

**TABLE OF CONTENTS: ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION TOOLKIT**

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## GOALS

During fiscal year 2011, AmeriCorps Alums will be taking part in the Get HandsOn Campaign, a project of the Points of Light Institute that will generate impact around the environment, economy, education, and emergency response. Because it allows for greater flexibility and its viability in both the group and individual setting, AmeriCorps Alums will primarily focus on impact around the environment. Our goals over the next fiscal year, October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010 to September 30<sup>th</sup> 2011 include the following:

- Register 50,000 AmeriCorps Alums-related participants at [www.gethandson.com](http://www.gethandson.com) (be sure to indicate your affiliation with AmeriCorps Alums)
- CO<sub>2</sub> reduction of 10.0 million lbs
- Save households, schools, and businesses over \$500,000 in actual energy savings

Throughout the year, AmeriCorps Alums will rely heavily on its chapters and individual alumni to help realize these goals. While the effort will occur throughout the year, to help make big pushes during the year, we will focus much of our energy on three signature days of service: Make a Difference Day, MLK, Jr. Day, and Earth Day.

AmeriCorps Alums plans to offer grants during these signature days of service to help our chapters and individual alumni achieve the goals of this campaign. A few things to remember:

- Before you can receive a grant from us or any other agency, you as an individual or through your AmeriCorps Alums chapter will need to secure a fiscal agent or sponsor
- To stay up to date about grant opportunities, it is best to frequent [www.americorpsalums.org](http://www.americorpsalums.org). Before sending the grant RFP announcement out through e-mail, we will post it online first.
- Don't wait to submit your proposal until the last minute. In the past we have turned down well-written proposals because they were received after the deadline

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Creating a positive impact on the environment can occur through a variety of methods. With a lens toward CO<sub>2</sub> reduction and saving consumers money, here are some recommended project activities that are easy to undertake and also are conducive to both the group and individual setting.

Product	Project <sup>1</sup>	Cost
	<b>Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL).</b> Depending on the wattage of the CFL, each CFL light bulb can reduce CO <sub>2</sub> reduction by 143.3 to 234.7lbs each year, and save from \$8.58 to \$14.05 each year. CFL's use 75% less energy than incandescent light bulbs, and save about \$30 over its lifetime.	\$
	<b>Install faucet aerators on kitchen and bathroom faucets.</b> Depending on its type, each faucet aerator can reduce CO <sub>2</sub> reduction by 74.7 to 95.5lbs per year, and save from \$4.47 to \$5.72 each year. View instructional video here: <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9clpukq-Raw&amp;feature=Playlist&amp;p=7581404502E07F73&amp;playnext=1&amp;index=9">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9clpukq-Raw&amp;feature=Playlist&amp;p=7581404502E07F73&amp;playnext=1&amp;index=9</a>	\$
	<b>Install LED nightlights.</b> On average, LED nightlights educe CO <sub>2</sub> reduction by 29.2 lbs per year, and save \$1.75 per nightlight. If you are unfamiliar with LED nightlights, they will turn on and off automatically as room lighting levels change.	\$
	<b>Install low-flow shower-head.</b> On average, low flow showerheads reduce CO <sub>2</sub> reduction by 1454.5lbs per year, and average annual savings of \$87.08 each year.  View instructional video here: <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9yq1VuDGHQ&amp;feature=related">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9yq1VuDGHQ&amp;feature=related</a>	\$\$
	<b>Replace existing surge protectors with Smart Strip LCG3 Energy Saving Power Strip.</b> On average, Smart Strips reduce CO <sub>2</sub> reduction by 243.5 to 370.8lbs per year, and save from \$14.70 to \$22.20 each year. If you are unfamiliar with Smart Strip technology, it auto-switches connected devices on and off to save energy. View instructional video here: <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FeUVSat1VFo&amp;feature=related">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FeUVSat1VFo&amp;feature=related</a>	\$\$

<sup>1</sup> Cost and CO<sub>2</sub> calculations based on research by Earth Aid available here ([http://www.earthaidenterprises.com/eae\\_calculations.pdf](http://www.earthaidenterprises.com/eae_calculations.pdf))

## HOW TO GUIDES

### INSTALLING COMPACT FLUORESCENT LIGHT (CFL) BULBS

#### Overview:

Replacing incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs is one of the easiest ways to create a positive impact on the environment, while also saving money on energy costs. CFL's help reduce CO<sub>2</sub> production and use significantly less energy than incandescent light bulbs, while lasting considerably longer.

#### Suggested Age Group(s)

- Adults, teens (adult supervision required)

#### Suggested Skill Level

- Easy

#### Supplies

- CFL light bulbs
- Gloves/hand towels (in case of contact with hot light bulbs)
- Ladders
- Newspaper (to wrap up discarded light bulbs)
- Trashbags (to dispose of discarded light bulbs- incandescent light bulbs cannot be recycled)
- Stiff paper/cardboard (in case of broken bulbs)
- Sealed plastic bags (i.e. zip lock bags)

#### Safety Instructions

##### Should power be disconnected during the switch out process?

Because of the electricity component, volunteers should be comfortable with switching out light bulbs, and should understand that the light switch should be turned off and power disconnected during the switch-out process.

##### How should I clean up a broken fluorescent bulb?

Because CFLs contain a small amount of mercury, EPA recommends the following clean-up and disposal guidelines:

##### 1. *Before Clean-up: Air Out the Room*

- Have people and pets leave the room, and don't let anyone walk through the breakage area on their way out.
- Open a window and leave the room for 15 minutes or more.
- Shut off the central forced-air heating/air conditioning system, if you have one.

