

April 29, 2005

## **Alberta youth give highways a spring cleaning**

### **Annual highway cleanup provides fundraising opportunities for youth groups**

Edmonton... Young Albertans will spruce up the province's highways and earn some money for their clubs and community groups at the same time.

The 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Highway Cleanup Day takes place Saturday, May 7, from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. throughout the province. In case of inclement weather, the cleanup will take place the following Saturday, May 14.

"It's a win-win situation for community groups and Alberta highways," said Dr. Lyle Oberg, Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation. "Highway rights-of-way get cleaner and participants earn money for their clubs or community groups. This year's cleanup is especially important as our highways will be spruced up in time for the Queen's visit and other events associated with Alberta's Centennial."

Last year, over 5,000 young people from 354 clubs and organizations collected over 34,000 bags of garbage from over 5,700 kilometres of highway rights-of-way. That's enough garbage to fill 630 dump trucks.

Participants wear bright orange safety vests and are under adult supervision. They must attend a safety training program on the dos and don'ts of highway cleanup before they can participate. Participants may earn up to \$43.50 per kilometre of right-of-way for their club or non-profit community group. Last year, the Alberta government contributed approximately \$170,000 to the participating groups and clubs.

Motorists are asked to slow down, obey signs, and be on the lookout when passing the workers in the ditches.

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### **Backgrounder attached**

### **Media enquiries may be directed to:**

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To call toll free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

# Backgrounder

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April 28, 2005

## **29th Annual Highway Cleanup Day**

### General Information

- Each year up to 6,000 kilometres of highway rights-of-way are cleaned.
- 4-H Clubs, Junior Forest Wardens, Scouts Canada and non-profit community groups participate.
- Participants must be at least nine years old.
- The cleanup will focus on highway rights-of-way, which is the land adjacent to the highway.
- Participants will not clean up medians.
- Cleanup work is done in partnership with Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation's highway maintenance contractors who collect the garbage bags.
- Workers receive \$43.50 per kilometre for cleaning both sides of the rights-of-way within 16 kilometres of cities or towns with populations greater than 5,000.
- Outside the 16-kilometre area, workers are paid \$22.50 per kilometre for cleaning both sides of the rights-of-way.

### Safety Information

- Participants and supervisors must go through a safety training program before they are allowed to take part in the cleanup.
- Workers wear bright orange safety vests.
- Workers wear gloves and sturdy footwear.
- Supervisors must have emergency contacts and phone numbers with them.
- For safety reasons, workers do not clean highway medians.
- Signs are posted alerting drivers to be cautious of clean up activities occurring in the area.
- Traffic safety is coordinated with the RCMP.
- There is at least one adult supervisor for every two children.
- Participants must stay off the highway and paved shoulder.

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