

April 27, 2006

Alberta youth spruce up roadsides for 30th time

Annual highway cleanup provides fundraising opportunities for youth groups

Edmonton... This May, young Albertans will give the province's highways a spring cleaning and earn some money for their clubs and community groups at the same time.

The 30th Annual Highway Cleanup Day takes place Saturday, May 6, 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 13.

"It's an opportunity for youth groups and Alberta's highways to benefit at the same time," said Ty Lund, Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation. "Highway rights-of-way get cleaner and participants earn money for their clubs or community groups."

Last year, more than 5,100 young people from 347 clubs and organizations collected more than 29,000 bags of garbage from more than 5,900 kilometres of highway rights-of-way. That's enough garbage to fill 41 Hercules cargo airplanes.

Participants wear bright orange safety vests and are under adult supervision. They must be at least nine years old and attend a safety training program before they can participate. Participants may earn up to \$52 per kilometre of right-of-way for their club or non-profit community group. Last year, volunteers earned \$183,000 for their groups and clubs.

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

- 30 -

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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30th 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 \$52 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 \$28 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 cleanup activities occurring in the area.
- Traffic safety is coordinated with the RCMP.
- There is at least one adult supervisor for every two young workers.
- Participants must stay off the highway and paved shoulder.
- Younger participants work further away from the road surface than older youth.

- 30 -

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