##### 2. *Clean-Up Steps for Hard Surfaces*

- Carefully scoop up glass fragments and powder using stiff paper or cardboard and place them in a glass jar with metal lid (such as a canning jar) or in a sealed plastic bag.
- Use sticky tape, such as duct tape, to pick up any remaining small glass pieces and powder.
- Wipe the area clean with damp paper towels or disposable wet wipes. Place towels in the glass jar or plastic bag.
- Do not use a vacuum or broom to clean up the broken bulb on hard surfaces.

##### 3. *Clean-up Steps for Carpeting or Rug:*

- Carefully pick up glass fragments and place them in a glass jar with metal lid (such as a canning jar) or in a sealed plastic bag.

- Use sticky tape, such as duct tape, to pick up any remaining small glass fragments and powder.
- If vacuuming is needed after all visible materials are removed, vacuum the area where the bulb was broken.
- Remove the vacuum bag (or empty and wipe the canister), and put the bag or vacuum debris in a sealed plastic bag.

#### 4. *Clean-up Steps for Clothing, Bedding, etc.:*

- If clothing or bedding materials come in direct contact with broken glass or mercury-containing powder from inside the bulb that may stick to the fabric, the clothing or bedding should be thrown away. Do not wash such clothing or bedding because mercury fragments in the clothing may contaminate the machine and/or pollute sewage.
- You can, however, wash clothing or other materials that have been exposed to the mercury vapor from a broken CFL, such as the clothing you are wearing when you cleaned up the broken CFL, as long as that clothing has not come into direct contact with the materials from the broken bulb.
- If shoes come into direct contact with broken glass or mercury-containing powder from the bulb, wipe them off with damp paper towels or disposable wet wipes. Place the towels or wipes in a glass jar or plastic bag for disposal.

#### 5. *Disposal of Clean-up Materials*

- Immediately place all clean-up materials outdoors in a trash container or protected area for the next normal trash pickup.
- Wash your hands after disposing of the jars or plastic bags containing clean-up materials.
- Check with your local or state government about disposal requirements in your specific area. Some states do not allow such trash disposal. Instead, they require that broken and unbroken mercury-containing bulbs be taken to a local recycling center.

### **Project Instructions**

#### 1. Identify Partners and Leaders

- Call your friends, family, and coworkers and ask if they would be interested in helping plan and implement such a project. You can also ask schoolteachers and community leaders to lend their support and ideas. These partners may have materials and resources you can use for your project.

#### 2. Set a Location

- Contact your local schools, businesses, city or county representatives, faith-based communities, and nonprofit organizations and ask if they have a need for this type of project at their property. Arrange a meeting with the staff lead (principal, clergy, or other staff) and conduct a site visit as well as review the day-of-project plan.

#### 3. Establish Goals

- Setting goals can help you create a plan for implementing your project. Do you simply want to get some folks together and engage in a meaningful activity for a few hours? Do you want to teach volunteers about the impact of using CFL's on CO<sub>2</sub> reduction and energy saving? Do you want to install a certain number of CFL's? What do you want your end result to be?

#### 4. Develop Your Plan

- As you continue to establish your project, ask yourself the following questions in order to create a coherent plan:

1. Where can I get funding for the project supplies and tools needed for the project?

2. What resources are available to use?
3. Where can I find volunteers who would be excited about such a project?
4. How do I get the message out about the project?
  
5. Do I want to attach learning to this activity?
6. Do I need to have help from other volunteer leaders?

#### 5. Define a Timeline

- Set a timeline for your project. When will your project begin and end? Will it be recurring? Will there be projects that follow? Where will volunteers meet the day of the project? How will volunteers get to and from the project? How long will the project take?

#### 6. Promote!

Recruit adult and youth volunteers. You may want to print fliers, publish in the school/library newsletter, send emails, and use social media to mobilize your networks. Use whatever medium you can to get the word out and engage people in your effort. You can do this yourself or with the help of partners and leaders you've found in the community.

#### 7. Empower Youth Leaders

- If you are working with youth on this project, keep in mind that the youth voice is a key component in offering a high-quality youth project or program. Young people should have an influence on the project. Allow young people to suggest ideas for the current and future projects.

#### 8. Reflect and Recognize

- After your project, take a few minutes to reflect on the project with the volunteers. Don't forget to thank your volunteers, partners, and supporters. They deserve it!

#### Additional Project Tips

- You may want to create a project that combines other energy reduction activities like installing faucet aerators, building rain catchment systems, installing low-flow shower heads, or programmable thermostats.
- Because of the electricity component, volunteers should be comfortable with switching out light bulbs, and should understand that the light switch should be turned off or power disconnected during the switch out process.
- Volunteers should receive instructions on where restrooms and food/drinks are located in the event they need to access.
- If youth are participating, they should always be accompanied by an adult supervisor with a project that involves a component such as electricity.

#### Reflection

- After your volunteer project, it is important to reflect on the experience and think about the impact of the project on the community as well as what you learned about yourself and others. Here are some suggested activities:
- Tell your family and friends about something you learned and how you will continue to help others.
- Blog, draw a picture, write a poem, submit a letter to the editor
- Write about your experience on your Facebook account or Twitter feed.
- If you are working with a group of volunteers on this project, lead a group discussion with questions such as:
  - Why did you volunteer today?
  - What did you learn about social responsibility and environmental stewardship?
  - What is the one thing that you will remember most about this service activity?
  - How can you continue to make a difference in our community?

