

Adopt-A-Stream Program Manual

City of Lawton
Stormwater Management



Created July 2012 by CW
Approved July 2012 by SM

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To All Adopt-A-Stream Participants:

Thank you for your commitment to help protect our local surface waters. By adopting a stretch of stream in Lawton, you are contributing to preserving the health and beauty of one our most precious natural resources. Adopt-A-Stream is a voluntary program supported by the City of Lawton Stormwater Management Division that encourages citizen-based stewardship of water resources. This program provides an opportunity for individuals, community and civic organizations, and businesses to voluntarily step forward and promote cleaner and healthier streams, rivers and lakes in our area. The success of the program depends on your involvement and support.

This handbook is intended to serve as a guide and provide the basic information you or your group will need to carry out your volunteer activities as guardian(s) of your adopted segment of stream. Please read this handbook carefully to become familiar with basic requirements and recommended procedures. Since this handbook is just a guide, you should feel free and are encouraged to undertake any and all additional precautions and procedures you deem necessary in order to safely and effectively carry out your activities.

Adopt-A-Stream is a flexible program. As a minimal level of commitment, we simply ask that you maintain current contact information with the stormwater office, perform four (4) stream clean-up events per year and report on those activities within 72 hours of their occurrence. We encourage quarterly activities, but the frequency and scheduling of your participation is up to you. We understand that different groups will have different interests, resources, and availability.

The stormwater staff will assist you with the planning and logistical details associated with carrying out your activities to the extent resources allow. Notifying the stormwater office well in advance of your scheduled activities will help ensure sufficient lead time to coordinate the available support you may need.

The stormwater division has a variety of other environmental projects underway and welcomes your involvement in these also. The staff can help direct you to these opportunities provide education materials and assist you with stream issues and concerns.

The stormwater program is one part of a larger effort to protect our local watersheds.

Again, thank you for your involvement.

City of Lawton Stormwater Management
212 SW 9th Street
Lawton, OK 73501
(580) 581-3478
Lawtonok.gov

Adoption Responsibilities

As a participant in the Adopt-A-Stream program, we ask that you or your organization fulfill a minimum commitment of four (4) stream protection activities per year. Additional involvement is encouraged, and the Stormwater Division is eager to assist you in pursuing higher levels of participation. The frequency and scheduling of your participation is up to you.

Minimum Commitment:

Conduct four (4) stream clean-up events per year. A stream cleanup involves:

- Walking the length of your adopted stretch of stream, picking up as much litter as is feasible, bagging it, and delivering it to a designated disposal or pick-up site.
- Reporting data summarizing your clean-up results (number of bags, number of pounds, number of participants, etc.) within 72 hours of the event.
- Observing the condition of the stream as you walk your stretch and reporting your observations.

Additional Activities:

We strongly encourage you to plan and participate in additional activities. The City of Lawton stormwater staff can provide information and support on a variety of additional projects such as:

-
- Implementing one or more Best Management Practices (BMPs) for individuals or homeowners.
- Conducting neighborhood education / outreach activities that encourage others to implement BMPs for stream protection.
- Stabilizing and/or restoring stream banks (planting and maintaining protective bank vegetation).
- Installing rain gardens or other stormwater control structures in your neighborhood.

Stream Clean-Up Guidelines

Good planning and preparation will help ensure that your stream clean-up event is a huge success. Some key things to consider include the following:

Site Selection:

Clean-up projects are typically along streams, creeks or rivers where litter has accumulated. Projects can be on public lands or private property, but participants must always have written authorization to be on the land prior to the project date. A landowner approval form is provided in the manual to assist you in securing a landowner's permission in advance of your activities.

Project Date and Time:

Notify the stormwater division, (580) 581-3478, 4-6 weeks before the event to ensure available resources can be supplied. Allow adequate time for project planning and volunteer recruitment. Clean-up events typically last 2-4 hours. When scheduling, avoid holiday weekends to ensure maximum participation.

