

MnDOT looking for Adopt a Highway volunteers

ST. PAUL, Minn. – The Minnesota Department of Transportation is looking for individuals and organizations to join the more than 4,500 groups and 45,000 people in the state who are Adopt a Highway volunteers.

The program is a public service project that helps reduce litter along the roadsides. It's been part of MnDOT's maintenance operations for many years.

"Some groups have participated since 1990," said Vicki Kessler, Adopt a Highway program coordinator for the Twin Cities Metro Area, which has about 500 sections of roadway maintained by volunteers.

Kessler currently has a waiting list for groups wanting to adopt a highway, but there are plenty of roadways available outside the Twin Cities area.

The volunteers, representing schools, businesses, faith-based organizations, families and individuals, clean up more than 10,000 miles of Minnesota roadways each year.

Groups last year spent more than 180,000 hours picking up more than 960,000 pounds of litter, according to Ernest Lloyd, statewide Adopt a Highway manager. He added that the program saves MnDOT more than \$7 million annually.

"Volunteers pick up litter, keep the roadways beautiful and save taxpayers money," said Lloyd. "When our volunteers are out cleaning the roadway ditches, MnDOT employees use their time to maintain our highways. It's a win-win for the state and it shows that Minnesotans care about their state."

Individuals and groups who want to volunteer should go to mndot.gov/adopt/ to find their local area program coordinator. MnDOT provides safety training, trash bags and safety vests, and will pick up the filled bags. MnDOT also posts signs along the adopted segments of roads with the names of the volunteer groups.

Volunteers are asked to commit to the program for at least two years and pick up litter on both sides of the roadway at least twice a year. The average length of an adopted roadway is two to three miles, although some roads are longer.

What is the Adopt a Highway Program?

A volunteer group cleans up a highway roadside



The public can volunteer and participate in Adopt a Highway to pick up litter along Minnesota's highways.

Adopt a Highway also enables residents who are environmentally conscious to make a personal contribution to a cleaner environment.

These volunteers save MnDOT \$7 million every year.

How does it work?

Community groups, churches, individuals or businesses adopt a highway by picking up litter on both sides of a road at least two times per year for at least two years.

MnDOT will help your group select a highway to adopt. Roads that have heavy traffic or are inaccessible to pedestrians are not eligible.

How do I start?

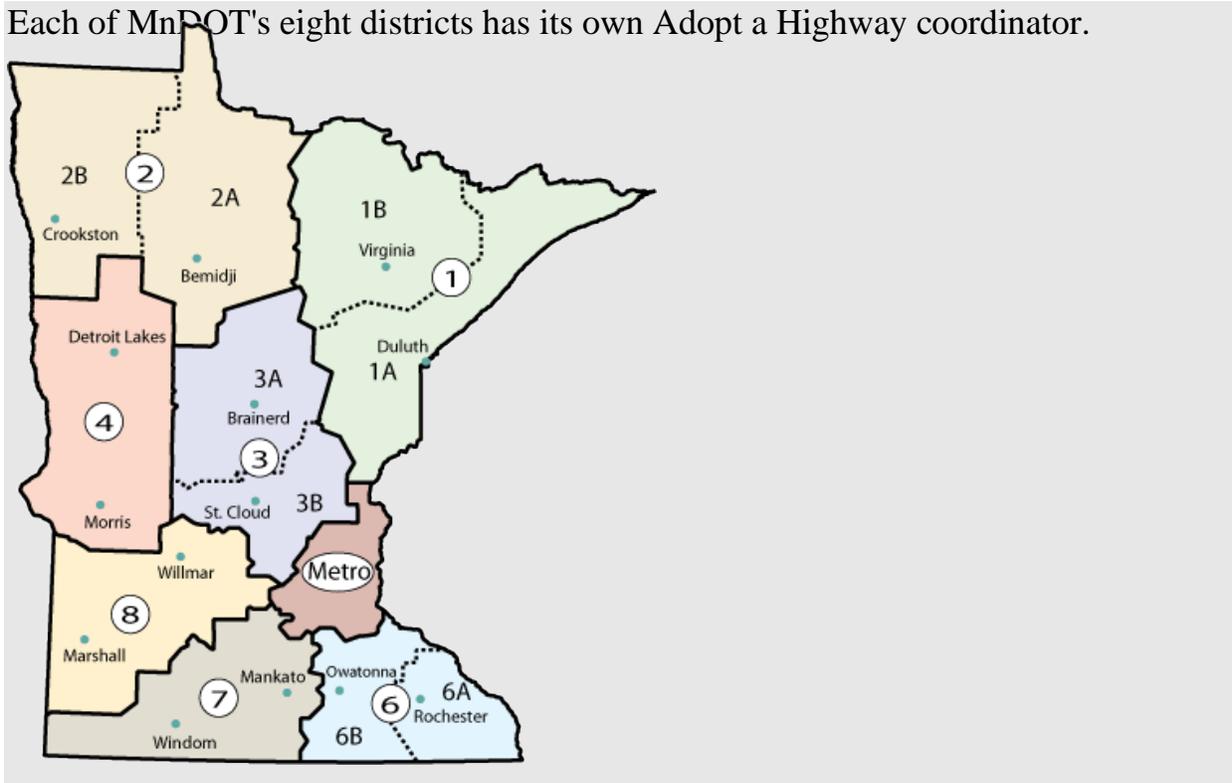
- Contact your local [Adopt a Highway coordinator](#).
 - Choose a representative for your group. The representative will sign an agreement on behalf of the group.
 - All participants in the group must review the safety information provided by MnDOT before every pickup.
 - Participants must be at least 12 years old unless specifically permitted. Participants 18 years old or younger must have adequate adult supervision.
- MnDOT provides volunteers with safety vests, trash bags and safety information.

What if I'm interested in doing it only once?

Pick a Highway is a one-time litter picking activity on an assigned segment of state highway. MnDOT will provide bags, vests, training, and bag retrieval. You contribute approximately four hours of labor.

Is your class seeking an environmental project? Does your business coordinate employee activities in the community? Pick a Highway better fits these situations. Contact an [Adopt a Highway coordinator](#).

Each of MnDOT's eight districts has its own Adopt a Highway coordinator.



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District Contacts

Call the coordinator nearest to you. [View the map](#) for assistance.

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