#### **Additional Resources**

- Light bulbs for consumers

[http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=find\\_a\\_product.showProductGroup&pgw\\_code=LB](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=find_a_product.showProductGroup&pgw_code=LB)

- Smart for Your Wallet. Smart for Your World.

[http://www.earthaidenterprises.com/eae\\_calculations.pdf](http://www.earthaidenterprises.com/eae_calculations.pdf)

- VolunteerSpot - A free resource to help schedule and organize volunteer activities

<http://www.volunteerspot.com/>

## INSTALLING FAUCET AERATORS

### Overview:

Replacing faucet aerators is a fast way to create a positive impact on the environment, while also saving money on energy costs. Faucet Aerators help significantly reduce CO<sub>2</sub> production and use less energy by reducing the flow rate of water from faucets.

### Suggested Age Group(s)

- Adults, teens, children (adult supervision required)

### Suggested Skill Level

- Easy to moderate

### Supplies

- Faucet Aerator Kits (2.2 Gallons per minute or 1.0 GPM)
- Crescent wrench
- Trashbags (to dispose of discarded faucet aerators)

### Project Instructions

#### 1. Identify Partners and Leaders

- Call your friends, family, and coworkers and ask if they would be interested in helping plan and implement such a project. You can also ask schoolteachers and community leaders to lend their support and ideas. These partners may have materials and resources you can use for your project.

#### 2. Set a Location

- Contact your local schools, businesses, city or county representatives, faith-based communities, and nonprofit organizations and ask if they have a need for this type of project at their property. Arrange a meeting with the staff lead (principal, clergy, or other staff) and conduct a site visit as well as review the day-of-project plan.

#### 3. Establish Goals

- Setting goals can help you create a plan for implementing your project. Do you simply want to get some folks together and engage in a meaningful activity for a few hours? Do you want to teach volunteers about the impact of using faucet aerators on CO<sub>2</sub> reduction and energy saving? Do you want to install a certain number of faucet aerators? What do you want your end result to be?

#### 4. Develop Your Plan

- As you continue to establish your project, ask yourself the following questions in order to create a coherent plan:
  1. Where can I get funding for the project supplies and tools needed for the project?
  2. What resources are available to use?
  3. Where can I find volunteers who would be excited about such a project?
  4. How do I get the message out about the project?

5. Do I want to attach learning to this activity?
6. Do I need to have help from other volunteer leaders?

#### 5. Define a Timeline

- Set a timeline for your project. When will your project begin and end? Will it be recurring? Will there be projects that follow? Where will volunteers meet the day of the project? How will volunteers get to and from the project? How long will the project take?

#### 6. Promote!

Recruit adult and youth volunteers. You may want to print fliers, publish in the school/library newsletter, send emails, and use social media to mobilize your networks. Use whatever medium you can to get the word out and engage people in your effort. You can do this yourself or with the help of partners and leaders you've found in the community.

#### 7. Empower Youth Leaders

- If you are working with youth on this project, keep in mind that the youth voice is a key component in offering a high-quality youth project or program. Young people should have an influence on the project. Allow young people to suggest ideas for the current and future projects.

#### 8. Reflect and Recognize

- After your project, take a few minutes to reflect on the project with the volunteers. Don't forget to thank your volunteers, partners, and supporters. They deserve it!

#### Additional Project Tips

- You may want to create a project that combines other energy reduction activities like installing LED's, CFL's, building rain catchment systems, installing low-flow shower heads, or programmable thermostats.
- Be sure to engage the sink stopper so any loose parts do not get lost in the drain.
- Volunteers should receive instructions on where restrooms and food/drinks are located in the event they need to access.
- If youth are participating, they should always be accompanied by an adult supervisor with a project that involves a component such as electricity.

#### Reflection

- After your volunteer project, it is important to reflect on the experience and think about the impact of the project on the community as well as what you learned about yourself and others. Here are some suggested activities:
  - Tell your family and friends about something you learned and how you will continue to help others.
  - Blog, draw a picture, write a poem, submit a letter to the editor
  - Write about your experience on your Facebook account or Twitter feed.

• If you are working with a group of volunteers on this project, lead a group discussion with questions such as:

- Why did you volunteer today?
- What did you learn about social responsibility and environmental stewardship?
- What is the one thing that you will remember most about this service activity?
- How can you continue to make a difference in our community?

#### **Additional Resources**

- Installing a faucet aerator  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xNQ1auGtSyY&p=129E897F68B55789&playnext=1&index=39>
- Smart for Your Wallet. Smart for Your World.  
[http://www.earthaidenterprises.com/eae\\_calculations.pdf](http://www.earthaidenterprises.com/eae_calculations.pdf)
- VolunteerSpot - A free resource to help schedule and organize volunteer activities  
<http://www.volunteerspot.com/>

## INSTALLING LIGHT-EMITTING DIODE (LED) BULBS

### Overview:

Replacing incandescent light bulbs with LED bulbs is an easy way to create a positive impact on the environment, while also saving money on energy costs. LED's help reduce CO<sub>2</sub> production and use significantly less energy than incandescent light bulbs, while lasting considerably longer.

### Suggested Age Group(s)

- Adults, teens, children (adult supervision required)

### Suggested Skill Level

- Easy

### Supplies

- LED bulbs
- Gloves/hand towels (in case of contact with hot light bulbs)
- Ladders
- Newspaper (to wrap up discarded light bulbs)
- Trashbags (to dispose of discarded light bulbs- incandescent light bulbs cannot be recycled)

### Project Instructions

#### 1. Identify Partners and Leaders

- Call your friends, family, and coworkers and ask if they would be interested in helping plan and implement such a project. You can also ask schoolteachers and community leaders to lend their support and ideas. These partners may have materials and resources you can use for your project.

