



### **We Value our Volunteers**

As a volunteer for Santa Rosa Recreation and Parks, you have committed personal time and effort, without compensation, to help the Department provide the community with a positive gardening experience. Recreation and Parks values your contribution to the Community Garden Program, and we thank you in advance for your efforts to enhance the quality of life in Santa Rosa.

### **Community Garden - Lead Site Volunteer Welcome Guide**

As a Lead Site Volunteer, you make it possible for the City of Santa Rosa to manage the community gardens it oversees. You will be the regular point of contact for the gardeners, who will look to you to facilitate their success as gardeners. While that does not include weeding and hoeing their plots, you should orient them to the garden and the City of Santa Rosa guidelines, be available to answer questions, deal with problems, and help develop a sense of community and responsibility among the gardeners. You will also be the eyes and ears for the City, which depends on you maintaining the smooth functioning site and informing staff of problems, needed material, and any other issues requiring administrative attention. Regular contact between you and the Recreation Coordinator will ensure the City can meet the garden's needs, gardeners are happy, the garden runs well, and your role as Lead Site Volunteer is enjoyable.

### **Responsibility of the Volunteer Position**

#### **Lead Site Volunteer**

Recreation and Parks encourages you to function as an organizer or facilitator and include all gardeners in carrying out tasks, rather than just doing them yourself. Involving other gardeners can sometimes be more work because you must prioritize the projects, think ahead to obtain equipment and supplies, and prepare to put the gardeners and volunteers to work quickly. If someone shows up to help and does not have something to do reasonably quickly, they assume you do not need their help. However, involving the gardeners is very important because it helps create a sense of ownership of the community garden, making the work seem less overwhelming and more fun for you and everyone involved.

Specific aspects of being the Lead Site Volunteer are described below:

- **Interacting with Gardeners**

This part of your job can be fun: you get to talk with your fellow gardeners, find out how they are doing, see what they are growing, answer questions regarding gardening, organics, policies, or problems, and talk about yourself and what you are doing in the garden. Do not feel that you must know everything. If you do not, probably another gardener down the row does, or you can look it up online. What is important is the interaction. Please encourage everyone to socialize with one another and with you, making gardening in a community garden enjoyable and satisfying for everyone.

- **New Gardener Orientation**

As the Lead Site Volunteer, you must meet with all new gardeners for an on-site Garden Orientation. During this orientation, you will review the policies and practices advocated in the Community Garden Program Handbook and go over garden site-specific information such as the schedule, plot location, and gate code.

- **Eyes and Ears of the City**

Recreation and Parks' staff will regularly visit the community gardens throughout the year but will never spend as much time in the garden as the Lead Site Volunteer. The City depends on you to ensure that gardeners follow organic gardening policies and the garden is running smoothly. However, the City's Recreation Coordinator for the garden is there to support your actions and intervene on your behalf if necessary. Feel free to ask the Recreation Coordinator questions, request material, and involve them when City input is required.

- **Contact with the Recreation Coordinator**

The Recreation Coordinator needs to maintain contact with you to learn how things are going and whether their intervention is necessary. Please keep in touch with them regularly. The Recreation Coordinator is the person to go to for material and consult with when problems arise in the garden requiring administrative input. The Recreation Coordinator knows the City's policies and what changes the community can implement in the garden. The Recreation Coordinator has the authority to terminate a Garden Plot Permit if gardeners do not adhere to the City of Santa Rosa policies, procedures, or standards of behavior. Work with the Recreation Coordinator directly if a situation arises.

- **Spring Garden Meeting**

We encourage you to set up a Spring Garden meeting for all the gardeners. The evening during the week, or mornings if on the weekend, are good times for such a gathering. Gardeners are very excited and eager to start gardening, so attendance should be high at

this meeting. The Spring Garden meeting allows everyone to introduce themselves, gives you a chance to go over guidelines specific to your site, stress the need for community involvement and attending work parties, answer questions from gardeners, and determine group project priorities. You will run this meeting; however, the Recreation Coordinator and Park Maintenance Supervisor can attend if requested in advance.

- **Monitoring the Garden**

Once the gardening season starts, it is useful to take a stroll throughout the site to see its condition every so often. How does it appear? Weedy? Great? Is the irrigation all fine, or does it need some repair? Is the garden receiving too much water or not enough? Does a plot look like it needs more care? Is the gardener away on vacation, ill, or in need of some help?

