



# SHORELINE CLEANUP KIT

## INFORMATION PACKAGE



Thank you for helping to protect the Ottawa River and its tributaries by cleaning up garbage. Ottawa Riverkeeper is pleased to help you with this effort by loaning you a shoreline cleanup kit from our WaterSHED, a community sharing shed for both our beloved educational resources and our shoreline cleanup kits. This Information Package will walk you through how to retrieve and return materials from the WaterSHED as well as some tips and tricks to host a successful cleanup!

### ***Agreement Reminder***

In borrowing materials for Ottawa Riverkeeper's WaterSHED, you have agreed to the following:

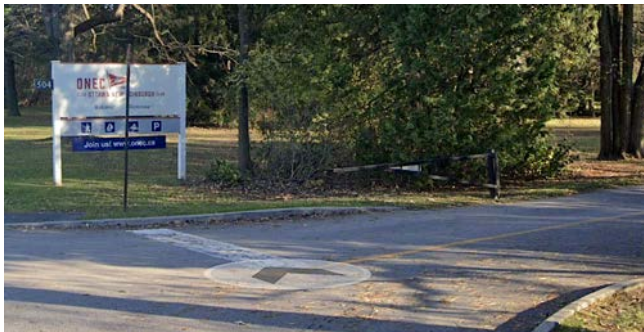
- Returning all borrowed equipment on time and undamaged to the WaterSHED. If items are damaged beyond normal wear and tear and/or lost, you may be held responsible for paying for replacement costs.

- ☑ Collecting and returning the items on the agreed upon date and time.
- ☑ Cleaning and drying the items before returning them to the WaterSHED.
- ☑ Assuming all responsibility for risk and liability for both the equipment and participants.

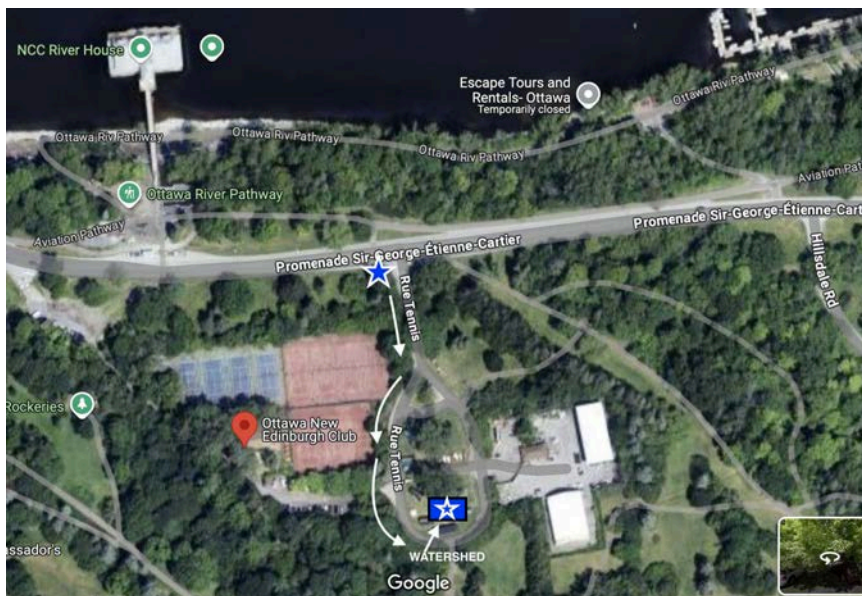
We appreciate your efforts to keep items in their current condition. If you find something missing or damaged beyond repair when you collect your shoreline cleanup kit, please reach out to [volunteer@ottawariverkeeper.ca](mailto:volunteer@ottawariverkeeper.ca).

