

DOT: Drive safely for adopt-a-highway crews

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The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) asks motorists to stay alert for Adopt-a-Highway volunteers, who are busy collecting a winter's worth of trash and recyclables along state highways.

New to the program this year, the department keeps an [interactive map \(wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/real-estate/roadsides/adopt-hwy/default.aspx\)](https://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/doing-bus/real-estate/roadsides/adopt-hwy/default.aspx) showing areas maintained by the Wisconsin's 2,769 Adopt-a-Highway groups as well as what routes are still available for additional volunteers.

"It's a sure sign of spring to see people so generously taking the time to remove trash and debris from our roadsides," said WisDOT Secretary-designee Craig Thompson. "Every driver makes a difference for their safety as well - buckle up, phone down and mind your speed."

Last year, Wisconsin Adopt-a-Highway groups collected more than 81 tons of trash and recyclables. County highway crews gather the bagged materials for proper disposal.

This season, the crews will continue to operate with extra health and safety precautions, including recommendations for masks and social distancing. Additionally, WisDOT furnishes safety vests, highway worker signs, a safety training video, trash bags, and two permanent signs identifying the group. Each group must provide one adult supervisor for every five or six volunteers. Groups do not work in dangerous areas like medians, bridges or steep slopes.

Adopt-a-Highway workers are asked to clean-up their assigned two-mile state highway segment at least three times per year. Of the 11,800 miles of state

highway in Wisconsin, about 4,200 miles (about one-third of the system) are still available for adoption, meaning there's plenty of room for interested volunteers. Check out the new [interactive map \(wisconsin.gov/Pages/doing-bus/real-estate/roadsides/adopt-hwy/default.aspx\)](https://wisconsin.gov/Pages/doing-bus/real-estate/roadsides/adopt-hwy/default.aspx) to find nearby opportunities.