

# How to Start a Trash Hero Chapter

## What Can a Trash Hero Chapter Do?

- Start and maintain a Weekly Cleanup
- Organize local businesses to sell and promote the reusable water bottles and set up refill stations
- Organize local businesses to sell and promote the reusable shopping bags
- Give presentations in local schools about handling trash responsibly and the impact of waste on the environment
- Organize a volunteer trash collection program for rural communities with no public trash pick up services
- Come up with great new project ideas for all of Trash Hero

## Are There Any Rules?

Yes! Just a few, but they're very important:

- Rule #1: Your chapter must at a minimum either organize a weekly cleanup or start a reusable water bottle program; it's best to get both projects going early on.
- Rule #2: You must not take money donations from anyone – sponsors, volunteers, or anyone else! If a sponsor is going to cover the cost of, for example, trash bags, you can bring that sponsor a receipt for items purchased and collect the funds for exactly those things purchased. But you may not accept money donations. If someone wants to donate money to Trash Hero, please direct them to the Trash Hero website: [www.trashhero.org](http://www.trashhero.org)
- Rule #3: It must be easy for people to join your chapter and participate in projects. This isn't a club for just friends, and you can't exclude people or businesses you don't like. Also, it must be easy for people to find meet-up locations for cleanups, and bottle refill stations.
- Rule #4: You must agree to use approved Trash Hero logos and graphic designs, to ensure consistency throughout all chapters.
- Rule #5: Have fun! Although the problems Trash Hero is trying to fix are serious, as an organization what we do should be full of joy and laughter and community!

## Who Should Be on Your Core Team?

Experience has taught us that a good core team has people from a variety of backgrounds and with a variety of skills. Look for people who:

- Are high energy and who are good at motivating others to join them, and who have time each week to lead the weekly cleanups
- Are Facebook experts who can easily manage posts, messages, and photos/videos
- Have graphic design and basic text editing skills, as well as video editing skills
- Have both local language and English language skills (for translation of Facebook posts, etc.), if needed in the area where the chapter is
- Are well connected to the local business community

## How Do I Start a Weekly Cleanup?

- Pick a day of the week (Mondays, if possible) that will be the set cleanup day each week – changing the cleanup day from week to week gets confusing for volunteers.
- Pick a meet-up time and location; make sure it's the same location and time each week to make it easy for volunteers to find you. Also make sure that you plan your cleanup for an appropriate time – for example, 3am after the bars close is not an appropriate time.
- Pick a cleanup location – which may be different than your meet-up location. For example, your meet-up location may be at the local 7-11 or a well known hangout spot, which everyone knows, but you'll be cleaning a beach area a few blocks (or a few islands) away. Make sure that the cleanup locations you choose are public property or you have permission in advance to use private property as a meetup spot! Beaches and park areas are public property.
- For the first cleanup, find three local businesses to agree to be sponsors, and to donate at least: trash bags, work gloves, and drinking water. You can also get additional sponsors to provide fruit and food (lunch), and if needed transportation. If possible, use reusable water bottles. Post all names of the Sponsors on Facebook.
- Send us the details for your first cleanup so we can promote it via our social media channel where we have thousands of followers.
- Start a facebook page according the following instructions on youtube: <https://youtube.com/watch?v=Tn7lvwuyDdU>
- **DO NOT COLLECT MONEY DONATIONS!** – It is very important that you do not collect money donations from sponsors, volunteers or anyone else. Ask sponsors to

donate goods or services – like trash bags, gloves, fruit, drinking water, food, and transportation. If the sponsor wants to just pay for something, for example: trash bags, buy the bags first and bring the receipt to the sponsor to be reimbursed.

- If there are cash donations going into someone's pocket, people may not trust that the money is being used properly. But if you don't collect money, and only get reimbursements for actual purchases and actual purchase amounts, Trash Hero will maintain its credibility. If someone wants to simply donate money to Trash Hero, direct them to the website: [www.trashhero.org](http://www.trashhero.org)
- During the first cleanup, make sure to take pictures and upload them to your facebook site. These pictures will be used to make posters advertising the weekly cleanup with the day, time and location to meet-up each week.
- Plan to clean for no more than 2-3 hours (it's hot in SE Asia!). End each cleanup day with something fun – a group picnic on the beach, snorkeling or a waterfall hike, beach volleyball, etc. Remember to keep it fun!
- At the end of each cleanup, talk to all volunteers and motivate them to become a Trash Hero every day and to help to spread the word. Our movement grows with the people, so make sure to motivate everybody. Here is an example from Thailand how we do it: <https://youtube.com/watch?v=flathXBpQIg>. Collect all email addresses from the volunteers and send them an email with the links to your social media channels and some general information about Trash Hero. Contact us via [info@trashhero.org](mailto:info@trashhero.org) if you need our standard template for that email.
- Keep a record every week about how many volunteers joined, how many bags or kilos (normally we count 1 bag=5kg) of trash was picked up, and how many cleanups you've done so far. We will also help you get set up with a facebook page, so that you will be able to post your own photos and messages about your chapter's activities.
- After the first cleanup, and once you have the posters, get some volunteers and start a campaign to get everyone involved! From the smallest street vendor to the fanciest resort, ask everyone to join and everyone to give their support. Don't feel shy to show what other Trash Hero chapters have already done, and are doing each week. This is Trash Hero's reputation and we're very proud of it. Make sure not to just go to the big sponsors – big resorts and restaurants and companies – but get the little guys involved too! The more people in the community coming together, the stronger your chapter will be. And while big sponsors have a lot of resources, you'll be surprised at how much dedication and commitment comes from the small business community.
- Celebrate your successes! Make sure that each and every week your volunteers and sponsors are thanked, and that you celebrate them on Facebook by posting pictures of the cleanup, and listing the names of sponsors for that week! If you end

the cleanup day with a meal or some drinks, don't always bring people to the same business. Spread the love around to all your sponsors!