## How to get to the WaterSHED

1. Drive to [504 Sir George Etienne Cartier Parkway](#) (across from NCC River House)
2. Turn at "ONEC" sign *Tournez à droite/gauche sur la promenade Sir George-Étienne Cartier au panneau « ONEC » (#504)*



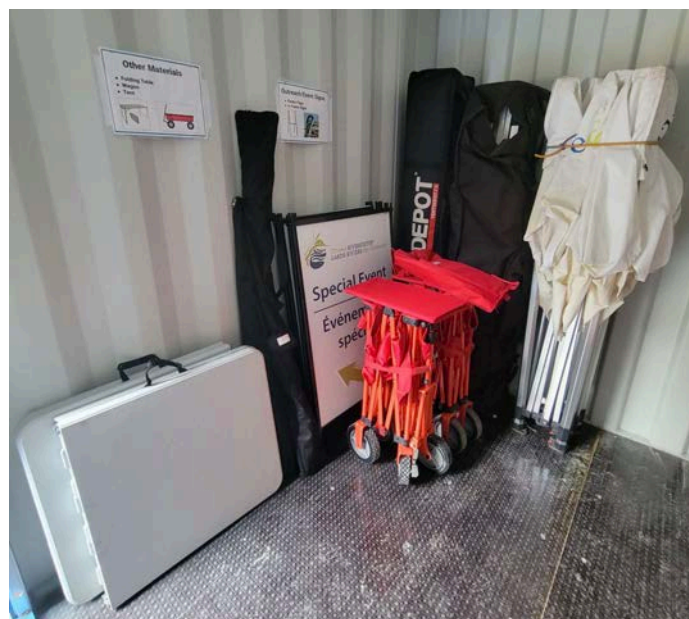
3. Drive around Cul-de-Sac past ONEC tennis courts until you see the blue WaterSHED. *faites le tour de la cul-de-sac en passant devant les courts de tennis ONEC jusqu'à ce que vous voyiez l'EntrepEAU bleu vif.*



*Note: Outdoor lighting is limited at this location. You may find the location quite dark at night. Please consider personal safety when planning your pick up/drop off times.*

## WaterSHED Access

1. Access code: you will have received a lock code via email – please also remember to carefully lock the shed when exiting!
2. There is more than one kit stored in the shed, as well as other materials. Please only take the specified quantity on your loan agreement. The kits are colour-coded with tape.
3. Contact us at [volunteer@ottawariverkeeper.ca](mailto:volunteer@ottawariverkeeper.ca) if you encounter difficulties.



### *Items included in the kit*

Each kit provides you with the equipment you need for 20 people to participate in a cleanup:

- 20 Buckets
- 20 Tongs/grabbers
- 1 Information Package

- 1 Clipboard for waivers/newsletter sign up/report log
- 2 Safety Vests
- 1 weight scale
- 2 sharp object containers

### *Items you will need to provide*

We highly recommend that you obtain and provide the following essential items:

- First Aid Kit
- Garbage Bags/Recycling Bags/Compost Bags
- Gloves - either gardening or vinyl
- Hand sanitizer
- Tape
- Scissors/knife
- Sunscreen
- Mosquito repellent

## **PREPARATIONS**

### *Location, Timing, and Safety considerations:*

- When choosing a location: consider safety for participants, timing of the event, volume of waste that typically is present at the site, accessibility, transportation and parking.
- Visit the site a day or two beforehand to check for any possible hazards (traffic, syringes or broken glass, rough terrain, water, poison ivy, fallen trees, encampments, hazardous or toxic waste, etc.) and volume of trash that you will be cleaning.
- Make sure to seek permission from the land manager/owner, and coordinate in advance for trash pick up & disposal for the event.
- Select a start and end time for your event. We recommend no more than two hours, as people tend to get tired - especially if they have been successful at cleaning up most of the garbage by that time.
- The day before your cleanup, check the weather and send a reminder to participants to be dressed appropriately for the weather: hat, sunscreen, closed-toe shoes, long pants (preferable), waterproof clothing, warm clothing for cool weather, etc.

- Define the cleanup zone to ensure people stay close enough to the main site for safety.
- Purchase or arrange for donations of additional items needed: hand sanitizer, gloves, and garbage bags.
- We recommend having participants sign an informed consent form prior to the event to ensure that they are well informed with regards to any possible risks in participating in the cleanup.