Volunteers:

Only children over the age of eight (8) should be allowed to assist in a clean-up project. Children must also have written parental permission. One (1) adult supervisor for every six children is recommended. The number of volunteers and/or adult supervisors will however always depend upon the difficulty of the area to be covered and the magnitude of litter accumulation.

Collecting trash and debris:

Notify the stormwater division at (580) 581-3478 before any Adopt-A-Stream event you hold. We will supply you with large trash bags, safety vests and gloves to the extent available. Any unused materials must be returned to the Stormwater Division after an event to help ensure future availability for other participants.

You are encouraged to experiment and find the best collection methods for your stretch of stream. Some groups choose to walk within the stream channel itself when it does not present a danger to participants. Wading can be part of the fun and may provide the best way to access all the trash present. Other groups find it efficient to have people in the stream and up on the bank. It is also useful to have a wagon or cart at hand to tote the trash as it gets heavier. The feasibility of these and other selected methods will depend on the depth of the stream as well as the density and quality of vegetation or structures along the stream bank. Safety must be the foremost consideration of both organizers and individual participants at all times.

We recommend that you walk your stream once before collecting debris in order to survey the surroundings. Pay special attention to the depth of the stream at all points along the route, the steepness of the banks, obstacles, etc., and plan your collection route(s) accordingly. You may find it necessary to walk your stream in several sections, entering and exiting at different points.

It is critical that private property be respected. The stream channel itself is often public, and you may wade in it along the entire stretch of your stream. However, the banks and land adjacent thereto may be owned by landowners along the stream. Prior to your event, you will need to contact them and get permission to cross their land (see *Landowner Authorization for Access*). Each landowner should sign a copy of the *Landowner Authorization for Access* form.

If you discover big, heavy items that need to be removed (such as appliances, concrete blocks, ect.), notify the stormwater division of the location so they can coordinate removal by city staff.

Please do NOT remove logs, leaves, branches, or other natural items. They provide important habitat and are the foundation of the food chain within the stream. If you are concerned that a fallen log or other natural item is causing damage to the stream, blocking flow, etc., please leave it for the time being and note it on your stream report.

Participants are responsible for transporting and disposing of collected debris at the City of Lawton landfill unless arrangements have been made with the stormwater division staff for an alternative disposal plan. Stormwater staff will notify the landfill prior to the event and all disposal fees will be waived for debris collected.

Reporting:

In addition to collecting trash and debris, your stream clean-up event includes visual monitoring of stream. This means simply observing the condition of the stream and taking notes about its particular characteristics. Use the *Stream Clean-Up Report* provided to record your observations. Some of the areas you should focus your observations on are:

- Water appearance and odor. The color, clarity, and smell of the water serve as a warning flags for pollutants such as oil, sediment, excessive nutrients, detergents, sewage leaks, and other substances.
- Stream Bottom. A healthy aquatic environment requires a gravelly or rocky streambed. Rocks and gravel provide surfaces on which macroinvertebrates (bugs) colonize, and the spaces between rocks and gravel provide hiding protection and areas for laying eggs. Rocks also help create riffles and pools. Riffles stir up the water and help it collect oxygen, while pools provide cool respites for fish. When silt and sand buries the stream bottom, aquatic habitat is compromised.
- Stream Bank. A healthy stream requires protection from the land. A well-vegetated bank, with lots of dense, woody vegetation with deep roots (trees), provides the best buffering effect. Shorter, woody plants such as brush and small trees provide some good protection, and even herbaceous plants such as grass filter strips are better than bare soil. In some areas, eroding stream-banks have been temporarily stabilized using piles of rock called Rip-Rap. This is a band-aid solution that can actually cause more damage to the stream by directing the scouring energy of the water farther down stream, spreading out the erosion.
- Tributaries and Pipes. Direct discharges into the stream may or may not be detrimental. Storm systems drain to many of our creeks. The extent to which stormwater carries pollutants depends on our success in implementing pollutant and run-off controls throughout the landscape. The appearance and odor of any discharge and the location of pipes is important information for enforcing the laws that protect water quality and for educating land owners to help resolve problems.

