

Mighty Mississippi Cleanup Challenge

Hennepin County 2025 results

Hennepin County was challenged by our downstream neighbor, Goodhue County, to participate in the Mighty Mississippi Cleanup Challenge between April 15 and May 15, 2025, and we wholeheartedly accepted! The Mississippi River, and all the lakes, rivers, and streams in Hennepin County, make this a great place to live, and so many groups and people contribute to picking up litter each spring.

We encouraged residents to join a cleanup event with a list and map at hennepin.us/earth-day, organize their own cleanup, or sign up to Adopt-a-Drain at mn.adopt-a-drain.org.

About 50 cleanups and hundreds of drain cleanouts happened throughout the county during the challenge. We had results reported from 16 groups, including cities, staff groups, neighborhood groups, and nonprofit organizations. The groups that shared data and photos had about 2,800 participants and picked up over 20,500 pounds plus 110 bags of litter!

Hennepin County staff groups

A Hennepin County Public Health group of 8 staff (upper left) collected 8 bags of litter along a highway in Minnetonka. A Hennepin County Strategic Planning and Initiatives group of about 8 staff (upper right) cleaned up 15 bags of trash in the span of 2 hours at Webber Park and along Shingle Creek in north Minneapolis. About 20 staff from Hennepin County



Communications (middle on previous page) picked up 10 bags of litter along a county road in Maple Grove. Three staff from the 6th Commissioner District (bottom on previous page) collected 4 bags of litter along West River Parkway, noting there was a lot more waste near the water than along the trails

City, watershed, neighborhood, and community group cleanups



The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and City of Minneapolis held cleanups at 42 locations across Minneapolis on Saturday, April 19. More than 2,000 people helped pick up about 10,000 pounds of litter. The cleanups this year included a partnership with Twin Cities Kayaking whose members paddled down the Mississippi River and removed a pickup truck full of waste! The 2025 results represent about a 50% increase in waste removed compared to Minneapolis' 2024 cleanup events.



The City of Champlin had 139 volunteers at their cleanup event at Andrews Park.



The City of Eden Prairie had 43 groups sign up to pick up litter at 29 parks. In total, over 250 adults and 180 youth participated in cleanups, collecting over 50 bags of trash. Volunteer groups included Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, corporate and nonprofit groups, neighborhood and community groups, and families.



The Harrison Neighborhood group in north Minneapolis had 32 adults and 10 youth clean up 230 pounds of litter.



Nine Mile Creek Watershed District had 17 volunteers pick up 7 bags of litter at Valley Creek in Hopkins.



Restore the Nine, a grassroots community group, had 19 volunteers pick up about 6 bags of litter along Nine Mile Creek in Bloomington.



EcoAlpha had 11 participants, mostly youth, who collected 2 bags of trash at the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden. Many visitors to the Sculpture Garden praised the youth for their initiative and expressed their appreciation and gratitude.

The Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge had 9 participants pick up 8 bags of litter plus some larger items at their cleanup that started at Old Cedar Avenue Bridge.

City, corporate, and nonprofit staff cleanups



City of Bloomington staff groups totaling 16 people collected about 4 bags plus a wagon full of litter.



A group of 9 staff with Environmental Initiative (left) picked up 1 bag of litter in Minneapolis. A group of 19 people with Olympus in Brooklyn Park (right) cleaned up 300 pounds of litter.

Adopt-a-Drain cleanouts

Between April 15 and May 15, Hennepin County had 93 new drain adopters and 210 new drains adopted. Adopt-a-Drain participants in Hennepin County spent over 160 hours cleaning out storm drains, cleaning up 9,945 pounds of pollution.