#### 2. Set a Location

- Contact your local schools, businesses, city or county representatives, faith-based communities, and nonprofit organizations and ask if they have a need for this type of project at their property. Arrange a meeting with the staff lead (principal, clergy, or other staff) and conduct a site visit as well as review the day-of-project plan.

#### 3. Establish Goals

- Setting goals can help you create a plan for implementing your project. Do you simply want to get some folks together and engage in a meaningful activity for a few hours? Do you want to teach volunteers about the impact of using LED's on CO<sub>2</sub> reduction and energy saving? Do you want to install a certain number of LED's? What do you want your end result to be?

#### 4. Develop Your Plan

- As you continue to establish your project, ask yourself the following questions in order to create a coherent plan:
  1. Where can I get funding for the project supplies and tools needed for the project?
  2. What resources are available to use?
  3. Where can I find volunteers who would be excited about such a project?
  4. How do I get the message out about the project?

5. Do I want to attach learning to this activity?
6. Do I need to have help from other volunteer leaders?

#### 5. Define a Timeline

- Set a timeline for your project. When will your project begin and end? Will it be recurring? Will there be projects that follow? Where will volunteers meet the day of the project? How will volunteers get to and from the project? How long will the project take?

#### 6. Promote!

Recruit adult and youth volunteers. You may want to print fliers, publish in the school/library newsletter, send emails, and use social media to mobilize your networks. Use whatever medium you can to get the word out and engage people in your effort. You can do this yourself or with the help of partners and leaders you've found in the community.

#### 7. Empower Youth Leaders

- If you are working with youth on this project, keep in mind that the youth voice is a key component in offering a high-quality youth project or program. Young people should have an influence on the project. Allow young people to suggest ideas for the current and future projects.

#### 8. Reflect and Recognize

- After your project, take a few minutes to reflect on the project with the volunteers. Don't forget to thank your volunteers, partners, and supporters. They deserve it!

#### Additional Project Tips

- You may want to create a project that combines other energy reduction activities like installing faucet aerators, building rain catchment systems, installing low-flow shower heads, or programmable thermostats.
- Because of the electricity component, volunteers should be comfortable with switching out light bulbs, and should understand that the light switch should be turned off or power disconnected during the switch out process.
- Volunteers should receive instructions on where restrooms and food/drinks are located in the event they need to access.
- If youth are participating, they should always be accompanied by an adult supervisor with a project that involves a component such as electricity.

#### Reflection

- After your volunteer project, it is important to reflect on the experience and think about the impact of the project on the community as well as what you learned about yourself and others. Here are some suggested activities:
  - Tell your family and friends about something you learned and how you will continue to help others.
  - Blog, draw a picture, write a poem, submit a letter to the editor

- Write about your experience on your Facebook account or Twitter feed.
- If you are working with a group of volunteers on this project, lead a group discussion with questions such as:
  - Why did you volunteer today?
  - What did you learn about social responsibility and environmental stewardship?
  - What is the one thing that you will remember most about this service activity?
  - How can you continue to make a difference in our community?

#### **Additional Resources**

- Installing an LED bulb  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aVwNu72ts8Y>
- Light bulbs for consumers  
[http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=find\\_a\\_product.showProductGroup&pgw\\_code=LL](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?fuseaction=find_a_product.showProductGroup&pgw_code=LL)
- Smart for Your Wallet. Smart for Your World.  
[http://www.earthaidenterprises.com/eae\\_calculations.pdf](http://www.earthaidenterprises.com/eae_calculations.pdf)
- VolunteerSpot - A free resource to help schedule and organize volunteer activities  
<http://www.volunteerspot.com/>

## INSTALLING OXYGENATING/LOW FLOW SHOWER HEADS

### Overview:

Installing low-flow showerheads is a useful way to create a positive impact on the environment, while also saving money on energy costs. Low flow showerheads significantly reduce CO<sub>2</sub> production and use less energy by reducing the flow rate of water from showerheads.

### Suggested Age Group(s)

- Adults, teens (adult supervision required)

### Suggested Skill Level

- moderate to difficult

### Supplies

- Low Flow/oxygenating showerhead
- Back-off wrench
- Crescent wrench
- Teflon Tape
- Trashbags (to dispose of discarded showerheads)

### Project Instructions

#### 1. Identify Partners and Leaders

- Call your friends, family, and coworkers and ask if they would be interested in helping plan and implement such a project. You can also ask schoolteachers and community leaders to lend their support and ideas. These partners may have materials and resources you can use for your project.

#### 2. Set a Location

- Contact your local schools, businesses, city or county representatives, faith-based communities, and nonprofit organizations and ask if they have a need for this type of project at their property. Arrange a meeting with the staff lead (principal, clergy, or other staff) and conduct a site visit as well as review the day-of-project plan.

#### 3. Establish Goals

- Setting goals can help you create a plan for implementing your project. Do you simply want to get some folks together and engage in a meaningful activity for a few hours? Do you want to teach volunteers about the impact of using low flow shower heads on CO<sub>2</sub> reduction and energy saving? Do you want to install a certain number of faucet aerators? What do you want your end result to be?