If the amount of water needs adjustment, please contact the Recreation Coordinator. If a plot needs more work, get in touch with the gardener to do more. Occasionally, something might be preventing them from attending to their plot. In that case, you may suggest contacting other community gardeners to see if anyone can provide temporary gardening assistance to the gardener in need. This bit of help might be just enough to stave off the weeds and save the season for the gardener. If the garden's common areas need trimming or mulch, or if the compost needs repair, you will need to schedule a workday with the Recreation Coordinator and request the gardeners' attendance.

- **Use of Non-Organic Products**

Most new gardeners use non-organic practices because they do not know the proper procedures to follow or acceptable gardening aides to use. The policies and practices advocated in the Community Garden Program Handbook must be familiar to all community gardeners. The Handbook should be reviewed with all new gardeners during the Gardener Orientation and quickly reviewed during the Spring Garden meeting. It is a good idea to have a copy of the Handbook on-site, so gardeners can consult it when needed, and you can gently correct them if necessary, focusing on the behavior and not the individual.

- **Failure to Start in May**

Most gardeners will enthusiastically start working their plots as soon as allowed. Occasionally, however, a gardener does not. By May, a gardener who has not begun working on their plot should be notified by you via email that they must work their plot by June 1<sup>st</sup> or risk termination of their Community Garden Plot Permit. Please include the Recreation Coordinator, so the City is aware of the situation. Keep monitoring the plot and emailing the absent gardener (and copy the Recreation Coordinator). If the plot is still not worked by June 1<sup>st</sup>, please report this to the Recreation Coordinator. Based on discussions with you and possibly with the gardener, the Recreation Coordinator might determine the

plot as abandoned and assign it to another gardener. If no new gardeners are on the waitlist, the Recreation Coordinator may temporarily assign it to a gardener already at the garden. If no other gardener is interested in the plot, it will still need to be maintained by the Lead Site Volunteer to ensure that it does not become a problem for neighboring gardeners. Shearing the plot when weeds get 24 inches tall is an acceptable solution.

- **Organizing Workdays**

Workdays address problems that arise in the common areas, such as paths, the compost, the perimeter of the garden, and tool shed, which belong to no one but are used by all. If work is needed, organize a workday to put things right. Schedule a date and time with the Recreation Coordinator (weekend mornings are best; 3 hours of work time is typical), email members requesting their attendance, post signs in the garden, and submit a supply request to the Recreation Coordinator. Workdays must be requested at least a month in advance for Recreation and Parks to assist. See appendix for Volunteer Program – Rec & Parks Assistance Request form.

Items to consider before your workday:

1. Workday projects that include structural changes to the garden, such as plot layout, irrigation system, adding storage sheds or benches, and planting trees, berries, or vines, must be approved in advance by City staff. You must submit all structural project proposals to the Recreation Coordinator through the Volunteer Project Proposal form of approval. See appendix for form. The City must approve the project before you can schedule the workday with the Recreation Coordinator. Long term planning is crucial.
2. Gardeners wishing to operate power tools in the community garden must undergo Advance Volunteer training. See appendix for a list of Approved Tools and Equipment for Volunteer Use and the Certificate of Power Tool Training Completion. Gardeners with professional gardening experience may provide a copy of their license certificate to forgo the training component. The City does not offer power tools, so gardener must bring their tools to the training. Requests for Advance Volunteer training must be made a month in advance of the scheduled workday. The City prohibits the use of tractors, backhoes, skid steer loaders, riding mowers, chainsaws, forklifts, woodchippers, boom & scissors lifts, and backpack, hand-help, or truck-mounted pesticide application sprayer or spreader.
3. The Recreation and Parks department can request additional volunteers for your workday through Volunteer Hub, an online volunteer registration system. If you would like extra volunteers, please notify the Recreation Coordinator when scheduling the workday. These volunteers will require extra attention because they are new to the gardens, so assign a gardener to oversee them.
4. It is nice to offer refreshments during a workday. Request donations of cookies, cold water, cups, and such, and gardeners will usually respond well.

- **Weedy or Abandoned Plots**

As you monitor the garden, note the general state of the other plots. If you see many weeds over 24 inches tall, please contact the gardener to come in and deal with the weeds as soon as possible. Weeds of that height will quickly go to seed, generating many future offspring. It is crucial to address these issues quickly. As you observe further, you may see a plot that a gardener has not worked for weeks or months, with the plants dying and weeds thriving. It is best to contact the gardener to urge them to continue working on their plot. If no action occurs, despite your efforts, try to verify if the gardener has indeed abandoned the plot. A plot affirmed as abandoned should be reported to the Recreation Coordinator, who can officially declare the plot abandoned after discussion with you and possibly the gardener. The Recreation Coordinator may temporarily assign the plot to a gardener already at the garden; however other gardeners are typically unwilling to take over an abandoned plot late in the season. If no other gardener is interested in the plot, it will still need to be maintained by the Lead Site Volunteer to ensure that it does not become a problem for neighboring gardeners. Shearing the plot when weeds get 24 inches tall is an acceptable solution.