- Other observations. One of the most important sections of your report is the area for other observations that we cannot predict here. The range of damage and abuse inflicted upon our waterways is broad and diverse. Your report of any situation you think is causing damage is the first step to resolving the problem. Citizen vigilance is critical and is a big part of the Adopt-A-Stream program.

Safety, Health and Comfort

Clothing and Footwear:

Be sure to advise all of your participants to dress comfortably and safely. Consider the season and the weather. Dressing in layers for warmth, or wearing light breathable clothes to keep cool, is always advisable. Long sleeves and pants provide protection from the sun as well as vegetation. A hat for warmth in the cold, or for sun protection in the heat, is also a good idea. Closed-toed shoes are a must, so no sandals. Hiking boots for those who plan to stay on land, and waders, rubber boots, or old sneakers for in-stream trekking should also be considered. An elastic or Velcro strip at the ankles helps prevent pant-legs from ballooning in the water. Nylon “water-shoes” are not recommended as they tend to have thin soles and do not provide much toe protection.

Gloves:

Nitrile, vinyl or latex gloves will be provided. Notify the stormwater division on what sizes will be needed before the event. Any unused gloves should be returned to the Stormwater Division after the event.

Each participant should additionally be advised to bring and wear rubber or leather work gloves to further ensure the personal safety of their hands.

Safety:

Dehydration is one of the greatest health risks but easily preventable. Advise all of your participants to bring a full water bottle. Extra drinking water should be available. Participants should avoid drinking water from any stream.

Advise all of your participants that sunscreen, lip balm, and sunglasses are all recommended, even in cold weather. A small backpack or waist-pack for personal items is useful for these items and the water bottle. Several participants can share a pack, and take turns wearing it. Car keys should be secured in a pack, not kept in pockets, where they can fall out when bending or reaching. Take as little extraneous stuff as possible.

A first aid-kit at the event is also recommended.

A meeting to review all possible stream hazards and provide other necessary safety precautions should be conducted by the primary contact for the volunteer organization prior to the start of each event. Standard hazards to be reviewed are listed on the *Hazard*

Review sheet and some safety guidelines are provided on the *Safety Guidelines for Volunteers Review* sheet. These should be supplemented by any additional precautions unique to the area you will be working in. All volunteers must attend the safety meeting prior to participating in the clean-up.

Liability

The City of Lawton is neither liable nor responsible for your clean-up project. A primary and secondary contact must be provided and sign the *Adopt-A-Stream* form. Each participant, or their parent/guardian if a minor, must additionally sign a *Participant Waiver Form* prior to participation. These forms must be submitted to the Stormwater Division with the report at the conclusion of your event. Proper supervision should be provided for youth participants.

Signage

All participants will be awarded an Adopt-A-Stream sign that includes their name. The City of Lawton will place and maintain the sign near the adopted area. The signs will be removed if the organization/individual elects to no longer participate in the program or does not meet the minimum requirements of four (4) clean-up events per year.

Contact Information

Thank you for your interest in the Adopt-A-Stream program. The stormwater staff is excited to work with you and will provide assistance as needed. Please contact us by:

Phone	(580) 581-3478
Fax	(580) 581-3598
E-mail	cywilliams@lawtonok.gov
Mail	City of Lawton Stormwater Division 212 SW 9 th Street Lawton, OK 73501

Please visit the City of Lawton website, lawtonok.gov for additional information.

Adopt-A-Stream Clean-Up Check List

PRIOR to the event:

___ Notify the Stormwater Division at (580) 581-3478 4-6 weeks before any Adopt-A-Stream event you hold. Make arrangements to get trash bags, safety vests, and gloves.

___ Photocopy the *Landowner Authorization* form and get it signed by each landowner whose property you plan to cross. Send these signed forms to the Stormwater Division, and keep copies for your records.