#### 4. Develop Your Plan

- As you continue to establish your project, ask yourself the following questions in order to create a coherent plan:
  1. Where can I get funding for the project supplies and tools needed for the project?
  2. What resources are available to use?
  3. Where can I find volunteers who would be excited about such a project?
  4. How do I get the message out about the project?

5. Do I want to attach learning to this activity?
6. Do I need to have help from other volunteer leaders?

#### 5. Define a Timeline

- Set a timeline for your project. When will your project begin and end? Will it be recurring? Will there be projects that follow? Where will volunteers meet the day of the project? How will volunteers get to and from the project? How long will the project take?

#### 6. Promote!

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#### 7. Empower Youth Leaders

- If you are working with youth on this project, keep in mind that the youth voice is a key component in offering a high-quality youth project or program. Young people should have an influence on the project. Allow young people to suggest ideas for the current and future projects.

#### 8. Reflect and Recognize

- After your project, take a few minutes to reflect on the project with the volunteers. Don't forget to thank your volunteers, partners, and supporters. They deserve it!

#### Additional Project Tips

- You may want to create a project that combines other energy reduction activities like installing LED's, CFL's, building rain catchment systems, installing faucet aerators, or programmable thermostats.
- Be sure to engage the shower stopper so any loose parts do not get lost in the drain.
- Volunteers should receive instructions on where restrooms and food/drinks are located in the event they need to access.
- If youth are participating, they should always be accompanied by an adult supervisor with a project that involves a component such as electricity.

#### Reflection

- After your volunteer project, it is important to reflect on the experience and think about the impact of the project on the community as well as what you learned about yourself and others. Here are some suggested activities:
  - Tell your family and friends about something you learned and how you will continue to help others.
  - Blog, draw a picture, write a poem, submit a letter to the editor
  - Write about your experience on your Facebook account or Twitter feed.

• If you are working with a group of volunteers on this project, lead a group discussion with questions such as:

- Why did you volunteer today?
- What did you learn about social responsibility and environmental stewardship?
- What is the one thing that you will remember most about this service activity?
- How can you continue to make a difference in our community?

#### **Additional Resources**

- Installing a low-flow showerhead  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DW80eaRbeBs>
- Smart for Your Wallet. Smart for Your World.  
[http://www.earthaidenterprises.com/eae\\_calculations.pdf](http://www.earthaidenterprises.com/eae_calculations.pdf)
- VolunteerSpot - A free resource to help schedule and organize volunteer activities  
<http://www.volunteerspot.com/>

## PROJECT PLANNING RESOURCES

### PRE-PROJECT CHECKLIST

If you plan your service event well beforehand, you can expect things to run pretty smoothly during the actual day of service. But we all know that sometimes things don't go as expected. Here is a checklist to help you manage logistics for your service event:

#### Logistics

There are several logistical concerns leading up to the day or the project. Be ready to address the following questions:

- Do you know where the trash containers are located? Make sure there will be ample trashcans and recycling bins with bin liners.
- Have you thought about how you will create a fun environment? Do you have your CD player ready? Think about how you are going to provide an energizing atmosphere. One fun idea would be to have a local radio station broadcast live from the site, thus providing music and promotion for the event.
- Are there questions and concerns that still need to be addressed? If you do not think a project/task is feasible or if you have questions or concerns, be sure to discuss any changes that you feel need to be made with your team and partners.
- Have you finalized the project plan? Have you shared it with all necessary parties? If necessary, make additional visits to the service site in order to finalize the task matrix and to ensure that you are prepared to run a successful project. Be sure to stay in contact with your partners about details for the project.
- Have you met with project leaders? Meet with the staff and volunteers who will be leading the project to make sure that everyone is comfortable with the scope of the project and understands the plan. Leaders should also be familiar with the layout of the site and emergency procedures. Utilize your leaders to delegate tasks within the groups.
- Have you started to implement a PR and media plan (if necessary)? If PR and media attention are important to the project, begin working with communications contacts early so that they can develop and implement a strategy to seek coverage for your project. You will want to make sure you've assigned a media spokesperson to be at the service site and that he/she is armed with media kits and talking points.
- Have you addressed documentation of the event? Ask a staff person or volunteer to take pictures of the project. You should make a list of the types of pictures you want, such as close-up shots of people, volunteers in action or team photos.
- Did you confirm all tools and materials? Confirm that all tools and materials have been picked up and are on the site. Obtain any overlooked items. Make sure that you've thought through all of the cleaning supplies you might need. Extra work gloves and trash bags are always a good idea!
- Do you have your project kit packed? Pack a kit with materials that you will need to facilitate the project, including: sign-in sheets, evaluations, pens, markers, tape, poster board, rope/bungee cords, paper, clipboards and nametags. You will need these things for registration, to take notes, to make signs (directions to water, bathrooms, etc.), to hang banners and to handle little details of the day. You may also want to bring handouts about the next volunteer opportunity.
- Have you checked, double-checked and triple-checked? Don't leave anything to chance. It's better to confirm a detail twice than to assume that someone else will do it. Ask your project leaders to review details. If someone agrees to be responsible for any materials, follow up with an e-mail.

Stay in touch with partners and donors who are providing financial or in-kind resources to make sure that you have everything you need before the day of the project.

- Have you organized final planning meetings? Meet with your project leaders to ensure that everyone is confident about all project details.
- Did you create a “call list”? Exchange cell phone numbers with all key contacts if you have not already done so. You may also want to secure walkie-talkies for the day of the project.
- Have you made your final calls? Make any final calls to project-specific contacts, such as landscapers or media contacts.
- Do you need to identify a bilingual speaker? You want all volunteers to have a meaningful experience, so make sure that you have the language capabilities to communicate with each volunteer.
- Have you thought about how you will take care of VIPs if any are attending the project? Decide how you want to greet them and give them a tour of the site and the work taking place.