### *Communications to Participants (sample email)*

Hello,

Thank you for volunteering your time to the **GROUP NAME** shoreline cleanup at **LOCATION/DATE**. We are excited to clean up this area and meet you all. Also, a big thank you to Ottawa Riverkeeper for partnering with us on this cleanup through their generous loan of shoreline cleanup equipment. Together we are taking action to protect the health of the Ottawa River watershed!

The cleanup will take place rain or shine, but we want to remind you to check the weather before heading out.

Make sure to dress appropriately: we suggest wearing waterproof boots or sturdy shoes that you don't mind getting muddy. In the event of rain, we ask that you bring waterproof clothing.

We will provide hand sanitizer, pickers and tongs, buckets, and garbage bags for the event. You will need to bring gloves (either vinyl or reusable gardening gloves). If you prefer, you are welcome to bring your own equipment. We also encourage you to bring your own reusable water bottle.

The cleanup site and meeting location can be found on this map: **MAP LINK**

The cleanup will begin at **TIME**, at the meeting location marked on the map. Organizers will provide cleanup instructions, including related to safety, and

share cleanup equipment with participants. We will gather again at **TIME** at the same spot to count up and weigh all the garbage we have found and take a group photo to share with Ottawa Riverkeeper.

Questions? Contact **XXXXXX**

Onsite contact for the event: **XXXXXX inc phone #**

Have a great rest of your day!

### **POST EVENT EMAIL**

Hello,

On behalf of **YOUR GROUP**, we want to thank you for attending our shoreline cleanup on **DATE & LOCATION!**

Your hard work managed to keep **XXXkg** of garbage out of the **Ottawa/Rideau** Rivers and off the shoreline. We think that is something to be very proud of!

You can find photos of your cleanup **HERE**

The Ottawa River and all of its biodiversity is so fortunate to have such dedicated individuals like you who give their time to preserving its natural beauty for years to come.

We are grateful that we could borrow a shoreline cleanup kit from **Ottawa Riverkeeper**. You can learn more about them and their work on their webpage [HERE](#) or borrow a kit for your own future cleanup [HERE](#).

If you would like to get more involved in protecting the watershed you could:

- Join the [Shoreline Cleanup Community](#) on Facebook to see many other inspiring posts from members and share your own photos and stories!
- For all other volunteer opportunities at Ottawa Riverkeeper, sign up for the volunteer newsletter [HERE](#).
- Sign up for the [In Otter News E-newsletter](#) to learn more about Ottawa Riverkeeper activities.
- Make a [donation to Ottawa Riverkeeper](#)
- Host your own cleanup locally.

We hope to see you again at another shoreline cleanup!

All the best,

## ***EVENT DAY***

### ***Logistics***

- Designate one person to stay at the meeting point throughout the event.
- Remind participants of the hazards (plants such as poison ivy, sharp or heavy objects) and advise them to stay in pairs for safety.
- Explain why cleanup activities are important for the health of the waterways and surrounding environments.
- Identify when and where to return.
- Point out the nearest washroom facilities.
- Ensure everyone has signed a waiver/photo release form.
- Take photos of participants to share and celebrate their impact.
- Use the scale to measure the quantity of garbage collected at the end of the cleanup, giving participants a clear quantitative result of their hard work.
- Leave time at the end to gather together and celebrate your success. Ask participants what were the most interesting or most common items they found.
- Take a group photo at the end with the garbage collected and share it on social media (assuming photo consent from participants).
- Place the garbage and recycling in an appropriate spot for proper removal - and notify relevant land managers.

## **Speaking notes:**

### **What does Ottawa Riverkeeper do?**

Ottawa Riverkeeper, a charitable organization, is a champion and collective voice for the Ottawa River watershed, providing leadership and inspiration to protect, promote and improve its ecological health and future.