- **Fall Garden Meeting**

We encourage you to set up a Fall Garden meeting with all the gardeners. The evening during the week, or mornings if on the weekend, are good times for such a gathering. Gardeners are typically very busy in the Fall with back to school activities and the holidays, so it is good to tie this meeting with an end of the year celebration. The Fall Garden meeting allows everyone to share their excess fall bounty, go over what went well and what could be improved, discuss the winterization process, and start the plot renewal process. You will run this meeting; however, the Recreation Coordinator and Park Maintenance Supervisor can attend if requested in advance.

- **Final Workday**

The date for winterizing the garden is December 1<sup>st</sup>. A final workday should be scheduled after December 1<sup>st</sup> to put away tools, cut down weeds, and remove inorganic items from the paths, garden perimeter, around the faucets, compost, and shed. Clearing abandoned plots is usually the most significant task. As the Lead Site Volunteer, it is crucial to get ahead of the job by reminding gardeners of the December 1<sup>st</sup> deadline, monitoring the progress of winterizing their plots, and recruiting gardeners for the final workday.

Steps that will facilitate the Final Workday are:

1. Warn gardeners of the impending December 1<sup>st</sup> winterizing deadline, starting about a month before. The email should list the December 1<sup>st</sup> deadline, the Recreation and Parks guideline on winterizing plots (listed in the Community Garden Program

Handbook), and notice of the final workday, which is often held the Saturday morning following December 1<sup>st</sup>.

2. Post a notice sign at the community garden where all gardeners will see it about a month before.
3. Reminders can be sent out starting in early October, with a final and more dire warning a week before December 1<sup>st</sup>.
4. Observe the garden in the meantime to see who is making progress and who is not. Some individuals may need more time or more substantial reminders. Keeping on top of the slower gardeners will make the final workday easier.
5. Winterizing abandoned plots must be cleared by the Recreation Coordinator before the start of the final workday.

## APPENDIX

### Volunteer Program – Rec & Parks Assistance Request Form

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Recreation and Parks Department  
2060 W College Ave  
Santa Rosa, CA 95401  
(707) 543-3279

## Volunteer Program – Rec & Parks Assistance Request

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Event Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Event Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**1) Tool check out program (please specify # of each tool requesting)**

Shovel (Pointed/Flat) _____/_____	Pitch Forks _____	Pruners _____
Litter Grabbers _____	Buckets _____	Loppers _____
Wheel Barrows _____	Push Brooms _____	Rake (Leaf) _____
Hand Weeder _____	Hoes _____	Rake (Bow) _____
Garbage Bags _____	Tarps _____	Other: _____

**2) Are you requesting Advanced Volunteer Training for use of power tools?**

Use of any power tools requires volunteers using such equipment to go through the City's Advanced Volunteer Training Program

If so, please list the types of power tools you would like to request to use for this project. Please note, the City does not provide any power tools. Volunteers must use their own power tools and do so at their own will and risk.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**3) Any additional request for City assistance with your volunteer project:**

Portable Restrooms \_\_\_\_\_ Debris Bins \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials (wood chips, dirt, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

**Please Return Form To:**

Kimberly Hatch  
2060 W College Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

OR

Scan/E-mail to:  
[volunteer@srcity.org](mailto:volunteer@srcity.org)

Please note: A Volunteer Application must be submitted and approved before any requests will be considered

## Volunteer Project Proposal Form

11/25/2020



Recreation and Parks Department  
2060 W College Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95401  
VolunteerSantaRosa@srcity.org  
(707) 543-3279

### VOLUNTEER PROJECT PROPOSAL

DATE:

#### TYPE OF PROJECT

☐ One-Time Service Project

☐ Ongoing Volunteer Project

#### PROJECT INFORMATION

Date(s) of Project

Ongoing Schedule Details (i.e. Every Tuesday, first Saturday of the month, etc.)

