



Bristol Green Team Handbook

Be part of the solution, not the pollution.

Bristol Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services

51 High Street

860-584-6160

parksandrecreation@bristolct.gov

Thank you for partnering with the Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services Department to help maintain and enhance our public parks. This handbook outlines the standards, procedures, and safety requirements you should follow while participating in the Bristol Green Team.

Our goal is to ensure that every volunteer is safe, environmentally responsible, and respectful of public spaces and wildlife.

As a participant, you are expected to:

- Follow all guidelines in this handbook
- Maintain open communication with department staff
- Prioritize volunteer safety
- Respect park rules, wildlife, and natural features

Purpose and Guiding Principles

Bristol Green Team is an environmental stewardship program that empowers residents and local organizations including businesses, nonprofits, civic groups, schools, and community associations to take an active role in caring for Bristol's parks, trails, and public green spaces.

Managed by the Bristol Parks, Recreation, Youth & Community Services Department (BPRYCS), the Green Team provides resources, structure, and support so individuals and organizations can make a meaningful and lasting impact on the community.

Through individual engagement and coordinated volunteer events, the Green Team promotes environmental responsibility, community pride, and sustainable practices.

A park clean-up is more than picking up trash — it's community building and environmental stewardship.

1. How the Program Works – Individuals and Families

The Green Team is designed to be flexible to allow for individuals and families to participate as their schedule allows. The following steps outline the program for individuals and families:

1. Sign up for Bristol Green Team using the following link: <https://seam.ly/sHTazXaC>
2. Pick up your Bristol Green Team supplies at the Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services Department Main Office at 51 High Street
3. Read the Bristol Green Team Handbook
4. Pick up litter at the park of your choice at whatever time works for you

5. Leave trash bags or items collected in or next to a trash can in the park
6. Send pictures of you participating in Green Team to parksandrecreation@bristolct.gov and you might be featured on our social media

a. Logistics and Supplies

- i. BPRYCS will provide the following supplies for your participation. Supplies can be picked up following the submission of your registration at the Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services Department Main Office at 51 High Street. The office is open Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 8am – 5:30pm and Wednesdays from 8am – 7pm.

- ii. BPRYCS provided supplies

BPRYCS will provide you with the following supplies:

- Trash bags (regular and heavy-duty)
- Gloves (nitrile)
- Litter grabbers
- Bristol Green Team shirt
- First-aid kit

b. Individual-Provided Supplies

- i. We recommend you utilize the following while participating in the Bristol Green Team:
 - Water and snacks
 - Sunscreen and insect repellent
 - Additional safety equipment as needed

c. Safety reminders

- i. General Safety Rules

(a) All volunteers should:

- Wear gloves at all times
- Use grabbers instead of hands for sharp or unknown items
- Stay hydrated
- Avoid lifting heavy objects alone
- Keep a safe distance from wildlife and water

(b) Prohibited Items

Volunteers should **not** handle:

- Needles or syringes
- Chemical containers

- Dead animals
 - Broken glass (unless trained and equipped)
 - Large or heavy debris
- ii. First Aid and Emergency Planning
- Have a stocked first-aid kit on site
 - Ensure at least one person is CPR/first-aid trained
 - Identify nearest hospital or urgent care
 - Establish a communication plan (cell numbers, meeting points)
 - Review weather conditions and have a cancellation plan

2. How the Program Works – Organizations

The Green Team is designed to support organizations in hosting a clean-up event. The following steps outline the program for organizations:

1. Choose a date for your volunteer event
2. Register at www.bristolrec.com as a Green Team partner
3. Provide BPRYCS with a Certificate of Insurance for your organization
4. Receive planning support, safety guidance, and supplies from the Parks Department
5. Participate in a guided, structured volunteer experience led by designated team leaders
6. Submit post-event results to parksandrecreation@bristolct.gov to help track community impact

a. Pre-Planning and Preparation

- i. Register your organization at www.bristolrec.com. A staff member from BPRYCS will reach out following your registration to confirm your event and discuss logistics.
- ii. Please ensure:
 - (1) The event date, time, and location match your approved registration
 - (2) Any changes are submitted to the department at least 7 days in advance
- iii. Sample Timeline
 - 6–8 weeks out: secure permits, choose location
 - 4 weeks out: recruit volunteers, order supplies
 - 2 weeks out: finalize roles, confirm logistics
 - 1 week out: send reminders, check weather
 - Day of: run event

- 1–3 days after: send thank-yous, share results
- iv. Set Goals and Scope for your organization
- Things to consider:
- Expected number of volunteers
 - Age of Volunteers
 - Minors must:
 - i. Be supervised by adults at all times
 - ii. Be assigned age-appropriate tasks
 - iii. Avoid areas with steep terrain or water hazards
 - Experience of Volunteer
 - Duration (typically 1–2 hours)
- v. Build Your Team
- (a) Potential Event team roles:
- Event Lead – overall coordination
 - Safety Officer – first aid, hazard monitoring
 - Volunteer Coordinator – check-in, instructions
 - Logistics Lead – supplies, waste management
 - Communications Lead – photos, social media, signage
- vi. Recruitment
- (1) Encouraging volunteers to commit in advance while still welcoming walk-ups.
 - (2) Highlighting the “quick win” nature of park clean-ups — visible results in just a few hours.
 - (3) Suggested Methods
 - (i) Email lists
 - (ii) Corporate/organization volunteer programs
 - (iii) Corporate/organization bulletin boards
- vii. Volunteer Event Registration
- (a) Collect:
- Names and contact info
 - Emergency contact
 - Waivers (liability, photo release)
 - Age (minors may need guardian consent)

viii. Logistics and Supplies

(a) BPRYCS will provide the following supplies for your Green Team event. A staff member will coordinate pick-up with your organization.