___ Publicize the date, time and meeting location of your event to your group. Advise group members of the proper clothing and personal items they need to have with them to be fully prepared (water bottle, sunscreen, sunglasses, lip balm, long sleeves and pants, closed-toed shoes, hat, layers for warmth, gloves, etc.).

___ Research your stretch of stream. Identify your entry and exit points and any unique hazards associated with the areas you will be working in. Have a plan for the logistics of your clean-up, especially transporting your collection to the landfill.

___ Photocopy the *Participant Waiver* form, to be signed by each participant.

___ Photocopy the *Stream Clean-Up Report* form, to be filled in during your clean-up.

___ Gather other appropriate and necessary safety equipment: rubber gloves, extra drinking water, first aid kits, cell phones, paperwork.

___ Develop a response plan to accidents and emergency situations.

DAY of the event:

___ Have each participant, including group leaders and parents of minors, sign the applicable waiver form upon arrival (if not already obtained).

___ Assign adult supervisors for minor participants.

___ Deliver all collected items to the landfill. Do not leave anything on the stream bank or the side of the road unless you have coordinated its prompt removal with the stormwater division staff.

AFTER the event (within 72 hours):

___ Complete the *Stream Clean-Up Report* form.

___ Send the *Stream Clean-Up Report* form, and the *Waiver* forms to the Stormwater Division.

___ Return borrowed and unused supplies to the Stormwater Division



PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

103 SW 4th Street • Lawton, Oklahoma 73501
Phone (580) 581-3478 • Fax (580) 581-3598
www.cityof.lawton.ok.us



ADOPT-A-STREAM Agreement

The City of Lawton and the individual participant or group recognizes the value of litter-free and healthier streams, rivers and lakes.

The Adopt-A-Stream program has been established for individuals, community and civic organizations as well as private businesses and industry to contribute toward the effort of maintaining cleaner and healthier streams, rivers and lakes.

By adopting a section of waterway you agree to perform at least four (4) stream clean-up projects per calendar year and to report the time, date, and results to the City of Lawton Stormwater Management Division. In return, and provided the event was coordinated 4-6 weeks in advance, the City of Lawton Stormwater Management Division will provide trash bags, gloves, and safety vests as needed to the adopting party. The City of Lawton Stormwater Management Division also agrees to provide a metal sign stating the adopting group or person's name and section of stream adopted.

As indicated by their signatures on this agreement, the individual participant, or group representatives acknowledge they are aware of the nature of the work which is to be performed, that there may be hazards associated with their participation as disclosed in the Safety Procedures and otherwise, and have agreed to adhere to the program's objectives, policies, recommended safety guidelines and instructions. The individual participants and groups further agree to not hold the City of Lawton responsible for any injuries they, their employees or their agents may suffer or damages that they, their employees, or their agents may cause or suffer as a result of their voluntary participation in the program.

SIGNATORY INSTRUCTIONS: Signatures of adopting individual or group representatives responsible for clean-up projects are required in the spaces provided below. No person may sign for another person.

ADOPTING GROUP SIGNATURES

The following persons will participate in one or more stream clean-up projects. By their signatures they: (1) are indicating that they are aware that there may be hazards associated with such participation as disclosed in the Safety Procedures and otherwise and that by voluntarily participating they agree to assume the risks of such hazards; (2) agree to abide by the program's policies, recommended safety guidelines and instructions, and (3) agree to not hold the City of Lawton responsible for any injuries that they may suffer or damages that they may cause or suffer as a result of participation in the Stream Clean-Up program. The undersigned also agree to keep complete and accurate records of all cleaned streams using the Stream Clean-Up Log. Completed Stream Clean-Up Logs should be returned to the City of Lawton Stormwater Management office within 72 hours of the completion of the marking event.

