

Facilitate a Clean-Up for your community

Welcome to Operation Rich Coast – Operación Costa Rica

What an exciting opportunity to unite your community with such a meaningful activity. The goal is not only to remove considerable amount of debris from the coastline and to prevent it from entering the ocean, but also to increase awareness for the plastic pollution problematic.

By planting this small seed in your community you open the door to find more sustainable solutions of living and will inspire individuals and local companies to take actions to beat plastic pollution. Inspire everyone to implement a plastic-free life routine.

Continuing we will guide you through an easy action plan you can follow to facilitate your first clean-up.

There are three sections:

- Before the Clean-up
- During the Clean-up
- After the Clean-up

Before the Clean Up:

- Identify the area you want to clean and choose the start time of your event considering influencing points like the tide on beach locations.
- Identify possible hazards such as busy roads, possible or high risk to find **needles, sharp items or broken glass, rocky/slippery areas**, and take note.
- All volunteers must be informed of these possible hazards and agree that they undertake the litter pick up at their own risk. Neither Operation Rich Coast nor you as organizer are in no way liable for any injury or illness that may be caused or triggered by the clean-up.
- Every volunteer should demonstrate a respectful behavior in nature. Try not to disturb living animals/plants. If there are dunes and grasses on the beach. Let's respect natural habitats and the environment.
- All children under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Parents leave children at the clean-up at their own risk. Operation Rich Coast, representatives and volunteers of the clean-up **do not** provide child care provision and are in no way accountable for juveniles (or adults) attending the event.
- Create your event flyer or event page on Facebook or Instagram. Inform about the location and how to get there. Define visual references on where your volunteers will meet you at the location you have defined to clean. This is really important to assure that there is no confusion. The more information the better!
- A very important section of your flyer should inform on **“What to bring”**:
Volunteers should ensure they are wearing suitable clothing to protect themselves from the meteorological elements of the day to avoid exposure, illnesses or injury.

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Here is a short list on **must-bring-items** to guarantee a successful clean-up:

- Biodegradable bags
- Water
- Gloves
- Sunscreen
- Hat
- Shoes (Depending on location)
- Weighing Scale
- Waste Record Sheet

Important:

- Define which of these essentials you as organizer will provide and which items your volunteers need to bring. Make sure that you make exact reference on your event flyer or page.
- Where possible we strongly suggest that hand protection is provided for all volunteers and that volunteers do not conduct any litter pick-up without hand protection. If there is insufficient hand protection at an event volunteers must be advised to share or wear their own form of hand protection. Operation Rich Coast is in no way liable for any injury caused by the failure of any form of issued or non-issued hand protection to protect participant's hands which ultimately results in injury or illness.
- Volunteers must be advised that you do not want them to touch/pick up any sharp objects at all (i.e. syringes, broken glass, sharp metals) or unhygienic waste, such as dog poo or sanitary towels.
- A container to store sharp items that are found should be available e.g. a large Tupperware
- Every volunteer collects sharp items at their own risk

Accident or Injury Prevention

First Aid Kit: Clean-up organizers should provide a basic First Aid Kit. Make all participants present at the beginning of the event aware of the location of the First Aid Kit.

Coastguard/Lifeguards: Where applicable it will be the responsibility of the event organizer to notify the appropriate authorities of your event and make all participants aware of the location of the nearest coast guard station or phone where they can raise the alarm and contact the emergency services if an incident were to occur. As event organizer you must have access to a mobile phone (with signal) or land line.

Emergency Services: All event organizers must ensure they have a predesigned emergency service access point for an ambulance or helicopter if required. All emergency services including the Lifeguard can be raised using the (911) emergency line.

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Decide how to handle collected trash:

- Define what you will be doing with the recyclables and the non-recyclables
- How will the material be picked up from your clean-up location or transported to the recycling center?
- Volunteers must be informed on proper litter separation keeping recyclables apart from non-recyclables.
- Make sure they are provided with the correct information and 2 bags each - of different colors. You can also assign different types of 'trash' to different volunteers if that is easier.
- Group your volunteers in pairs of two to collect the **"waste data"** during the activity

Promote your Clean-up event:

- Share your event where it will be seen by as many people as possible:
 - LOCALLY - such as shops, supermarkets, dive centers, schools, restaurants, etc.
 - ONLINE - Advertise the event on social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and your Website
 - NETWORK: Submit your flyer to us Operation Rich Coast / Operacion Costa Rica to help spread the word.

During the Clean-up event:

Arrive early and get set-up for your event and your volunteers. Give an introductory speech informing all participants about the most important dos and don'ts:

DOs:

- Do only collect non-biodegradable items: plastic, glass, metal or polystyrene.
- Do collect small items: polystyrene or candy wrappers.
- Do work in teams to collect litter and **"waste data"**
- Do separate non-recyclable from recyclable.
- Do deposit collected trash in the allocated place.
- Do use the **"sharp items box"** for the containment of syringes, glass and other sharp objects found.

DON'Ts:

- Don't collect biodegradable items: driftwood, coconuts, seeds, seaweed, coral, shells or other vegetation.
- Don't burn any trash you collect.
- Don't trample vegetation.
- Don't try to lift or move heavy objects without assistance.
- Don't touch any unusual or potentially hazardous items that cannot be easily identified. These will need to be removed by authorities.
- Don't disturb the wildlife (i.e. nesting sites)

Document the event. Take before and after photos of the site. Take photos, videos and stories during the event. Use the hashtag #OperationRichCoast.

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After the Clean Up:

Ensure all trash is removed properly from the site as well as any garbage from the event itself. Bring the collected trash and recyclables to the appropriate location you have defined.

Say thank you! Have a short thank you ceremony to acknowledge your participants. Take a final group photo to celebrate everyone's hard work.

Spread the word & encourage everyone! to share their photos with you, online and tag #OperationRichCoast / #OperacionCostaRica. Tell people about your good work and encourage them to do the same.

Stay away from single use plastic! We all know it is hard to do so since we come across plastic on a daily basis. Keep making the right choice by saying no to plastic, start the conversation and ask for alternatives. Lead the way! Be the change!

For any questions and assistance contact us at contact@operationrichcoast.org