Start Time  End Time

Location - Park/Site

Estimated # of Adult Volunteers (Age 18+)

Estimated # of Youth Volunteers (Age 13-17)

*Youth Volunteers Must Work Under the Direction of an Adult*

Estimated # of Child Volunteers (Age 12 and under)

*Child Volunteers Must be Accompanied by a Legal Guardian*

Project Description ☐ If more space is needed, please check this box and include additional details on a separate piece of paper

Request for City Assistance ☐ Volunteer Recruitment ☐ Tools ☐ Debris Bin ☐ Portable Restrooms

☐ Other

#### CONTACT INFORMATION

Organization (if applicable)

Contact Name

Address

Email  Phone

Submit Proposal E-Mail: VolunteerSantaRosa@srcity.org  
OR  
Mail to: SRRP Volunteer Program  
2060 W College Ave.  
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

Received: \_\_\_\_\_  
Responded: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Denied: \_\_\_\_\_  
Permit #: \_\_\_\_\_

## Approved Tools and Equipment for Volunteer Use



Recreation and Parks Department  
2060 W College Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95401  
(707)543-3279

## Approved Tools and Equipment for Volunteer Use

### General Requirements

- No volunteer under the age of 18 can use power tools
- All volunteers must wear closed-toe shoes, gloves, eye protection, and earplugs (for power tools).
- Those volunteers wishing to operate tools listed in the Advanced Volunteer section must undergo training.
- Volunteers with professional gardening experience may provide a copy of their license certificate to forgo the training component.
- The City does not provide power tools for volunteer use; volunteers must use their own power tools. However, they do so at their own will and risk. The City is not responsible for tools breaking down.
- Prohibited Equipment: tractors, backhoes, skid steer loaders, riding mowers, chainsaws, forklifts, wood chippers, boom & scissor lifts, and backpack, hand-held or truck-mounted pesticide application sprayer or spreader.

### Basic Volunteer

TOOL	TRAINING LEVEL
<b>AGE 10 AND OVER</b>	
Shovels	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Hoes	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Brooms & rakes	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Litter stick and bucket	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Wheelbarrows	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Basic hand tools (wrenches, hammers, screwdrivers)	Onsite demonstration of safe use
<b>AGE 14 AND OVER</b>	
Palm sanders	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Loppers	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Hand shears	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Pitchfork	Onsite demonstration of safe use
McLeod – also known as Fire rake	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Digging (breaker) bar	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Post hole digger (manual)	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Stake pounder	Onsite demonstration of safe use
<b>18 AND OVER</b>	
Pick	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Weed whip	Onsite demonstration of safe use
Turf roller	Onsite demonstration of safe use

### Advanced Volunteer

TOOL – 18 AND OVER	TRAINING LEVEL
Power drill	Completion of required training
Line trimmer (weed whacker)	Completion of required training
Leaf blower - hand-held	Completion of required training
Leaf blower - backpack	Completion of required training
Cold water pressure washer	Completion of required training
Pond vacuum	Completion of required training
Power hedge trimmer	Completion of required training
Walk behind mower	Completion of required training
Power sander	Completion of required training
Edger	Completion of required training
Power post hole digger	Completion of required training

## Certificate of Power Tool Training Completion



Recreation and Parks Department  
2060 W College Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95401  
(707)543-3279

### Certificate of Power Tool Training Completion

#### Volunteer Information

Name			
Phone		E-mail	
Volunteer application on file (required) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes			

TOOL	DATE OF TRAINING	NAME OF TRAINER (Please print)	INITIALS
Power drill			
Line trimmer (weed whacker)			
Leaf blower - hand-held			
Leaf blower - backpack			
Cold water pressure washer			
Pond vacuum			
Power hedge trimmer			
Walk behind mower			
Power sander			
Edger			
Power post hole digger			

#### Safety Checklist Required for Use of Power Equipment

Closed Toe Shoes ____	Eye Protection ____	Earplugs ____	Gloves ____
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#### Agreement and Signature

I, individually and on behalf of my heirs, successors and assigns, do hereby release, waive, discharge and relinquish City of Santa Rosa and its officers, employees, and agents from any liability, loss, damage, claim, demand or cause of action for personal injury, property damage or death against them arising from or attributable to my participation in the volunteer activity, whether same shall arise by their negligence or otherwise. I understand that during the course and scope of my volunteer services to the City, I will be covered under the City's Workers' Compensation self-insurance. I also understand that working with power tools may involve additional risk of injury. I waive any other right or remedy that I may have available to me for any injuries incurred (including injuries arising out of the City's negligence) during my volunteer service.

I also understand that I requested and voluntarily accepted this training. I further understand that I am solely responsible for ensuring the safe condition and the safe use of the equipment, and the appropriateness of the equipment for the volunteer services to be performed.

Volunteer signature		Date
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#### City of Santa Rosa Staff Signature

Staff signature		Date
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