



# CITY OF HARRISONBURG PUBLIC WORKS

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*(Above) Blacks Run Clean Up Day volunteers picking up materials at the event's Green Scene and heading to their Clean Up destination.*

## City gears up for Blacks Run Clean Up & Arbor Day Events

HARRISONBURG, Va. – The City of Harrisonburg is improving water quality and reducing stormwater runoff in The Friendly City through two upcoming events.

- **27<sup>th</sup> Annual Blacks Run Clean Up Day on Saturday, April 12**
- **Arbor Day (observed) on Saturday, April 12**

The annual Blacks Run Clean Up Day allows volunteers and Harrisonburg Public Works staff to clean around the waterway, which begins in the northern end of the city, runs through Downtown and eventually connects with Cooks Creek in Rockingham County. This year's Blacks Run Clean Up event, in addition to removing items along the stream, will feature information and activities with environmental organizations at the Clean Up Day Green Scene in Downtown Harrisonburg, a social media photo contest



for a chance to win prizes, a pizza party for all Clean Up participants, and continued participation from local businesses in this year's post event Clean Up Pour Tour.

The event will kick off with check-in, distribution of supplies and cleanup location assignments at the Green Scene – located in the grass lot beside Turner Pavilion, 228 S. Liberty St. The Green Scene will feature educational exhibits from local environmentally focused organizations. Once volunteers have received their supplies, including disposable gloves and trash bags, they will proceed to their cleanup location. Some sections may be walkable from the Green Scene, but other clean-up sections may require other modes of transportation to access.

Volunteers will walk their assigned clean-up sections and pick up any trash, litter, and recyclable materials that are safely accessible from the streambanks. All volunteers are instructed not to enter the stream due to water quality issues. Once a team or individual finishes their stream or street section, they will place their collected trash bags and debris to the curb or area designated on their clean-up maps.

Clean Up Day volunteers may participate in the Harrisonburg Public Works annual Social Media Photo Contest for a chance to win prizes donated by local businesses. Prizes will be awarded to those who capture the best photo of the largest item discovered, weirdest object discovered, largest local business team and most enthusiastic/spirited team.

To be considered, participants may do one (or all) of the following:

- Tag @harrisonburgpublicworks on Facebook
- Tag @hbgpublicworks on Instagram
- Use the hashtag #BRCD2025 on your Facebook or Instagram post.

Prizes will be announced on the Harrisonburg Public Works Facebook page after the event.

Once Clean Up Day is complete, volunteers are encouraged to return to the Green Scene for a special Pizza Party. As part of the post event Clean Up Pour Tour, volunteers will be given a participant voucher to receive discounted brews and other specials at Downtown breweries and cafés, during open hours, on Clean Up Day. More information on specials will be available at the event.

**The public may pre-register to participate in Clean Up Day by visiting [www.harrisonburgva.gov/cleanstream-clean-up-day](http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/cleanstream-clean-up-day).** Day-of registration is available however pre-registration is encouraged, allowing participants to select which stream location they would like to help with and allowing staff to get supplies to participants quicker so they may begin their clean up.

“Blacks Run Clean-Up Day is a wonderful opportunity for the local community to come together and clean up our local waterways,” Harrisonburg Public Works Environmental Specialist Austin Shenk said. “The event helps reduce the amount of trash and litter from entering Blacks Run, and ultimately the wider Chesapeake Bay watershed. Our staff always appreciates the dedication and efforts of all the community volunteers who show up and make this a great success.”

Also on April 12, Public Works Green Space staff will be working with volunteers on an **Arbor Day (observed) Tree Planting** event at Thomas Harrison Middle School. The tree planting event supports the City's annual designation as a Tree City USA. In addition to the tree planting, the Virginia Department of Forestry will be implementing their Callery Pear exchange program at Thomas Harrison Middle School (pre-registration required).

“We are excited to celebrate Harrisonburg's 20th year of being a designated Tree City USA and to celebrate, we are offering more opportunities for the community to participate in efforts that enhance our tree canopy,” Harrisonburg

Green Space Manager Jeremy Harold explained. “We encourage the community to continue participation in tree programs that support installation of sustainable green infrastructure, that benefits our community and urban environment. We will be releasing tree care and maintenance educational materials this Fall and we are looking forward to helping the community to share in these efforts.”

Registration for the Arbor Day (observed) Tree Planting event is now full, however those wishing to volunteer may still register to help with the Blacks Run Clean Up Day activity now and morning-of the event. Those wishing to participate in future tree planting projects should email [Jeremy.harold@harrisonburgva.gov](mailto:Jeremy.harold@harrisonburgva.gov).

Questions for Blacks Run Clean Up Day may be emailed to [austin.shenk@harrisonburgva.gov](mailto:austin.shenk@harrisonburgva.gov), or call 540-434-5928.

The **City of Harrisonburg** is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 56,879 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is available online at [www.HarrisonburgVA.gov](http://www.HarrisonburgVA.gov).

You can also follow **Harrisonburg Public Works** on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/harrisonburgpublicworks).



*(Above) Public Works Greenspace Manager Jeremy Harold (left) holds up the Arbor Day Proclamation along with Landscape Supervisor Mike Hott. The proclamation was read at the March 25 Harrisonburg City Council meeting acknowledging Harrisonburg’s dedication to its Tree City USA designation and celebration of Arbor Day with a tree planting event annually.*