- Once you have a set cleanup day/time and meetup spot, contact [info@trashhero.org](mailto:info@trashhero.org) and we will help you get posters and other materials printed to help you inspire others to join you!

### **How Do I Start a Bottles & Bags Program?**

- Start by carefully reading and making sure you understand the Trash Hero Bottles & Bags Program FAQ sheet (It's a separate document). If you have questions, don't hesitate to email us at [info@trashhero.org](mailto:info@trashhero.org).
- Pick out three businesses in your area that you think might be interested in participating in the Trash Hero Water Bottle Program (one of the three can be your business). Meet individually with an owner or manager of each business to talk about the program. Give them a copy of the FAQ, or show/send them a digital copy. Find out what their questions and concerns are, and see if you can get them to agree to join the program.
- Once you have three businesses in your area to agree to join the program, plan a larger meeting where you will present to many businesses at one time.
  - Use the contacts of the three businesses who have already agreed to join to get other business owners and managers to come to the meeting.
  - If some businesses are interested but can't attend the meeting, make a note and schedule a time to meet with them separately.
  - Make sure to advertise the meeting on social media, such as Facebook and Line.
- If you don't already have a Trash Hero water bottle to show people, send an email to [info@trashhero.org](mailto:info@trashhero.org) and we will send you samples. Make sure to tell us the day and details for your planned meeting.
- At the meeting, give a short presentation on what Trash Hero is and about the Water Bottles Program. Give/send all meeting attendees a copy of the FAQ.
  - Make sure to have a sign-in sheet and collect contact information for everyone who attends.
  - If you can have a computer or tablet available for the presentation, show some videos from the Trash Hero video collection, as well as pictures from the Blog/Facebook.
  - Emphasize that Trash Hero is a non-profit organization, and that Trash Hero makes no profit of any kind from the Bottles & Bags Program. We can

provide you with a copy of an invoice from the supplier, showing that the price businesses pay for the bottles and bags is the same as the supplier's price.

- Go through the FAQ question by question verbally, so that even if people don't take the time to read it, they still get the information.
- At the end of the meeting, try to collect as many orders as possible. Then contact us at [info@trashhero.org](mailto:info@trashhero.org) and we will help you come up with a plan that makes sense for your chapter regarding how to get the orders paid for prior to delivery of the bottles.
- Make sure that everyone who orders the bottles to sell understands that they must have a refill station as well. If there are specific cases that may require a different plan, contact us so that we can think about the best way to proceed. But don't discourage businesses from participating in the program just because they are hesitant about the refill station – experience teaches us that in the end, business owners come around and are happy to have refill stations on their premises.
- Once your order for bottles and/or bags is received, contact us and we will help you get set up with posters and signs in appropriate languages that participating businesses can display to explain to customers how the Bottles & Bags Program works.

## **Use Social Media!**

- Social media is your best organizing tool! Use Facebook, Line, YouTube and other media to inspire others to join the Trash Hero movement, and to celebrate the hard work of your volunteers.
- Document everything you do! Take pictures and video at cleanups, at events and even at participating businesses to show the positive efforts and impact of Trash Hero volunteers, sponsors and organizers.
- Make before and after pictures at cleanup events.
- Keep your message positive! For example, sad faces on a beach or messages chastising people for littering aren't nearly as effective as happy people picking up trash, making trash bins, or using reusable bottles and bags.
- DO NOT publicly reprimand or chastise any person or business because you think they are dirty or irresponsible about waste! First, you could be wrong about the persons/facts surrounding how trash came to be in a particular place. Second, Trash Hero is not the trash police. Trash Hero works hard to create and maintain a positive and inspiring image. If people or businesses feel watched or judged, they will not participate in supporting Trash Hero, and likely also will not change their

behavior. Inviting others to join and then celebrating their efforts is a much more effective way of creating lasting change.

- Use Facebook and make sure you have a Facebook page for your chapter. If you don't know how, let us know and we can help.
- Invite people to "like" your Facebook page (learn how: How to invite friends to like Trash Hero page <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s4WehwU0igQ>)
- Post pictures from cleanups and events in an album on your Facebook page (you can learn about how to do this at:
  - On your computer: <https://youtube.com/watch?v=Nr8iLAGtpol>
  - With your iPhone: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RliQQR-nTOA>).
- Make sure you make one big group picture with all happy people and all the collected garbage.
- Make sure to post a picture/screenshot listing your Sponsors for each cleanup and event, making sure each Sponsor is correctly identified. Find examples on [www.facebook.com/trashherothailand](http://www.facebook.com/trashherothailand)

### **Never Ever Give Up!**

- It's not easy to get a social movement going, and there will be hard times when only a few volunteers join, or when others will question your motives or efforts. Don't give up!
- Prove your commitment and dedication to your community by showing up each and every week, even if you only have 2 or 3 volunteers. Trust that you are building momentum and that others see what you do.
- Don't lose that momentum in low season! Keep at it, and keep asking for Sponsors and volunteers. You will win them over in the end.
- If someone questions how your chapter or Trash Hero is run or spends money or uses resources, don't get defensive. All that is needed is understanding and information. If you're not sure what the answer is, ask us for help, but don't give up!
- Make sure you and your volunteers are having fun – it's hard to give up on something that is fun, and that makes you feel good!