

Risk Assessment Advice

It is **strongly recommended** that you undertake a risk assessment of the area you intend to undertake your litter pick **prior to the activity** and that you retain a copy of this risk assessment and any subsequent risk assessments you complete. A blank template has been included within this pack for you to utilise and complete with the group undertaking the litter picking activity.

To help you complete your assessment, we have listed below a number of potential hazards that you may encounter but there may be other factors which you will need to consider depending on the location of your litter pick and who is taking part i.e. children, vulnerable adults etc.

People undertaking litter picking activities do so at their risk and should remain within the 30mph speed limits of any town or village, walking on pavements where possible.

Potential hazards and possible effects

Hazard	Effects
Sharp litter (i.e. cans, broken glass)	Cuts and abrasions
Uneven ground	Fractures and dislocations
Heavy sacks	Spinal injury, sprains and strains
Hard to reach litter	Sprains, strains, cuts and abrasions
Cars and other vehicles	Death or serious injury
Syringes	Contagious/infectious disease
Blind Bends	Death or serious injury

Potential hazards and possible control measures

Hazard	Control Measure
Sharp litter (i.e. cans, broken glass)	Only use hand held litter pickers. Advise children not to pick up broken glass but to get an adult to help. Place item carefully in to the sack. Remember sacks could split and cause cuts & abrasions to legs etc.
Uneven ground	Ensure all those taking part are wearing suitable footwear and advise them not to walk on steep slopes or uneven ground.
Heavy sacks	Only fill the sack to half way.
Hard to reach litter	Only use hand held litter pickers provided and do not over reach.

Cars and other vehicles	Litter pick one side of the road at a time (to avoid crossing), only litter pick where there are pavements and within 30 mph zones. Ensure all pickers have hi-vis tabards.
Syringes	Do not pick up syringes. If you find a syringe, contact the Forest of Dean District Council on <u>01594 810000</u> to advise location of syringes.
Blind Bends	Do not litter pick on or after a blind bend or blind summit, please advise the Forest of Dean District Council who will arrange for a contractor to undertake these works.

Additional Health and Safety

This information given below has been taken from the health and safety advice on the Keep Britain Tidy website

Hygiene

To avoid illness from poor hygiene, all those taking part in the clean-up must:

- Wear heavy duty protective gloves at all times
- Cover any cuts, however minor, with surgical tape or waterproof plaster
- Avoid rubbing the mouth and eyes whilst working
- Wash hands and forearms before eating, drinking, smoking or going to the toilet

Heavy Lifting

Lifting heavy items can be hazardous and volunteers should be discouraged from lifting large or heavy items.

- Once large or heavy items have been identified you should consider whether it is practical for volunteers to remove the given objects or whether it would be best removed by the local council
- If you decide that the item can be lifted by volunteers then this should be done at the end of the tidy up through a separate and co-ordinated effort

Hazardous Waste

Make sure everyone is aware of potentially dangerous items which they should not pick up i.e. needles, chemical drums, asbestos etc.

If very large or dangerous items such as unidentified drums, cans or canisters of chemicals, poisons or insecticides are present contact the Environment Agency on 0800 807 060 or the Local Authority 01594 810000.

If syringes are spotted at any stage during your tidy up, do not attempt to move them yourself. Make a note of their location and inform the Street Warden Team on 01594 81000 who will safely remove the items.

Natural Dangers

Avoid holding your tidy up near potentially dangerous places such as steep slippery banks, fast flowing or deep water or derelict buildings.

Line pins and tape can be used to section off any potentially dangerous areas. For a large operation, a loud hailer could be used to warn participants to stay in a designated area.

Other Dangers

- Giant Hogweed is an invasive plant species which grows on waste ground and riverbanks. It forms dense colonies that suppress the growth of native plants and grasses, leaving the banks bare of vegetation in winter and increasing the risk of erosion and re-colonisation from seeds washed downstream. Giant hogweed can cause harm to people and animals. Great care should be taken when working near this weed and it should not be touched at any time. Seek immediate medical advice if skin comes into contact with the weed and irritation, rashes or blistering occurs.
To find out more about invasive plant species and how you can help the charity Plantlife to tackle this issue please follow this link <http://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk>.
- Weil's Disease (Leptospirosis) is a very rare infection carried in rats urine and can be fatal. The symptoms include high temperature, severe headache, flu-like illness or muscle pains. The symptoms will appear 3 to 19 days after exposure to contaminated water, early treatment if suspected is vital.
- If you discover fly-tipping report it to the Forest of Dean District Council on 01594 810000. If you see someone fly-tipping or come across hazardous waste report it to the Environment Agency on their 24 hour hotline 0800 807 060 or alternatively contact the police.

Insurance Cover

Obtaining public liability insurance is very important and strongly recommended. This will provide cover for your legal liability arising from accidental damage or injury that may occur during the event, including damage or injury to a member of the public or their property.

If you are an individual organising a tidy up your current household insurance may cover you for public liability. You will need to check your policy to ensure you are covered. If not you will need to take out a separate public liability insurance.

If you represent an organisation such as a local council or school it is possible that you already have insurance in place but it is important to check that litter picks activity is covered under such insurance. If not, a suitable extension should be made to the policy. If you are unable to obtain public liability insurance for your event please contact BTCV on 01302 572 244 as they can provide group insurance or visit www.btcv.org.uk