

Spring Housecleaning

Throughout Iowa – spring is the time to do housecleaning, either of our home, work place, neighborhood or community. It is a time to make everything look clean and orderly and to get rid of those items that no longer serve any purpose in our lives. We use this time to give us a fresh start for the rest of the year – in essence we begin the rest of the year with a “clean plate”.

We gather in groups and clean up our parks, rivers and roads and streets. For Keep America Beautiful this time is called the “Great American Cleanup” – citizens across the U.S. volunteer and become part of the nation’s largest organized cleanup effort. From March through May millions of tons of trash and litter are picked up by thousands of volunteers across America. We do it because litter and debris on our countryside is depressing, degrades the landscape and for some it causes real sadness.



Just as Iron Eyes Cody looks at the landscape and reflects on the nature of society and wonders how anyone can desecrate the natural beauty of our country - each of us need to take another look at our countryside and neighborhoods. We need to help encourage others to gain back that respect for a clean and attractive countryside. The phrase – TAKE A STAND FOR YOUR LAND becomes appropriate.

I’m sure Iowans don’t really want to continue cleaning up after others by serving as janitors for those that don’t respect the land or our society. Generally, Iowans would prefer to avoid the need to do these community cleanups. Until we have a strong education program in place and a strong attitude by adult Iowans not to tolerate litter, debris and unattractive areas, we need to use these cleanups as an opportunity to help train the younger generation by getting them involved. When they get their hands dirty the lesson is learned. That experience often has the potential of making a great impression, an impression that frequently lasts and results in a change of our behavior patterns.



For those of you that would formally like to be involved in the Great American Cleanup please contact me. We can discuss the program and make sure that you become registered for the next years Great American Cleanup. Your involvement will make you a partner with thousands of other communities. It will also result in various cleanup supplies being provided by Keep America Beautiful. Whatever you call your local event it is important to have an educational feature tied to it so that there are lessons learned, remembered and practiced. Spring housecleaning can have a lasting impact on our lives.

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See you in the next column.

Helping to Keep Iowa Beautiful

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