

Making the Best 4-H Clubs Better

Intended Audience

- 4-H club members

Lesson Objectives

Club members and parents will:

- Learn about hidden dangers for litter and trash pick-up
- Understand the impact of drugs on our environment
- Learn to identify unsafe litter
- Plan a safe community service project using ICE

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment and supplies:

- Pictures of ordinary trash and litter items. List on handout.
- Pictures of harmful trash and litter items. List on handout
- Plastic bags, one per member
- Computer or equipment to watch YouTube Safety video.
- Handouts :
 - ICE - In Case of Emergency Planning Guide
 - Keeping Community Service Safe

Do ahead

- Review lesson
- Gather equipment and supplies
- Copy handouts
- Gather pictures
- Place pictures along an imaginary roadside or public area
- Set up equipment/test Internet access and sound if you wish to show the YouTube videos

Keeping Community Service Safe

BACKGROUND

There are hidden dangers everyone needs to know when planning a community service project. In a recent report released by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, an estimated 11,772 tons of litter was removed from Ohio's roads and public areas in 2013. The cost of this removal by the Ohio Department of Transportation was over \$10 million dollars in that one year alone. Ohio 4-H members have long been a partner with community programs such as Adopt a Highway, various river clean ups, and local beautification projects. However, state and local authorities are now warning about hidden dangers in litter pick up. Reports have been published in almost every state in the U.S. of roadside cleanup crews and volunteers finding discarded meth labs along roadways and in public places. In this lesson, advisors, members, and parents will learn about roadside safety while still caring for our environment.

WHAT TO DO

Activity: Hidden Dangers Everyone Needs to Know –

Prepare a variety of pictures of common roadside litter. Include pictures of trash that might have been discarded as part of a meth lab.

Scatter the pictures along a pretend roadway or public park. Give members plastic shopping bags to represent trash bags and tell them they are to determine if the objects are safe to pick up and put in their trash bags or if they might represent a hidden danger. Allow time for most of the items to be picked up. Use the hidden danger list to identify and discuss the dangerous objects that could have been part of a meth lab or are another roadside hazard.

Optional Activities:

- Watch the "Meth Lab Recognition Video" created by the Colorado Department of Transportation on YouTube.
- Invite a member of the local police department, Ohio Department of Transportation, Ohio Department of Natural Resources or local drug task force to discuss safety practices with your club.



Sources

- Colorado Adopt a Highway program
- Minnesota Adopt a Highway program
- Gallia County Sheriff's Office
- Bruynis, Kathy; Fogt, Nadine; Rockey, Jessica; Sharp, Joy; Takacs, Maggie; Turner Cassie; Ohio State University Extension 4-H project book "My Hands to Larger Service, Teen Leaders

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As a club, vote to see if members *feel it is important to continue 4-H's tradition of picking up* litter or if it has simply become too dangerous. Depending on the outcome of your vote plan a SAFE litter pick-up or plan an ALTERNATE community service project using the ICE - In Case of Emergency Planning Guide.

TALK IT OVER

Reflect:

- Discuss the pros and cons of picking up litter. Discuss dangers you might encounter during other community service projects. What precautions should you take?
- Discuss the dangers of drug use.

Apply:

- Have the club members come up with their own suggestions for staying safe and keeping our environment clean.

ADDITIONAL LINKS

- Colorado Safety Videos: <http://www.coloradodot.info/programs/adopt-a-highway/safety-videos.html>
- Ohio Department of Transportation <https://www.transportation.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/odot/about-us/resources/adopt-a-highway>