### Scheduling

- Do you have a printed schedule for the event, and have you reviewed it? Discuss the time the facility needs to be opened on the day of the event. If the facility isn’t usually open on that day, get the name and contact information for the person who will give you access.
- Have you assigned volunteers to serve as task leaders to work with specific parts of the event?
- Has time been allotted for set up, breaks, lunch, proper clean up, reflection and evaluation?
- Are volunteers aware of their scheduled volunteer time?

### Access to Event Site

- Do volunteers have directions to the event?
- Is the project site accessible to people with disabilities?
- If the site is normally closed or secured, who will be available to provide access to the facilities?
- Is there a place where can volunteers put personal belongings?
- Do you know where should volunteers park?
- Do you have a way to tell volunteers where to park (sign, other volunteers to direct traffic, etc.)?

### Registration

- Has an area been designated for volunteer check-in?
- Have registration forms been created and printed?
- Do you have writing utensils?
- Do you have volunteer nametags?
- Do you have volunteers to manage registration?
- Have they been trained on how to register the volunteers?
- Do volunteers know whom to contact in case of a cancellation or emergency?

### Weather and Attire

- Have you made contingency plans in the event of bad weather?

- Do volunteers know how to find out about a change in plans?
- Do you have a way to contact volunteers in case of an emergency?
- Do volunteers know how they should dress for the project?

### **Safety**

- Are there first aid kits, a water station, phones and volunteer safety accessories on-site?
- Are there any special safety concerns for the use of special tools or supplies being used? Do you have instructional handouts for any tools being utilized?
- Do you have a plan for monitoring the site if there are construction tools being used?
- Do you know how you can encourage everyone to be safe and have fun?

### **Food, Beverages and Breaks**

- Do you have a food or beverage station?
- Do you know if there is a specific place for volunteers to eat or drink or if refreshments can be anywhere on site?
- Do you have a volunteer who will help distribute the food and drinks?
- Do you have a plan to ensure that volunteers get a break?
- Do you have a volunteer who will monitor food and beverages and refurbish supplies if necessary?

### **Evaluation and Feedback**

- Has an evaluation form been developed and printed?
- Has a feedback form been developed and printed?
- Do you have a volunteer to manage evaluations?
- Do you have pens and extra evaluation forms?

### **Reflection**

- Do you have a reflection activity planned?
- Have you prepared a few take-a-ways to provide your volunteers to encourage continued thought and action around this particular issue?

## SITE VISIT CHECKLIST

The purpose of a site visit is to plan prospective projects with a community service organization (CSO) representative. You should begin thinking about the types of projects you will host and begin to develop an understanding of how you will manage the project from one session to the next (if it is an ongoing project) or throughout the day of the event (if it is a one-day project).

Here is what you should accomplish during the site visit:

\_\_\_ **Verify directions.** As you drive to your initial site visit, take note of the driving directions that were given to you. Make sure that they are accurate, as you may need to provide driving directions to volunteers.

\_\_\_ **Learn about the agency or school's needs.** During the site visit, ask questions that will help you understand what the organization's greatest needs are and the ways that ongoing or one-time volunteer support can have the greatest impact in meeting those pressing needs.

\_\_\_ **Begin planning.** Discuss possible project opportunities with the agency or school. What projects can you work on together? What goals do you both wish to accomplish within the community?

\_\_\_ **Identify tools and materials needed.** Brainstorm with the agency or school about the types and amounts of materials that will be needed to complete prospective projects. Also, discuss how the school or agency has secured tools and materials in the past. Can they provide any of the materials needed? Do they currently have partnerships with that provide in-kind donations for project materials?

\_\_\_ **Confirm the agency or school's involvement and participation.** Determine the type of participation you can expect from the agency or school during projects. Will they have supervisors and potential volunteers to work with you at the project? What will their level of involvement be? Are they donating any materials or services? Will they speak to volunteers before or after projects? In addition, discuss how they have recruited volunteers in the past and if your project will have access to their volunteers (or volunteer database).

\_\_\_ **Create backup plans.** Identify projects that can be expanded or reduced based on weather, volunteer attrition or other unforeseen circumstances.

\_\_\_ **Become familiar with the site and its amenities.** Important details about the site should not be overlooked, including accessibility to water (for clean up or drinking), restroom facilities, adequate parking, first-aid kits and the nearest hospital.

## VOLUNTEER PROJECT TIMELINE

This sample timeline can help guide your project planning process.

### 6-8 Weeks before the Project

- Identify potential community partner agencies and potential projects.
- Check project options and opportunities with potential agency partners.
- Contact potential agency partners, introduce yourself (if necessary) and schedule a face-to-face or phone meeting to discuss a project idea. If the partners are interested, determine the next steps.
- Make an initial project planning site visit to the partner organization site. The purpose of an initial site visit is to plan the project with the partner representative.
- At the site visit, determine what dates and times the project will be held and begin to develop an understanding of how to manage the project from one session to the next (if it is an ongoing project) or throughout the day of the event (if it is a one-day project).
- Begin planning your project with a Project Planning Worksheet.