We are a citizen-based action group that brings diverse people together to better understand and advocate for the ecological health of the Ottawa River and its tributaries. This includes the acknowledgement of the rights of the Algonquin Anishinabeg Nations within the watershed and a commitment to working together to build good relationships and shared understandings on water protection.

Expert and independent, our organization advocates for responsible and participatory decision-making, public education, access to information, and compliance with protective regulations. Guided by a science-based approach, we provide clear information with the aim to engage the public and empower citizens and decision-makers to ensure clean, healthy, and accessible water for all people and species.

Ottawa Riverkeeper is a licensed member of Waterkeeper Alliance, an international grassroots advocacy organization. Waterkeeper Alliance is the largest organization devoted exclusively to clean water, protecting 2.7 million miles of waterways with more than 300 Waterkeepers in 47 countries.

### **Our Mission**

Our mission is to inspire cooperative action focused toward a healthy watershed for all generations and all species.

### **Our Philosophy**

Ottawa Riverkeeper's vision is based on the belief that people protect what they love. Guided by this core belief we will work strategically to advocate, educate, and ensure the Ottawa River watershed is swimmable, drinkable, and fishable.

Ottawa Riverkeeper will pursue its vision and fulfil its mission by inspiring action for a healthy watershed through educating, connecting and empowering individuals and communities.

Ottawa Riverkeeper acknowledges the importance of working together. All voices must be included in Ottawa Riverkeeper's work to achieve more

equitable solutions. Just as biodiversity strengthens natural systems, water protection work is made stronger by the contributions, experiences, perspectives, and values of different people and communities.

### ***Land acknowledgement and finding artefacts***

We encourage you to acknowledge the Indigenous rights to the land with a land acknowledgement - make sure to specify the relevant nation to your location.

Historic artifacts may be discovered during a cleanup (especially along riverbanks). If uncertain about objects, please leave them in place, take note of their location, and contact [archaeology@ontario.ca](mailto:archaeology@ontario.ca) (in Ontario), fill out the form on NCC lands (<https://ncc-ccn.gc.ca/archaeology-in-canadas-capital>) or fill out the following form (Quebec):

<https://cdn-contenu.quebec.ca/cdn-contenu/adm/min/culture-communications/documents/patrimoine/archeologie/FO-decouverte-archeologique-sans-permis.pdf>

### ***The benefits of a cleanup & plastic pollution***

Besides noting the more obvious benefits of cleaning up your environment - feel free to share some of the information listed below

#### ***Plastics and microplastics***

- Plastics break down into microplastics then nanoplastics and each affect the environment in different ways
- Animals can eat them and then spread microplastics through the food chain
- Bioaccumulation and biomagnification
- Animals can get tangled in them
- Over 8 million tonnes of plastic every year enters the ocean
- 5 most common shoreline cleanup items: Tiny plastic pieces or foam, Cigarette butts, Plastic beverage bottles, Food wrappers, Plastic bottle caps

#### ***What can you (as an individual) do***

- Use reusable products (bags, bottles, tupperwares)
- Try to buy products that use minimal plastic packaging
- Recycle and dispose of your garbage properly
- Join our shoreline cleanups

### ***Benefits of cleanups***

- Easier to retrieve contaminants before they enter the waterway
- Team-building exercise
- Increases awareness of pollution in the environment
- Empowers people to take a more active role in protecting the environment
- Cleans the environment and removes plastics/microplastics

### ***Safety & risk management***

- Remind participants of the hazards (plants such as poison ivy, sharp or heavy objects)
- Go in groups or at minimum stay in pairs
- Children should be accompanied by responsible adult
- Stay within the boundaries (outline them)
- Be cautious on shorelines - river currents can be strong
- Always wear gloves or use tongs/reach extender to ensure you are not directly touching litter
- If a piece of litter is buried pretty deep don't try to yank it out
- Two feet on the ground: To keep everyone safe, avoid climbing trees, leaning over precarious positions, and jumping to reach items
- Meet back at set time
- Sudden severe weather: Find closest infrastructure to take shelter
- Disposing of dangerous objects: Instruct children to come back and have an adult pick up any pieces of hazardous waste (needles, drugs, etc.). Adults can place all hazardous waste in a sharps container and handle it with care. Do not dispose of it with the regular trash.

