

Wharton County Adopt-a-County Road Program

Wharton County is pleased to introduce its Adopt-a-County Road Program to maintain the natural beauty of our county and to decrease the cost of litter pickup.

This program is modeled after the very successful Adopt-a-Highway Program that has been operating in Texas since 1985 and has grown into a national and international litter-prevention effort, saving taxpayers' dollars and keeping our right of way clean.

The Adopt-a-Highway Program focuses on State maintained highways. The intent of the Wharton County Adopt-a-County Road Program is to focus on Wharton County roads.

Program Outline

1. An individual, family, community organization, youth organization, business, civic and non-profit organization, religious group, fraternity, sorority, or school may adopt a two-mile stretch of a county road.
2. The two-mile stretch of a county road is adopted for a minimum of two years.
3. The adopting entity agrees to pick up litter four times per year (more in some heavy traffic areas).
4. Adopt-a-County Road signs will be posted at each end of the adopted section with the adopting entity's name.
5. Adopt-a-County Road Program will provide volunteers with safety vests, litterbags, traffic control signs and safety information.
6. Application is made to the County Commissioner in the precinct where the adopted road is located.

Guidelines

7. Participation in the Program is open to individuals, families, community organizations, governmental entities, youth organizations, private businesses, civic and non-profit organizations, religious groups, fraternities, sororities and schools.
8. The County Commissioner may consider such factors as width of right of way, traffic level and sight distance of roadways in determining what sections of county roads are eligible for adoption.
9. Program participants must agree to hold the county harmless and agree not to hold the county responsible for any injuries that they may suffer or damages they may cause or suffer as a result of participation in the Program.
10. Individuals and groups can adopt section of roadway to memorialize individuals or family members who have died. The recognition sign may include the phrase "in

memory of”, the name of the person in whose memory the section is adopted, and the name of the adopting entity.

11. Only county roads are eligible for adoption. Roads in unincorporated communities and subdivisions and incorporated cities are not eligible for adoption.

The Participant will:

12. Obey and abide by all laws and regulations relating to safety and such other terms and conditions as may be required by the county for special conditions of a particular adopted section.
13. Adopt a section of county road that is a minimum of 2 miles (unless the total length of the road is shorter than 2 miles) for a minimum of 2 years.
14. Pick up litter a minimum of four times per year at approximately quarterly intervals unless the Commissioner of the precinct determines that less times per year is adequate. It is desired that one of these pickups occur during the annual “Don’t Mess with Texas Trash-Off” event each April.
15. Appoint an authorized representative of the participating group to serve as spokesperson.
16. Furnish adequate supervision by one or more adults for minor volunteers of a participating group who are 15 years of age or older, with at least one adult for every three children who are seven to 14 years of age. Children under the age of seven may not participate in the program.
17. Conduct a group safety meeting prior to each pick-up day.
18. Obtain required supplies and materials from the county during regular business hours.
19. Set up traffic control signs and remove after clean up.
20. Wear county furnished safety vests during trash pick-up.
21. Place litter in trash bags. Remove trash bags and coordinate with the Wharton County Road and Bridge Department to discard to an approved disposal site.
22. Return unused materials and supplies to the County within one week of clean-up.
23. Not possess or consume alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs while on the adopted section.
24. Maintain a first-aid kit and adequate drinking water while picking up litter on the adopted section of road.
25. Assignment of responsibilities to any other group is not allowed without consent of the County Commissioner of the precinct.
26. Have the option of renewing an agreement subject to the approval of the County Commissioner of the precinct.
27. Advise the County Commissioner of each time that litter has been picked up on the adopted road.

The County will:

28. Work with the participating group to determine the specific section of county road to be adopted.
29. Erect a sign at each end of the adopted section with the participant's name displayed.
30. Provide safety information, trash bags, traffic control signs and safety vests.
31. If in the sole judgment of the County Commissioner of the precinct, it is determined that the group is not meeting the terms and conditions of the agreement, the county may terminate the agreement and remove signs upon 30 days notice.

How to apply:

Request an application form from the County Commissioner in your precinct or go to www.co.wharton.tx.us to print the form. Submit the completed form to your County Commissioner or the County Judge.

Partners

Wharton County Adopt-a-County Road Program plans to partner with "Keep Texas Beautiful" www.ktb.org and "Don't Mess with Texas" www.dontmesswithtexas.org. These are state wide organizations focused on reducing litter on Texas roads.