.....
Name of adopting individual/group to be placed on signage

.....
Primary Contact Person (Print Name and Phone #) Signature Date E-Mail

.....
Secondary Contact Person (Print Name and phone #) Signature Date E-Mail

.....
Section of stream to be adopted (Name, length, location)

**Adopt-A-Stream
Adult Participant Liability Release**

I, _____, an individual and/or person affiliated with the below-named group or organization, voluntarily agree to participate in the Adopt-A-Stream Program (hereinafter “Program”).

In consideration for allowing me to voluntarily participate in the Program, and with full appreciation of, and assumption of, the risks associated with said action, I, for myself, my heirs, my personal representative and my assigns, do hereby release, discharge, defend, indemnify, hold harmless, and forever discharge the City of Lawton, Oklahoma, and its officers, agents, and employees, from any and all actions, causes of action, claims and demands, rights, costs, loss of services, expenses and compensation on account of, resulting from or in any way arising out of, directly or indirectly, any and all injuries, including death, or any property damage sustained in connection with any loss or injury suffered by me arising out of my participation in the Program.

Group / Organization Name:

Adult Participant’s Name:

Adult Participant’s Address:

Adult Participant’s Phone Number:

READ BEFORE SIGNING!

Signature of Adult Participant:

Date:

**Adopt-A-Stream
Child Participant Liability Release**

I, _____, hereby declare and certify that I am the parent or legal guardian of _____, a child under 18 years of age.

I agree to allow my child/ward to participate in the Adopt-A-Stream Program (hereinafter “Program”), and in consideration for my child voluntarily participating in the Program, and with full appreciation of, and assumption of, the risks associated with said action, I agree to forever release, discharge, defend, indemnify, hold harmless, and forever discharge the City of Lawton, Oklahoma, and its officers, agents, and employees, from any and all actions, causes of action, claims and demands, rights, costs, loss of services, expenses and compensation on account of, resulting from or in any way arising out of, directly or indirectly, any and all injuries, including death, or any property damage sustained in connection with any loss or injury suffered by me arising out of my child/ward’s participation in the Program.

Child/Ward’s Name:

Child/Ward’s Address:

Parent/Guardian’s Name:

Parent/Guardian’s Address:

Parent/Guardian’s Phone Number:

READ BEFORE SIGNING!

Signature of Parent or Guardian of Participant:

Date:

Adopt-A-Stream Hazard Review

Poisonous Plants/Insects/Snakes
Animals
Unknown/Unlabeled Substances
Slip, Trip or Fall
Hidden/Sharp or Broken Objects
High Water
Overcrowding of workers

1. Review safety rules and guidelines, appropriate dress and other pre-project checks.
2. Do not create potential conflicts with other vehicles and equipment operating near the work area and provide maximum protection for workers getting in and out of the stream.
3. Wear appropriate personal protective clothing as recommended in the Adopt-A-Stream manual
4. Take extra precautions to prevent heat and cold stress when working in extremely hot or cold temperatures.
5. Be aware of poisonous plants, insects, snakes, animals and animal waste products and carcasses. It is a good practice to wear long-sleeve shirts, gloves and high top boots to protect against unforeseen hazards.
6. Be aware of routes for medical care in case of emergency.
7. Be aware of loose material, tripping hazards, uneven ground and other obstructions.
8. Allow ample space for each person to work safely.
9. Be aware of hidden obstructions that may have sharp edges and broken glass, especially in grassy areas.
10. Be aware of hazardous materials and objects and notify proper authorities (Police or Stormwater Management).
11. Use caution when handling trash bags containing broken or sharp objects.
12. If you collect any trash from the stream, use proper lifting techniques when disposing of trash bags.

Adopt-A-Stream Safety Guidelines for Volunteers Review

Conduct a safety meeting for all participants prior to each clean-up project and go over Safety Guidelines for Volunteers and safety procedures.