(b) BPRYCS provided supplies

BPRYCS will provide your organization with the following supplies:

- Trash bags (regular and heavy-duty)
- Gloves (nitrile)
- Litter grabbers
- Buckets for sharp objects
- Bristol Green Team Shirts
- First-aid kit
- Map of park

(c) Organization-Provided Supplies

We recommend your organization provide:

- Volunteer sign-in sheets
- Water and snacks
- Sunscreen and insect repellent
- Additional safety equipment as needed

b. Running the Event

i. Check In

The start of the event should include:

- Volunteer sign-in
- Signage of waiver (if required)
- Distribution of supplies
- Assignment of volunteers to specific zones
- Providing maps and emergency instructions

ii. Kickoff

Start with:

(1) Welcome message

Sample Welcome message:

“Good morning, everyone, and thank you for being here today. On behalf of our organization and in partnership with Bristol Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services, we’re excited to spend the next few hours giving back to this beautiful park. Your time and energy make a real difference, helping to protect wildlife, waterways, and the overall health of our community. As we work, please remember to stay safe: wear your gloves, use grabbers for anything sharp or unknown, and let us know if you encounter any hazards. We’ll be working in designated zones, and our team leads are here to help with supplies, questions, or safety concerns. Most importantly, enjoy the experience. This is community stewardship in action, and we’re grateful you chose to be part of it. Let’s get started and make a visible impact today.”

(2) Safety reminders

(a) General Safety Rules

All volunteers should:

- Wear gloves at all times
- Use grabbers instead of hands for sharp or unknown items
- Stay hydrated
- Work in pairs or groups
- Avoid lifting heavy objects alone
- Keep a safe distance from wildlife and water

(i) Prohibited Items

Volunteers should **not** handle:

- Needles or syringes
- Chemical containers
- Dead animals
- Broken glass (unless trained and equipped)
- Large or heavy debris

(ii) First Aid and Emergency Planning

- Have a stocked first-aid kit on site
- Ensure at least one person is CPR/first-aid trained
- Identify nearest hospital or urgent care
- Establish a communication plan (cell numbers, meeting points)

- Review weather conditions and have a cancellation plan

(b) Sample Safety Speech

“Before we begin today’s clean-up, we need to review important safety information to ensure everyone has a safe and positive experience. Please give your full attention for the next few minutes.

Safety is our top priority. Please keep your gloves on at all times and use the litter grabbers provided. Do not pick up anything sharp, heavy, or hazardous. This includes needles, broken glass, chemical containers, or dead animals. If you see something unsafe, mark the location and notify a team lead or park staff immediately.

Be aware of your surroundings. Watch for uneven ground, roots, rocks, and low branches. Stay within your assigned clean-up zone and work with a buddy or in small groups. If you need help or feel uncomfortable with a task, please speak up.

Stay hydrated and take breaks as needed. We want everyone to feel well throughout the event. If you experience dizziness, heat discomfort, or any injury, notify a team lead right away.

Finally, please respect wildlife and natural areas. Do not disturb plants, nests, or animals. Our goal is to improve the park without disrupting its ecosystem.

If you have any questions about safety or procedures, please let us know. Otherwise, thank you again for being here — let’s take care of each other and take care of this park.”

(3) Demonstration of proper trash handling

(4) Group photo (optional)

c. During the Event

- Check on volunteers regularly
- Replenish supplies
- Monitor weather
- Track progress
- Address hazards immediately

d. Waste Management

Coordinate with the parks department:

- Where to stage full bags
- Who collects them (city staff or your team)

- iii. Recycling rules
- iv. Composting options (if applicable)

e. Wrap-Up

- i. Collect all tools and supplies
- ii. Ensure all waste is staged properly
- iii. Thank volunteers

(1) Sample Closing Speech

“Thank you, everyone, for your hard work today. Together, we collected a significant amount of litter and helped restore this park for all who enjoy it.

We’ll be submitting our results to Bristol Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services, and they’ll use this information to support ongoing maintenance and planning. Before you leave, please return any tools or supplies, make sure you’ve signed out, and grab some water.

We appreciate your time, your energy, and your commitment to keeping our parks beautiful. We hope to see you at future clean-ups and community events. Thank you again for making a difference today.”

f. Post-Event Follow-Up

i. Reporting

BPRYCS asks that you document:

- (1) Number of volunteers
- (2) Total volunteer hours
- (3) Amount of trash collected
- (4) Notable findings (hazards, vandalism, wildlife issues)

ii. Photos

We encourage you to share photos with BPRYCS so that we can highlight your organizations volunteerism.

iii. Appreciation

- (1) Thank volunteers
- (2) Share results publicly
- (3) Highlight the partnership with Parks, Recreation, Youth and Community Services
- (4) Certificates of participation (optional)

iv. BPRYCS can provide letters certifying volunteer hours or participation if requested.