### 4-6 Weeks before the Project

- Complete your project plans using the Project Planning Worksheet.
- Use the Project Supply List to identify the tools and materials the project will require and how these resources will be secured (donated or purchased).
- Recruit other volunteers to serve as Task Leaders to lead small groups of volunteers during your project.
- Confirm the involvement of the site organization. Make sure a representative from the agency or school will be at the project to thank and welcome volunteers and explain the importance of the project to the organization.
- Brief other project leaders on all aspects of the project and involve them in any further planning and preparation.
- Begin volunteer recruitment.
- Create the first draft of the project agenda.
- Craft a PR or media plan to handle publicity for your event.
- Discuss documentation (photos, video footage) of your event. Use a volunteer photographer if possible!
- Order event t-shirts, signage or other collateral as needed.
- Plan any transportation, catering or other logistics as needed. Be sure you communicate with volunteers if they are expected to bring their own refreshments.
- Outline a safety or emergency plan. Assign a safety point person for the day of the project, and know the location of the nearest first aid kit and hospital. Be sure you have a phone and the physical address of the service site in case you need to call 911.

### 2-4 Weeks before the Project

- Make an additional site visit. Address any remaining questions and concerns.
- Secure needed tools and materials.
- Secure volunteers (with appropriate skills as necessary).
- Reserve heavy equipment as needed.
- Plan your reflection and evaluation activities.
- Secure attendance of all dignitaries as needed for the day's agenda.

- Draft or secure talking points for dignitaries to include in the run of show document.
- Brief dignitaries, task leaders and organizational partners on the run of show and solicit feedback.
- Finalize the Project Planning Worksheet. Make sure that all of the project leaders are comfortable with the scope of the project.
- Establish contingency plans in case of inclement weather, too few or too many volunteers and any other problems that can be anticipated.
- Communicate project details to volunteers.

### 1-2 Weeks before the Project

- Confirm all final project details.
- Create a contact list. Exchange cell phone numbers with all key contacts. Make a contact list to carry with you during the project.
- Check to make sure there will be ample trash containers and recycle bins with bin liners.
- Make sure you will have tables and chairs for all project stations (registration, refreshments, media center, etc.).
- Review contingency plans and safety or emergency plans.
- Check, double check and triple check all project details!
- Finalize the run of show and talking points.
- Confirm that all tools and materials are on site.
- Conduct final communication with volunteers.
- Pack a Volunteer Leader “project kit” to include things such as:
  - first aid kit
  - sign-in sheets and waivers
  - evaluation surveys
  - signage, banners, and nametags
  - pens and markers
  - tape and clipboards
  - poster board
  - rope or bungee cords
  - extra paper or card stock
  - handouts or fliers about the next project or opportunity
  - CD player or music to create a fun, energizing atmosphere
  - sun block and/or bug spray
  - camera

## PROJECT PLANNING WORKSHEET

Use this form to help you plan your service project.

Project Site:	
Date:	
Address:	
Time:	

## CONTACTS

<b>Community Organization or School</b>	
Name:	
Phone:	
Alternate Phone:	
E-mail:	

<b>Partner Organization</b>	
Name:	
Phone:	
Alternate Phone:	
E-mail:	

<b>Volunteer Leader</b>	
Name:	
Phone:	

Alternate Phone:	
E-mail:	

<b>Volunteer Leader 2</b>	
Name:	
Phone:	
Alternate Phone:	
E-mail:	

<b>Volunteer Leader 3</b>	
Name:	
Phone:	
Alternate Phone:	
E-mail:	

<b>Volunteer Leader 4</b>	
Name:	
Phone:	
Alternate Phone:	
E-mail:	

**PROJECT DETAILS**

1. Briefly describe the project:




2. List the project(s) that have been identified at the site. How many volunteers are needed?

Project	# of Volunteers	Minimum Age

3. Is prep work needed prior to the day of service project?

Yes

No

<b>If yes, what is needed?</b>

4. Who will do the prep work?




5. Is this a one-day project?

Yes

No

If no, when will it continue?


### CONTINGENCY PLANS

Use this space to briefly describe back-up project plans.

1. How can this project (or parts of the project) proceed in the event of inclement weather?


2. Are other events or projects occurring on-site that day?

Yes

No

If yes, what impact will those activities have on this project?


3. What is the plan if you have a shortage of volunteers on the day of the project?





Idea: Scale back your project so that at least some aspects of the project will get completed.

4. What is the plan if more volunteers show up than expected?


Idea: Have a few other small projects in mind to keep all of your volunteers engaged.

**SAFETY**

Emergency Contact	
Name:	
Phone:	
Alternate Phone:	
E-mail:	

1. Briefly describe safety/emergency plan:


2. Are food and beverages provided?

Yes

No

If yes, who will provide? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Does the project site have restroom facilities?

Yes

No

If no, describe alternative:


4. Is the project site accessible for persons with disabilities?

Yes

No

5. How will volunteers pre-register?


6. Whom should volunteers contact with questions before the event?

<b>Contact</b>	
Name:	
Phone:	

Alternate Phone:	
E-mail:	

7. Have you investigated driving and/or public transit directions to the project site?

Yes

No

8. How will you communicate these directions to your volunteers?


9. What time should volunteers arrive? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Where should volunteers park?


11. What should volunteers bring and or wear?


### PROJECT INFORMATION WORKSHEET

Thank you so much for volunteering for \_\_\_\_\_. We have a wonderful project planned! Below are the details for the project that you will be doing on \_\_\_\_\_. Please review the following information and contact me if you have any questions.

I look forward to seeing you!

