

Adopt-A-Highway Program Rolls On

With the latest round of "adoptions," voluntary responsibility for helping keep more than half of the lane miles of roadway under the [Kane County Division of Transportation's \(KDOT\)](#) jurisdiction litter-free has been assumed by churches, schools, businesses, scout troops, labor organizations and sports teams from throughout the county.

Operated by KDOT's Maintenance and Permit Departments, Kane County's popular "adopt-a-highway" [program](#) has attracted an ever-increasing number of groups and volunteers in the 16 years since it was first introduced. With approval of the most recent applications to participate in the popular anti-litter program, including renewed applications for another two years, the total number of [Adopt-A-Highway \(AAH\) members](#) has grown to about 100, according to KDOT Superintendent Carl Schoedel. Under the program, citizen volunteers pledge to support the county's anti-litter efforts by adopting a specific section, or sections, of County Highway, between a half- mile and two miles long, for the purpose of keeping it clean.

"When we instituted the program, it was fairly unique for local governments," said Schoedel. "The transportation planning staff developed it in coordination with our highway maintenance staff," he said.

Using the adopt-a-highway programs that the [Illinois Department of Transportation \(IDOT\)](#) and those transportation departments in several other states for guidance, Kane County modeled its own application form and worked with the Kane County State's Attorney's Office "to create a system that would work for county government," according to Schoedel.

"Since then, the program has spread. I'm sure other local governments have used Kane County's program as a model for their own," he said.

"We figure that KDOT saves over \$30,000 a year by having people do the AAH program, even including the supplies we provide each group," said adopt-a-highway program coordinator Glenda Starcevich. "Our safety vests, dashboard cards, and bags are a small percentage of the cost. I have been with KDOT for over 13 years now... and some of our members have been with

the program since the mid 90's. So far this year, we have 8 new groups and 28 renewals of existing groups," she said. "The map on our website tells how many miles have been adopted - around 325. So we have over half the distance of (county-maintained) roadway adopted, and the program is doing pretty good. We've had a few groups drop out due to financial stress and lack of members. But we're getting new members regularly," said Starcevich.

The program is a collaborative effort, she said. In addition to KDOT departments, Starcevich said the county's computerized permitting system as well as support from the [Information Technology \(IT\) Department](#) have helped streamline and ease the process of applying for the program as well as helping to monitoring its operation.

"Now we have a wonderful program that, with a few key strokes, allows us keep up to date on all the supplies, clean up dates, agreements and information changes. It is so nice to have a tool like KPASS and the great IT people to make it happen. I try to make sure our web page is current and looks good, and our IT Department helps make that happen. Our sign shop and traffic department at KDOT work together to make sure signs are posted at all the proper locations. We all work together to get the job done," said Starcevich.

As part of the program, [KDOT](#) identifies each adopted highway section with a permanent road sign bearing the name of the group. KDOT-managed safety training for all group members is mandatory and each group must provide at least one adult supervisor over the age of 21 for every five youths under the age of 18 present on its adopted section of County Highway. No one under the age of 10 is allowed to participate. A minimum of one clean-up a year is required.

"The safety aspect is a very high priority," said Starcevich. "We include the safety language in our permits and it must be read and understood before anyone is allowed to sign the permit and before our Director will sign it. We always discuss how we want the participants to be sure they stay away from traffic and do not try a clean up on a day when it could be slippery or when visibility is bad," she said.

"Communication also is very important, so I'm always happy to answer any questions or concerns our members might have. I like to get emails and phone calls and keep in touch with them to get a feel for what's going on, like when one group reported it found a \$50 bill and donated it to the Moose - things like that. It is very gratifying to know these people. All of them are very special to us and our County is a much better place to live because we have so many people who care about it," said Starcevich.

The newest additions to the program and the highway sections each group has adopted include: **Batavia Robotics** – Kirk Road from Fabyan Parkway to Wilson St (east side); **Cleaning Services Inc.** – Keslinger Road from Peck Road to Randall Road; **Focas Hair Salon** – Randall Road from IL Rte 64 to IL Rte 38 (west side); **Fox Valley Robotics** – Randall Road from Fabyan Parkway to Mill Creek Bridge (east side); **Iron Deer Farm** –

Ellithorpe Road from McGough Road. to Peplow Road; **John B Sanfilippo & Son Inc** – Randall Road from I90 to Big Timber Road (east side) and **Larson Farms** – West County Line Road from IL Rte 38 to Keslinger Road.

Groups that recently renewed their highway "adoptions" include: **Boy Scout Troop No. 7** – Hughes Road from Bunker Road to Fabyan Parkway; **Boy Scout Troop No. 2** – Big Timber Road from Coombs Road to Randall Road; **Boy Scout Troop No. 25** – Burlington Road from Corron Road to IL Rte 64; **Construction Cleaning Services** – Silver Glen Road from Randall Road to IL Rte 31; Cyclones Amateur Hockey Association – Randall Road from IL Rte 38 to Keslinger Road; **Friends of the Geneva Park District** – Kaneville Road from Peck Road to Fabyan Parkway; **Hampshire High School Paws for a Cause** – Big Timber Road from Widmayer Road to US 20; **Hampshire Youth Football-Cheerleading** – Big Timber Road from Harmony Road to Widmayer Road; **Hintz Trucking Inc** – Bowes Road from Crawford Road to Muirhead Road; **Knights of Columbus 12497** – Randall Road from Silver Glen Road to Red Gate Road; **Package Concrete Inc** – Main Street from IL Rte 47 to I88; **Q Center of St Charles** – Dunham Road from Stearns Road to Army Trail Road; **Rizza Family** – Huntley Road from Miller Road to Sleepy Hollow Road; **St Charles Kiwanis Noon Club** – Randall Road from Dean Street to IL Rte 64; **St Pat's Boy Scout Troop** – Silver Glen Road from Randall Road to Burr Road; **The Phillips Family** – Peck Road from Keslinger Road to Kaneville Road; **Waubensee Community College** – Harter Road from Seavey Road to Scott Road; **Women of the Moose, Elgin Chapter** – McLean Blvd. from Bowes Road to Spring Street.

For a complete list of [participating groups](#), to view a [video](#) that explains the program and other information in detail, please visit the program's web page at:
<http://www.co.kane.il.us/dot/maintenance/adoptHiway.aspx>

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