 volunteers which included 4 who were unexpected (Brent Young, Larry Blatt, Tom Lewis and Arlene Kimura.) Of the 10, 3 could carry things, 4 could carry heavy objects / climb into boxes. We could have used more. The metals box is particularly difficult and requires strength, agility and courage. Jim Blatt has handled it but I have no idea how. It seems imprudently dangerous to expect any volunteer to do that. However, if we are

² The Rovers does excellent work setting up events all over East Portland. Arlene Kimura at arlene.kimura@gmail.com is the contact person. The Homeless shelter sent 30 guys who were very helpful and more volunteers than the cleanup needed.

going to accept washing machines, dish washers, etc. someone has to organize them in the metals box. That person must be strong, agile and physically brave (like Jim Blatt)...it's scary in there.

12. Buy and bring refreshments (coffee, hot chocolate, etc.) for volunteers. The cost will be reimbursed by Wcg.

13. Have ONE person for traffic control. (2016 Experience: Cars began lining up in both directions so had to be interwoven. It was a dangerous and potentially conflict producing arrangement which should be avoided. It apparently happened because someone was not on duty when that second line developed. The "customers" are to form one line headed east on Sacramento.)

14. Don't Open up until all volunteers are signed off.

15. "Graciously" greet the "customers". Someone (chairman of WCG) should go up and down the line of waiting cars and chat with the waiting "customers." It makes them feel recognized, patient and puts them on their good behavior. It should introduce us (WCG) as ALL UNPAID VOLUNTEERS (so be polite, don't complain or demand.) The flier should let them know what we cannot accept, why and what they can do with them. I put that information, which I got from the recycling company and Metro, on the flier. Also it explained the reason that contributions are accepted.

16. Don't let the customers drop their debris on the ground and leave. When that happens, others assume it is the right thing and do likewise. Then some volunteer has to pick it all up and move it appropriately. We are their helpful volunteer neighbors, not their servants.

17. Return the supplies borrowed from EPNO to EPNO. (2017 Experience: Jim Blatt has always done that with his personal trailer the Monday following the event.)

18. Dispose of Unacceptable Items. Some unacceptable items such as liquids, tires, monitors, etc. got through. We can't just leave them in the parking lot, so what do we do with them? (2017 Experience: Jim Blatt took the tires to R & B Recycling. He should be reimbursed for any cost associated with that.)

19. Afterwards, file the "Final Evaluation and Expenses Worksheet" with EPNO. Whoever filed the "East Portland Reuse, Recycle, Clean-up Program" request should submit that worksheet. Carrie Goble has done it in the past.

20. The recycling company will submit a bill to Metro for the bulk waste. It will also submit a bill to Wilkes CG for the yard debris, which will be paid for out of Wilkes CG funds. Contributions from the "customers" will hopefully, offset that cost. The price for selling the metals will be deducted from the bulk waste bill.

21. Submit an After-action Report to the board. Someone should prepare an overall report on the event which includes its costs, proceeds and an evaluation of how well it went. This document should also be updated and approved by those involved.

REMEMBER

- 1. Have a training session** for the volunteers BEFORE opening up. That session emphasizes safety and review **what items cannot be accepted**. Have the volunteers sign in on the volunteer form for insurance purposes. (2017 Experience: In the frantic activity of getting set up, I could not get them all together, so at Brenden's request, I spoke to each volunteer about what could not be accepted. Meeting him later, I asked if we took things that were not acceptable. He said there was nothing he was aware of, we did fine. Although, we did take tires and toxic liquids which Jim Blatt disposed of.)
- 2. Never lean any volunteer alone, ALWAYS HAVE AT LEAST TWO** present. (2017 experience: After the event, Carrie stayed behind alone, waiting for another box. A rude/threatening "customer" came by and alarmed her. She didn't sign up for that.)
- 3. Have enough capable volunteers or don't do it.** What would we have done without the 4 unexpected strong volunteers? We would have been unable to *complete* the cleanup. What could Alice, Kathi and Jill do with a washing machine in the parking lot after everyone had gone? In the future, I recommend that unless we have (A) enough capable volunteers committed or (B) a junk removal company on call³; the cleanup should not be attempted.
- 4. Consolidate the contributions** for someone to take to the bank. Alice Blatt has always done that.

Richard Mohle,
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³ Such as...Junk King (<https://www.junk-king.com/contact/>), I-Got-Junk (www.1800gotjunk.com/us_en?)