

How to Start a Litter Lifter Group for Your Township or Your Community

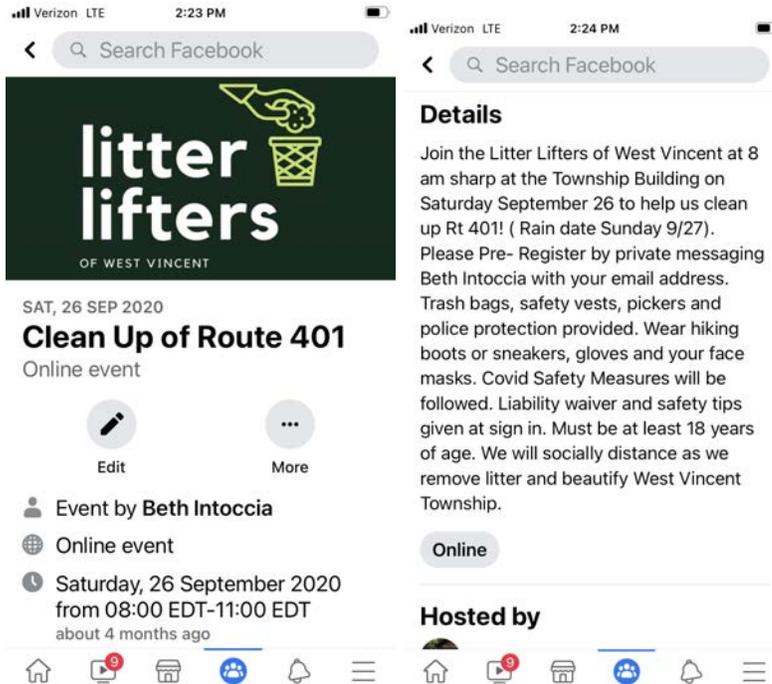
My name is Beth Intoccia and I helped start a Litter Lifting group in West Vincent Township. Here is how I organized this group and hold litter clean ups.

1. Start by organizing some people who want to help. Get their emails. Text or call friends. If you don't know anyone yet, create a post on Facebook for your township facebook or police department to share, and/or a group that has members in the area you reside. We asked for volunteers. We started with 5 people then grew the committee to 9 and then people keep directly messaging me on Facebook or email me they want to help too. The township where I reside asked us to write a short article of what we are doing to combat the litter issue, for the quarterly newsletter. That is how the group is growing.
2. Create a name for your group. It can be as simple as the litter people of XX Township.
3. Create a list of supplies you will need. The basics are trash bags, gloves, vests, pickers and grabbers. Start with trash bags and gloves and brightly colored clothes if you don't have all the supplies off the bat. Volunteers can use their own gloves if you don't have any yet, and a lot of people prefer to wear their own gloves anyways.
4. Figure out how to get the supplies for FREE. We did several things to make this happen. We chose a road to clean up which was a portion of Route 401 with the Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Adopt a Highway program with Penndot, but before that I reached out to Chester County Solid Waste Authority and they gave me free trash bags and made available to me safety vests to borrow. A member on our committee offered to buy us Safety Vests with our logo (which a volunteer created several logos that we voted on). Another resident gave me 80 trash bags. Now that we have an AAH road, I can get supplies whenever I need them (when I hold an event and request supplies in their portal) PennDot also has Litter Crew Ahead signs for us to borrow.
5. Decide if you want your group to be part of the township or you would prefer to do this on your own. The benefits to me of being part of my township is that I have support in the way of supplies, police and promotion of events. The downside is that we have to follow rules set forth by the township. For me, this has been a good thing to be part of the township government. Decide if you need police presence at a clean up, or if it is not needed. For example, if there are just a few of us working and it's not too challenging of a road, we don't need help. For larger events, more volunteers and busier roads, we ask for police support- even if it is just help setting up Litter Crew Ahead signs. We are extra careful watching for cars. If you can't get police support at an event, make sure you have Litter Crew Ahead signs in both directions and any cross roads that lead into the road you are cleaning up.
6. Utilize the Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful site for information on how to organize clean ups. They are great! Here's the link <https://www.keppabeautiful.org/>
7. Decide on a date for your clean up and have a rain date if possible. At our 1st clean up, it was drizzling and we decided to delay the start. I did not have everyone's emails so some people didn't get the message we delayed it. If I had set up a group email, I could have easily sent a brief email to let volunteers know of delay. It's good for you to know in advance if they are attending- if you have their emails you can send a group email

notifying them of a delay or a date change. If you are using social media you can update the event with delay or date change.

8. Create a post for social media with the details on date, time frame, place to park, what road you'll clean up, and what they should bring and wear. See attached sample.
9. Post event on the Keep Pennsylvania site, and if you have adopted a portion of a road you are cleaning up (Adopt A Highway AAH, PennDot) , post the event at least one week in advance on the AA/PennDot portal. They need this in advance notice to gather supplies for the groups.
10. Create or use my Safety List for Volunteers. Ask volunteers to review document in advance. I email it to people and have copies at events.
11. If your group is part of a township, consider having a liability waiver for volunteers to sign once for the 1st clean up they attend- this is valid for future clean ups. I email it to volunteers and have copies at events.
12. Hold your event! If you want to start working at 8 am, have them meet at 7:45 am to give a few minutes to hand out supplies and review any safety instructions you want them to know. I wouldn't plan more than 3 hours because people are busy, you will get tired, and you want them to come back again to volunteer! Start early if possible as there is less traffic.
13. During the event, keep volunteers close together. If you have a lot of volunteers, assign litter Captains and break groups up. When bags are getting full, pile them at street signs or cross roads so that when you report back to PennDot they can more easily locate the piles. Don't put the piles too far off road because PennDOT won't see them. Ask volunteers to securely tie bags shut because it might be a week before PennDOT can pick up the piles and you don't want the litter you just gathered flying all over the road. Sometimes I take a photo of the locations so that I can remember all the places we piled the filled trash bags to properly report back to PennDot. Estimate how many bags of litter you have as you will need to report that data. Take pictures of the event and take a video if possible.
14. After everyone gets back their cars, thank them! If you provided vests or gloves, wash them immediately due to germs, ticks and poison ivy.
15. Post on social media the results of the event- where you worked, what you accomplished, who helped, and how much fun you had!
16. Send an email to the volunteers for feedback- what worked, what can be improved. Implement changes for the next event.

Example of an event post for litter clean up



Thank you.
Beth Intoccia
Litter Lifter of West Vincent, Volunteer