

Adopt-A-Highway (AAH) is an innovative program developed by the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) to increase public awareness of environmental needs along Iowa highways by making sections of roadsides available for “adoption.” This gives the adopting individuals or groups opportunities to improve the appearance of our roadsides throughout the state.

Activities may include litter removal, and planting and/or maintenance of trees, shrubs, wildflowers, and native grasses. Other activities are eligible with approval from the department.

Seeds may be harvested and used to plant other public lands. However, seeds harvested on public lands cannot be sold.

Highway adoptions can be used to make the entrance or gateway to a community more inviting, and offer a proud welcome.

The AAH program allows individuals or groups to do one or more eligible activities on a segment of highway. These activities can reduce litter along highways, enhance the environment, beautify roadsides, and build broad-based community support for anti-litter and highway beautification programs. New ideas on how to beautify our roadsides are encouraged.

To allow greater participation in the program, a group or an individual may only adopt one entryway to a community.

Caring for roadsides will not only make them more attractive to the traveling public, but will also make major improvements in our environment.

Grassy roadsides provide habitat for ground nesting birds such as pheasants, quail, meadowlarks, and many other song birds.



Roadsides also provide excellent habitat for other wildlife. Many roadside plantings provide a source of food for wildlife.

Property owners may wish to adopt sections adjoining their land and will be given the first opportunity to do so. Second preference is given to governing bodies of small communities and urban areas. Final preference will be given to organizations, clubs and individuals.

Adoptions will not be allowed for political candidates, elected officials or entities that would constitute partisan endorsements. Any organization or individual whose sponsorship may have an adverse effect on the program is also ineligible.

Groups or individuals adopting sections of highway will be responsible for that roadside for a minimum of two years. Litter removal must be done at least twice a year or as necessary to keep the area clean. Litter pickup on primary roads must include both sides of the highway. Interstate highway litter pickup will be on one side of the highway.

Litter removal is automatically included in every Adopt-A-Highway sponsorship, even if the main project may be landscaping or another activity.

In addition to litter pickup and beautification projects, adopting groups may also control noxious weeds by using Iowa DOT-approved methods, which may include hand weeding.

A minimum distance for adoption is one-half mile for special project work. However, adoption of at least two miles is required for litter pickup. Smaller sections may be permissible on stub routes or unusual sections of highway.

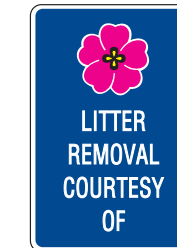
While working along a highway can be fun, safety of workers is a priority. Adopting organizations are required to hold safety meetings before work begins. Participants 14 years of age or younger should have adequate adult supervision.

Participants must also wear high-visibility safety vests when working on the highway right of way. Vests and orange trash bags will be furnished by the Iowa DOT.

For the safety of persons picking up litter, do not pick up large objects or anything on or within 10 feet of the pavement. Picking up litter from the medians is not allowed. If sponsors encounter anything they regard as hazardous, they should not pick it up, but should notify the Iowa DOT.



The sponsor must be willing to separate litter according to the requirements of the landfill used by the local Iowa DOT maintenance garage. The sponsor may retain any recyclables and take them to a recycler of the sponsor's choice.



Signs featuring our state flower, the wild rose, will be erected by the Iowa DOT at no cost to the sponsor to recognize the efforts of adopting groups or individuals. In areas with many signs or very rough terrain, AAH signing may not be possible.

A sign indicating the sponsor's name may be ordered through the AAH representative for the adopted area. (See contact information on the back of this brochure.)



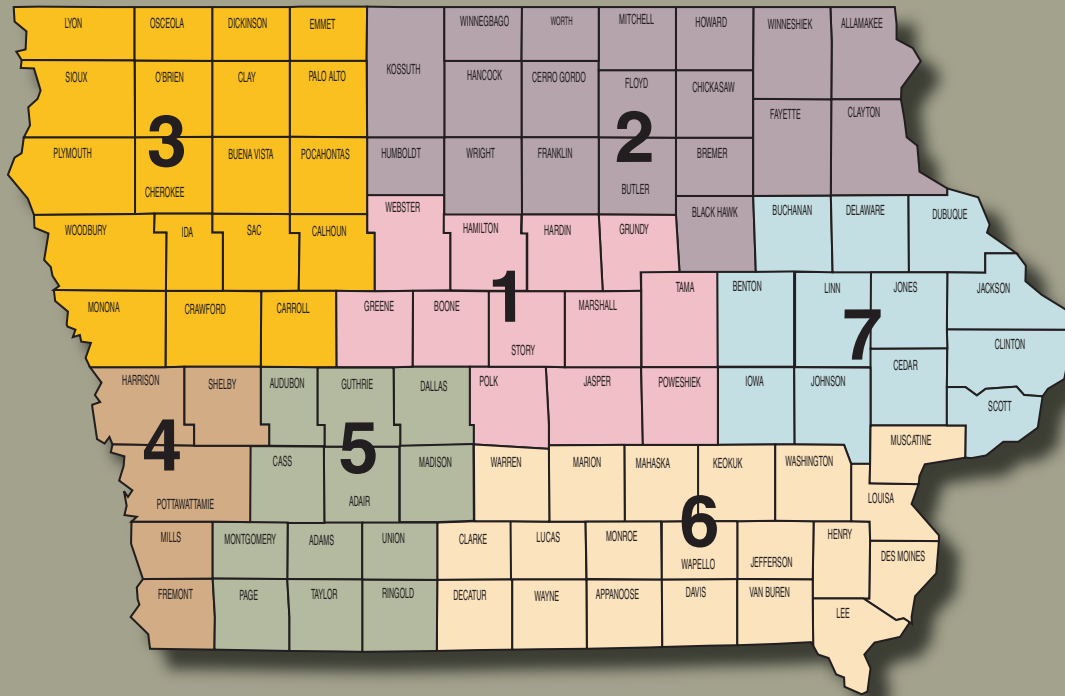
A sign with the sponsor's corporate, business or organization logo may be used in place of the sign shown above, but the sign must be supplied by the sponsor and some restrictions apply. Call the Iowa DOT representative for details.

Signing is not a requirement for AAH sponsorships. Sponsors may elect to adopt a highway section without signing.

Through this program, adopting groups of individuals will gain recognition for themselves and build a positive image for the state.

Beautification projects may also be done along roads other than primary or state highways. People wishing to initiate beautification projects along a county road should contact their county conservation boards or county engineers for details.

Adopt-A-Highway Area Representatives



- 1. Ames
515-663-6370, 800-436-8353
- 2. New Hampton
641-394-5634, 866-849-0327
- 3. Denison
712-263-3347, 800-683-8900
- 4. Council Bluffs
712-366-4642, 866-834-9673

- 5. Atlantic
712-243-3355, 800-289-4368
- 6. Fairfield
641-472-1771, 800-224-6019
- 7. Cedar Rapids
319-365-3558, 800-262-5144

If you would like to be a part of a program that is creating a lasting impression for this and future generations to enjoy, or would like more information about this program, contact the AAH representative nearest you.

Federal and state laws prohibit employment and/or public accommodation discrimination on the basis of age, color, creed, disability, gender identity, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or veteran's status. If you believe you have been discriminated against, please contact the Iowa Civil Rights Commission at 800-457-4416 or Iowa Department of Transportation's affirmative action officer. If you need accommodations because of a disability to access the Iowa Department of Transportation's services, contact the agency's affirmative action officer at 800-262-0003.



Wearing the required high-visibility vests enhances safety of AAH participants. The vests are available at your local Iowa DOT maintenance facility.

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Iowa's Adopt-A-Highway Program

