



SCHOOL BAG-A-THON

**WANT TO HELP CLEANUP YOUR COMMUNITY, ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY SERVICE
AND RAISE FUNDS FOR YOUR SCHOOL?**

HOST A SCHOOL BAG-A-THON FOR THE GREAT AMERICAN CLEANUP

Dear Principals, Teachers, and PTA Parents,

Every spring, thousands of volunteers get out to clean up our streets, parks, and waterways as part of Rockland's Great American Cleanup campaign. You can engage students at your school in this fun and meaningful act of community service by hosting a School Bag-A-Thon cleanup event.

A School Bag-A-Thon is a great way to raise environmental awareness, school spirit, and funds all at once. Students get out to cleanup around their school or in their neighborhoods. Their pledge dollars go to support your school PTA. The pride they take in creating a cleaner environment can be seen in the smiles on their faces!

Here's how it works:

- 1) Choose a day and time to host your School Bag-A-Thon cleanup event. The target dates for the Great American Cleanup are April 14 – April 22, 2012. However, cleanups run throughout the spring, so you can pick any day that is convenient for you.
- 2) Contact Keep Rockland Beautiful with the date of your School Bag-A-Thon: 845-623-1534 or sonia@keeprocklandbeautiful.org.
- 3) Launch your School Bag-A-Thon campaign with a 'pep' assembly. You can use your assembly to generate enthusiasm, to educate students about the effects of litter and the many benefits of waste reduction, and to encourage community service or service-learning projects.* KRB can supply a form letter on letterhead to a designated official for distribution to community service volunteers. KRB will provide you with a motivational video to help you kick off your event. Go to our website to access downloadable educational materials (www.keeprocklandbeautiful.org). You can also link your event to other environmental activities or initiatives in the school, such as a recycling initiative, an art project, or an upcoming fieldtrip to, for instance, the Solid Waste Management Authority's environmental education center in Hillburn, NY.
- 4) Distribute pledge forms to the students. Download an editable pledge form from our website. Place your own promotional flyer, with instructions for the cleanup and your School Bag-A-Thon cleanup event, on the back of the pledge form. The pledge form indicates that sponsors can pledge per bag or per unit of time dedicated to the cleanup. As a guideline, in a littered

area, a teenager or adult can fill, on average, a 30 gal. bag of trash in an hour. If the pledger is a very young elementary school student who will be cleaning up in a relatively clean schoolyard or park, he or she can pledge per unit of time that they will devote to cleaning up. Be sure to have pledge forms (and donations) turned in to you at least two weeks in advance of your event, so you know how many cleanup teams will be participating that day, and we know what supplies you will need. These pledge forms will also serve as Keep Rockland Beautiful's GAC registration forms.

- 5) Contact KRB as soon as your pledge forms have been collected to arrange for the pick up of your cleanup supplies. KRB provides trash bags and a limited number of t-shirts and tote bags. We also sell litter grabbers (\$10 each), and have a limited supply for loan. Please mail your collected pledge forms to Keep Rockland Beautiful. **This is also your opportunity to help support KRB.** We kindly request that you donate a portion of the funds you have raised to help support KRB and its programs. Any school donating \$200 or more back to KRB will be rewarded with a "Kids for a Cleaner, Greener Rockland" certificate, and will be recognized on the KRB website and in our follow-up media outreach.
- 6) Gather for your School Bag-A-Thon cleanup event. On this day, cleanup teams (students, their family members and friends) meet at the school to pick up their cleanup supplies before heading off to cleanup their chosen site. The PTA may also want to use this meeting time as an opportunity to provide refreshments or entertainment and sell items, such as reusable water bottles, to help raise additional funds for the school. You can also use this day to showcase student talents and projects. **Be sure to have cleanup teams take a Cleanup Report Form or pledge to report on-line at www.keepprocklandbeautiful.org. Please collect completed Cleanup Report Forms and mail them to KRB.** These reports are important to help demonstrate what an impact you are making, and to secure support for the cleanup campaign.
- 7) A certificate of appreciation and media recognition will be given to the school that has the most cleanup participants and to the school that has provided the highest number of Cleanup Report Forms.
- 8) GET OUT AND HAVE FUN! And know that we are...

Working Together for a Cleaner, Greener Rockland

*What is service-learning? If school students collect trash out of a streambed, they are providing a valued service to the community as volunteers. If school students collect trash from a streambed, analyze their findings to determine the possible sources of pollution, and share the results with residents of the neighborhood, they are engaging in service-learning. In this service-learning example, in addition to providing an important service to the community, students are learning about water quality and laboratory analysis, developing an understanding of pollution issues, and practicing communications skills. They may also reflect on their personal and career interests in science, the environment, public policy or other related areas. Both the students and the community have been involved in a transformative experience.

Keep Rockland Beautiful
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Questions? Call 845-623-1534 / sonia@keepprocklandbeautiful.org