

# Adopt A Block



## Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What area does a “block” cover? How far back from the street and sidewalk? Are we expected to remove trash or leaves from people’s front yards or neighboring fields, such as ballparks or tennis courts?

A. A “block” covers the public space which is all the publicly owned property between the private property lines on a street and includes but is not limited to, the roadway, tree spaces, sidewalks and alleys. Adopt A Block members are not permitted to remove trash or leaves from private property. Ballparks, fields and tennis courts publically owned are managed by the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). Inform DPR if you have any concerns at (202) 673-7637 or [dpr@dc.gov](mailto:dpr@dc.gov).

Q. How often are we expected to clean up? Are we expected to organize special cleanup days also?

A. Adopt A Block groups agree to 4 clean-up’s a year and biweekly walkthrough’s of your adopted streets (and alleys if applicable) and reporting any issues such as graffiti (on public property) broken street lights, etc. to the Mayor’s Citywide Call Center at (202) 311 or [311.dc.gov](http://311.dc.gov).

Q. Does the City provide trash bags and gloves for our regular or special cleanups, and how do we arrange to get them?

A. Yes, the city offers loaner tools through the Department of Public Works Helpings Hands Program. Visit [cleancity.dc.gov](http://cleancity.dc.gov) and click on “forms” to fill out an application. Applications must be submitted at least **TWO** weeks before a clean up.

Q. What should we do if we find a dead bird or squirrel? How should we dispose of it? Can we place it in the trash can?

A. If you find a dead animal, do not touch it. Call the Mayor's Citywide Call Center (202) 311 or visit [311.dc.gov](http://311.dc.gov) to report it so that the Department of Health may properly remove it.

Q. Are we expected to clean up leaves from the street and the block?

A. No, it is optional to rake leaves from the adopted streets street. However rakes are offered through the Helping Hands program if you want to remove leaves.

Q. Are we expected to clear snow and ice off the sidewalks in areas where there are no adjacent apartment buildings or townhouses. Are we expected to clear the ice off sidewalks on bridges? If not, is there a direct number we can call?

A. No, it is the responsibility of the District of Columbia government to remove snow and ice off sidewalks in areas with no adjacent buildings or townhouses and bridge sidewalks. Simply call the Mayor's Citywide Call Center at (202) 311 to report an ice or snow covered path.

Q. I know we should remove unauthorized signs along the block, but what about notices about a lost pet or announcing a local church event?

A. Lost pet signs are the only signs that may be posted in a community without a permit. All other advertisements are not allowed without a permit.

Q. How should we dispose of branches? Can we put them in the trash can? What about rocks, bricks and car pieces?

A. All branches and limbs should be bundled together and tied into 4 foot lengths for bulk collection. Do not put them in the trash. Once-a-week trash/recycling customers should put bagged and bundled yard waste where your trash is collected at the same time the trash container is placed. Twice-a-week trash/recycling customers should put their yard waste out with the trash on their second collection day. Rocks and bricks are not permitted for collection. Renovation material as bricks, concrete, construction and demolition materials, and dirt are not

accepted. Please visit [buildersrecyclingguide.com](http://buildersrecyclingguide.com) for a list of construction and demolition companies who may haul these items.

Q. Is it okay to place recyclables that we find (bottles, cans, newspapers, broken glass) in the public trash cans rather than separating them out?

A. No, when requesting materials through the Helpings Hands program, specify how many recycling bags and how many regular trash bags you will need for your clean up.

Q. Who do we call to remove graffiti? Is it okay for us to clean it off ourselves?

A. If the graffiti is on public space, call 311 or visit [311.dc.gov](http://311.dc.gov) to report it. If the graffiti is on private property the owner can have it removed by the city for free, but a waiver is required. If you choose to remove graffiti yourself off public property, graffiti removal toolkits are available through the Department of Public works. Visit [dpw.dc.gov](http://dpw.dc.gov) for more information.

Q. Should we report bus signs or other signs that are down? Do we call 311 or is there a more direct number? Should we report street lights or traffic lights that are out?

A. Yes, for traffic or street sign missing, damaged or broken, call (202) 311 or visit [311.dc.gov](http://311.dc.gov) to report it. For Metrobus stops and shelter repairs call (202) 962-2063.