

Hazard Review

- Abrasions
- Allergic reactions (e.g. dermatitis)
- Cuts
- Heat stroke or other heat-related injuries
- Infectious diseases
- Musculoskeletal injuries
- Slips, trips, or falls
- Violence or confrontations

Related Safe Work Practices

- Brush Removal
- First Aid
- Garbage Handling
- Hand Tools
- Hot Environments
- Infectious Materials
- Lifting, Body Mechanics and Ergonomics
- Poisonous Plants
- Pruning
- Walking and Working Surfaces
- Weeding
- Workplace Violence

Personal Protective Equipment

- Gloves
- Closed-toed shoes
- Long pants
- Sharps container

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BEFORE

1. This Safe Work Practice (SWP) only reviews the safety issues related to staff working with volunteers. For a complete step by step process of preparing, leading, and wrapping up a volunteer park project, please review Grow Your Community: A Volunteer Service Handbook for SFRPD Staff and Volunteers:

Implementing a Park or Facility Volunteer Project available from the Volunteer Office.

2. Plan the project:

- Locate potential hazards including, but not limited to, bee hives, poison oak, loose tree limbs, and any of the hazards listed in the Hazard Review or Related Safe Work Practices sections above.
- Determine material, tool and staff needs.
- Determine which SWPs will be relevant to the project (listed as *Related Safe Work Practices* above). Train the volunteers on those SWPs and specific hazards you identified from the step above.
- Designate one of the volunteers as the Volunteer Safety Officer (VSO) for the day or event. They will be responsible for monitoring volunteers, ensuring that they are following safe work practices including, but not limited to, this SWP and the Related SWPs. For example, they would be responsible for ensuring that volunteers are wearing appropriate PPE. The VSO might also watch and remind volunteers to use good body mechanics. Monitoring by the VSO is in addition to monitoring conducted by RPD staff.
- Ask volunteers about their physical ability and allergies. Plan to address them should an incident occur. Physical ability concerns and allergies should be verified and disclosed on the volunteer form.
- Always keep a first aid kit on site. The VSO will be responsible for ensuring access to the first aid kit (see the *First Aid* SWP). RPD staff will be responsible for administering first aid.

DURING

3. Cover the following items during orientation:

- a. Identify the VSO.
- b. Review relevant SWPs.
- c. Review the first aid kit location(s).
- d. Review appropriate PPE to be used such as gloves or safety glasses.
- e. If any volunteers have severe allergies to stinging insects, ensure that they have their sting kit with them.
- f. Demonstrate to the group proper use of each tool and technique:
 - Use one tool at a time.
 - Use two hands on a tool.
 - Use of proper tool placement including, but not limited to, tines down, away from other volunteers, loppers laid flat (not with blades inserted in the ground).
 - Small children (under 11) are not to use sharp tools (e.g. loppers or hand pruners).
- g. Volunteers should wear gloves, closed-toed shoes and long pants as they may be working around plants they may be sensitive to (e.g. poison oak or blackberries) and other hazards that may cut or scratch.

- h. It is recommended that you lead the group in brief warm-up exercises and stretches (see the *Lifting, Body Mechanics and Ergonomics* SWP).
 - i. Avoid the use of ladders (if used, see the *Ladders* SWP).
 - j. Volunteers are prohibited from the following:
 - Using power tools, pesticides, or city vehicles.
 - Picking up needles, condoms or broken glass. Volunteers should alert the gardener to the location of these items.
 - k. Have volunteers practice “Eyes before hands” to prevent being stuck by sharp objects when picking up trash from under bushes, behind trees, under benches, or any other area with obstructed views. Volunteers should use the tools provided to pull debris or waste items out where they can be seen and then picked up.
 - l. Assess youth safety needs:
 - Encourage the supervising adult to spread themselves out, each working with a small group of children. The adult to child ratio shall not exceed 1 adult to 8 children.
 - Show, don’t tell.
 - Young children can tire easily, so monitor the mood of the group and be flexible in your work scope.
 - m. If there is an accident, treat appropriately (see the *First Aid* SWP):
 - The first option is to take the volunteer to their own primary provider.
 - If the volunteer is uninsured, the volunteer can be taken to any hospital.
 - If you are uncertain if the person should go to the hospital, encourage them to go.
 - Fill out a Volunteer Accident Report Form and return a copy to the Volunteer Program within 24 hours of the accident. Volunteer Accident Report Forms are found under Volunteer on the Intranet, in the Volunteer Service Handbook, and in First Aid Kits.
 - The volunteer may be covered by supplemental accident insurance. Supplemental accident insurance is secondary to the volunteer’s own personal insurance.
4. Fill water coolers from a potable water source and not from gardening hoses. Provide easy access to water during the work (see the *Hot Environments* SWP).
5. Always monitor volunteers:
 - If any seem tired, encourage them to take a break, drink water, have a snack, etc.
 - Ensure they are lifting, using tools, and executing the project appropriately.
6. Stack debris appropriately:
 - Emphasize to the volunteers to stack debris out of the way of the public travel and use, but still accessible to the trucks.
 - Stack cut branches with the butt end to the road.

- Pile weeds to be picked up in small piles. Small piles can be handled by one “swoop” from a pitchfork and aids in loading trucks.

AFTER

7. Inventory and return tools to Volunteer Office. Report broken tools.
8. Clean and dry those water coolers you used, and then store in a clean and dry location.

For any other items or questions, please contact EHS at 415-831-2780.

References:

1. Implementing a Park or Facility Volunteer Project in the Grow your Community: A Volunteer Service Handbook for SFRPD Staff and Volunteers.