### ***Weighing in***

- Let the attendees know they can return to unload at any point
- Share the finish time with them (allowing time to weight and take a group photo)
- Take weight of collected trash and total it up
- Announce total to the group
- Congratulate them on their efforts
- Ask them to follow Ottawa Riverkeeper on social media, sign up for our newsletters, and encourage donations to help us maintain our programs

### ***Final notes***

- Encourage attendees to sign up for our newsletter, either online via our website or on the physical forms provided along with your kit.
- Talk about items found, what they mean to the ecosystem, and opportunities for encouraging less litter
- Announce and celebrate amount collected
- Take group photo
- Thank everyone
- Inspect/report any buried objects found during the cleanup

## ***POST EVENT***

- Follow up with attendees: templated copy is provided in section titled : [\(Templated copy\)](#) for including in your communications to Participants
- Make sure to:
  - share the total collected and the group photo
  - Share our [website](#) and newsletter sign up information (see sample email)
    - Newsletter [In Otter News](#) - all Riverkeeper news
    - [Volunteer newsletter](#) - volunteer opportunities
  - Thank them again
- Notify land managers of the location of the garbage to be collected and report any large or buried objects
- Clean all the equipment

### ***Reporting back to Ottawa Riverkeeper.***

We track all shoreline cleanups and would like to include the impact from your cleanup in those totals.

***We will require the following information on your [return form](#):***

- Date of Cleanup

- Location of Cleanup
- Organizer of Cleanup
- Social Handles of group
- Links to any public posts you make on social (so we can reshare)
- Weight in KG of trash collected
- Area Cleaned (km<sup>2</sup>) - you can measure this easily using [google earth](#) and tracing the area with the polygon/path tool 🗺️

***We also ask the following:***

1. A group photo and some action shots.
2. Join our Shoreline Facebook community and share your cleanup success with the group [HERE](#) - don't forget to mention us!
3. Mention us in your communications and social posts related to your cleanup
4. Provide the following information to your participants - we would love to connect with them! *(Sample email and links for your use are above)*

***(Sample message) - Social Media Post***

A huge thank you to all the participants who joined us at **LOCATION** on **DATE** to clean up the area, ensuring that garbage did not end up in our waterways. We managed to collect a total of **XXXX**(kg) and cover an area of **XXXX**(km<sup>2</sup>).

***(add in specific highlights)***

A big thank you to **Ottawa Riverkeeper** for their equipment loan and guidance, which contributed to the success of our cleanup. Learn about this program here: <https://ottawariverkeeper.ca/what-we-do-2/education/sharing-shed/>

***Returning the equipment***

We understand that occasionally items go missing or get broken. Regular wear and tear is expected. We would like to continue offering these items to the

community free-of-charge, and appreciate your efforts to keep items in their current condition. We will seek compensation to cover replacement costs. Please reach out to [volunteer@ottawariverkeeper.ca](mailto:volunteer@ottawariverkeeper.ca) if items are lost or damaged beyond repair.

**FILL OUT THIS RETURN FORM [HERE](https://forms.gle/FLKKQfDcAX9kzx9B6) - <https://forms.gle/FLKKQfDcAX9kzx9B6>**

- Please return the equipment in the clean state you found it in
- Clean all equipment - wash & dry the buckets & grabbers
- Make sure to place everything back in the WaterSHED as you found it, and in the correct location
- Check that you have returned all the items
- Report any damaged or lost items
- Remember to lock the shed on your departure!

### ***Other resources***

Educators, check out our [Stop Plastic Pollution](#) teacher guide with lessons and information on plastic pollution. The guide includes great information on organizing a cleanup at your school!