Project Leader name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Project Day phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization we will be assisting: \_\_\_\_\_

Project site address: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions/special instructions: \_\_\_\_\_

What we will be doing: \_\_\_\_\_

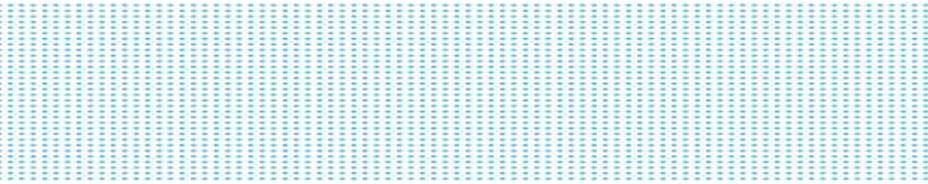
What you should wear: \_\_\_\_\_

Items you should bring: \_\_\_\_\_

When you arrive, check in with our Team Leader, \_\_\_\_\_, who will be there to answer questions and get you started.

#### Timeline of Activity:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Arrive/Check-in
- \_\_\_\_\_ Orientation to agency and project
- \_\_\_\_\_ Perform the work
- \_\_\_\_\_ Clean-up
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reflection on the day and completion



## CRAFTING A VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT MESSAGE

Qualities of a good recruitment message:

- The opening message should be interesting enough to entice the potential volunteer to consider volunteering for the organization.
- The body of the message should present information in an order that psychologically matches how people will think about the offer.

**Need: Is there a problem?**

**Solution: Can this job help solve it?**

**Benefits: What's in it for the prospective volunteer?**

**Contact Point: What steps does the potential volunteer need to take to get involved?**

## PROJECT DAY CHECKLIST

Below are a few helpful hints on managing the execution of a volunteer project:

- Verify that all materials and tasks are ready prior to volunteers arriving.
- Welcome and register all volunteers.
- Have volunteers sign waivers of liability.
- Have nametags for all staff members and volunteers.
- Present brief organization and project overview, including the impact of the project.
- Motivate and manage volunteers; make sure each volunteer has a task to complete.
- Manage the volunteers' time for effective service.
- At the halfway point, ask if there is too much or not enough to do.
- Prioritize tasks; complete the most important jobs first.
- Have back-up projects available for extra work.
- Monitor safety.
- Don't get wrapped up in doing the work; be available for answering questions and troubleshooting.
- If possible, take photos.
- Clean up.
- Reflect and evaluate.
- Thank volunteers and inform them of future volunteer opportunities.

## SAMPLE PROJECT DAY AGENDA

If you are conducting your service project in one day, this is one example of what your agenda could look like:

Time	Activity
8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	Arrive at your project site Perform necessary set up
9:30 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.	Greet volunteers Distribute nametags Have volunteers sign in Introduce agency contact Agency contact welcome and comments
9:45 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Project coordinators and task leaders direct volunteers in project tasks
12:00 p.m. - 12:45 p.m.	Lunch break
12:45 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	Lead and direct volunteers to completion of project
2:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Begin all clean-up tasks
3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	lead a group reflection activity Have volunteers fill out evaluations
3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Thank volunteers and celebrate!









**SAMPLE FINAL REPORT**

Project title: \_\_\_\_\_ Project date: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Community served: \_\_\_\_\_

Project location: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of project: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Total length of time at project: \_\_\_\_\_

Actual Outcome/Result/Benefit: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Quotes from agency/community/volunteers: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Number of Volunteers: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours of Community Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Hours of prep time: \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of hours donated to community: \_\_\_\_\_

Total monetary value of service given to community (value of a volunteer hour = \$20.85): \_\_\_\_\_

Total monetary value of in-kind: \_\_\_\_\_ Total monetary value of the project: \_\_\_\_\_

Attachments: Photos from Event

**VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENT SHEET**

Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Name/Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Partner Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Volunteer Leaders: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Office Location \_\_\_\_\_

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer Tasks**

**Volunteers**

Task # 1	
Task # 2	
Task # 3	
Task # 4	



## VOLUNTEER INCIDENT REPORT FORM

In the case that an accident or injury occurs during a volunteer project, it is important that the volunteer leader collect as much information as possible regarding the incident.

Project: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Leader Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Injured Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Date & Approximate Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the incident, including who was injured and/or what was damaged. (Use additional pages as necessary) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name of individuals involved: \_\_\_\_\_

Address/location of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

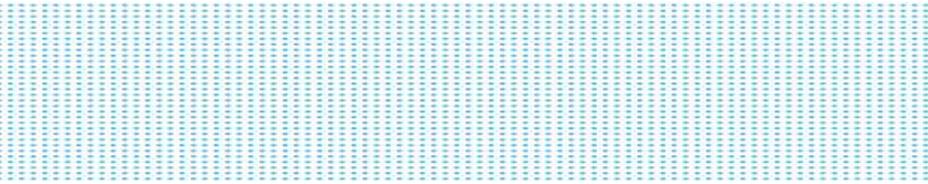
The Injured Person is:

- Active employee
- Retired employee
- Employee/retiree family member
- Employee/retiree friend
- Community Service Organization staff
- Community Service Organization volunteer
- Community volunteer

Was EMS contacted?  Yes  No

Injured Person Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Leader Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**EVALUATION/TRACKING**

## RESEARCH

AmeriCorps Alums has partnered with Earth Aid, a leading expert on energy use reduction. Based on scientific research gathered by Earth Aid, AmeriCorps Alums integrated evaluation tools to help determine the impact created by alumni chapters/alumni that participate in aforementioned toolkit projects.

Calculations and information was also used based on data from the Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Green Building Council, and U.S. Department of Energy