All Volunteers Must:

1. Never work alone
2. Wear provided safety equipment
3. Carpool to the project location, and park in designated parking area
4. Be eight years of age to participate in clean-up projects
5. Furnish adequate supervision by one or more adults (twenty one years of age or older) for groups that have participants eight to seventeen years of age
6. Complete clean-up projects only during daylight hours
7. Obey all safety guidelines

For Your Safety:

1. Wear light colored clothing that covers arms and legs
2. Wear protective gloves
3. Wear clothing that will not impair vision or movement during clean-up activities
4. Work in small groups
5. Stay well clear of any construction
6. Stop work in inclement weather
7. Postpone projects scheduled within 72 hours after any storm event to avoid storm surge
8. Drink plenty of fluids-take breaks-avoid overexertion
9. During cold weather months, dress warmly with layered clothing
10. Be alert for snakes, stinging insects and poisonous plants
11. Do NOT remove hazardous substances or dead animals (notify Stormwater Management and give the location of the item)
12. Avoid contact with noxious weeds and areas where herbicides were applied
13. Use proper lifting and bending techniques
14. Avoid steep slopes and drop offs

Volunteers Must Not:

1. Use or possess illegal drugs or alcohol during a clean-up event
2. Pick up what appears to be hazardous material (notify Stormwater Management if you encounter hazardous objects)
3. Push, shove or roughhouse near stream
4. Enter water higher than your knees
5. Enter water with strong current

In Case Of Emergency:

1. Have an adequate first-aid kit immediately available
2. Select an emergency room/hospital and know the route from the work area to the designated place of treatment facility
3. Have transportation immediately available

**Adopt-A-Stream
Landowner Authorization for Access**

State of Oklahoma
City of Lawton

The undersigned owner of the property located at _____,
Lawton, Oklahoma does by signing this License authorize

_____ and any associated participants to enter
upon such property for the purpose of removing trash and debris, from time to time, as
part of the City of Lawton Adopt-A-Stream Program, with the following understanding:

- 1) That this License may be revoked at any time by the undersigned.
- 2) That the Licensee and any other participants participating with the Licensee release
and waive any liability on the part of the Undersigned for any injury to such
participant occurring upon or during the entry upon the undersigned property.

Land Owner's Signature

Date

Witness Signature

Date

Adopt-A-Stream Stream Clean-Up Report

Please photocopy this form for each stream clean-up event

Group Name: _____
Date of Event: _____
Contact Name: _____
Phone Number: _____
Beginning Time: _____ Ending Time: _____
of Volunteers: _____
Stream Name: _____
Beginning Point: _____ Ending Point: _____

Trash / Debris:

of Bags _____ Approximate # of pounds: _____
Any unusual items collected: _____
Location and description of any large items that need to be removed: _____

Physical Data (Check all that apply)

Water appearance:

<input type="checkbox"/> Clear	<input type="checkbox"/> Foamy	<input type="checkbox"/> Green /Algae
<input type="checkbox"/> Oily	<input type="checkbox"/> Grey/Black	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Muddy	<input type="checkbox"/> Scummy	

Stream Bottom:

<input type="checkbox"/> Rocky	<input type="checkbox"/> Sandy	<input type="checkbox"/> Silty	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
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Stream Bank:

<input type="checkbox"/> Large Trees	<input type="checkbox"/> Exposed Soil	<input type="checkbox"/> Rip-Rap (rock)
<input type="checkbox"/> Weeds	<input type="checkbox"/> Small Trees / Brush	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

Odor:

<input type="checkbox"/> None	<input type="checkbox"/> Musky/Organic	<input type="checkbox"/> Rotten Eggs/Sewage
<input type="checkbox"/> Chemical	<input type="checkbox"/> Gas/Oil	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

Problem Areas:

Please describe the condition and location of any problem areas.

Tributaries/ Pipes

Please note location of any discharge which enters the stream.

Any additional comments, observations, suggestions, etc.:

Mail to: City of Lawton Stormwater Division or Fax: (580) 581-3598
212 SW 9th Street
Lawton, OK 73501