
Great LA River CleanUp Frequently Asked Questions

Registration FAQs

Do I need to register online? Do I need to register my children?

Yes, we require all volunteers to register for the event and agree to the event waiver online. Completing your registration online will save you time on the day of the event. For kids under 18 years of age, a parent or guardian must register the child online and sign the event waiver on behalf of the child. For kids under 16 years of age, the parent or guardian must also supervise the child for the duration of the event.

How do I register online?

To register for the CleanUp online, go to <http://folar.org/cleanup> and select the site you'd like to register for. You will have the option to register as an individual, or you can create or join a volunteer team. In order to complete the online registration, you will be asked to agree to the event waiver. Once you complete your registration, a personal event fundraising page will be created for you. You will receive a confirmation email to claim your page, which you can use to share on social media, build a volunteer team, or fundraise for the River if you choose.

Is there a registration fee?

Absolutely not! Our Great LA River CleanUp is always a free event, but volunteers can choose to fundraise for the event to further their impact on our urban ecosystem.

Can my class/church/scout troop/company come as a group?

Absolutely! Last year we had over 700 groups attend our CleanUp, and we're hoping for even more this year. As part of online registration, you will be able to create or join a volunteer team. Team captains will create their team's event page, and team members will be able to search for their team during online registration. Team captains can easily see who's signed up for their team, post updates to the team page, and send out group emails.

I'm a teacher and want to bring my students. How do I register them?

We love seeing students and teachers learning together on the River. We recommend that the teacher or group facilitator create a team through the online registration page and instruct all their students' parents/guardians to register their child to that team. The online event waiver needs to be completed by each minor's parent/guardian.

Event FAQs

What does FoLAR provide and what should I bring?

FoLAR provides gloves and trash bags, however, if you have old pillow cases or buckets lying around, we encourage you to bring those to help us reduce the use of single-use plastic bags. FoLAR will also have some snacks and water onsite, but please bring your reusable water bottles with you. Be sure to wear closed toed shoes and clothes you don't mind getting dirty in.

What if it rains?

For safety reasons, we cannot be in the River channel if it rains within a 72-hour window of the CleanUp day. If this happens, the event will be canceled and FoLAR will notify all participants by email.

Do I have to go in the water or get wet?

No! Please stick to the Riverbank and sandbars – it's safer! If you bring waders or boots and want to get wet, it's up to you.

Can my company sponsor the CleanUp?

Absolutely! We would not be able to put on this huge event without the help of our sponsors. Event sponsors receive a wide array of benefits, from logo placement on event t-shirts and banners, to acknowledgement on our online and social media platforms. For more information on sponsorship levels and sponsor benefits, please email sponsorships@folar.org or call our office at 323.223.0585.

Safety FAQs

Is it safe to go into the River channel?

There are of course inherent risks to cleaning an urban river, but we make sure all of our volunteers are informed and prepared by giving a Safety Talk at the beginning of each event before volunteers enter the channel and start cleaning. Because of this preparation and our expertise, FoLAR has been organizing the Great LA River CleanUp with few incidents for 30 years.

Does anyone spray herbicides or pesticides in the LA River?

US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) contractors spot-apply herbicide by hand-held sprayer to non-native vegetation in the LA River channel areas only where vegetation cutting/removal has occurred. The herbicide is Roundup Custom, which is an EPA- and DOD- approved aquatic herbicide. The USACE states that the US EPA, based on long-term toxicological tests, has classified glyphosate as Category E for evidence of non-carcinogenicity in humans – the most favorable cancer rating for pesticide active ingredients and one that few other products meet. They have determined the risk is sufficiently low that there is no significant risk of unreasonable adverse effects to humans or aquatic organisms under normal use conditions (including the Corps' application technique). Studies on

mammals, fish, and birds indicate that these chemicals do not bio-accumulate in the food chain. However, due to continued concerns that FoLAR and others have about the use of these chemicals, FoLAR is currently working with community groups, elected officials, and the USACE to advocate for improved methods of combating excess vegetation and invasive species growth.

I'm concerned about the homeless encampments in the River. Is it safe to participate?

Yes, it is safe to participate. FoLAR is working with the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) to provide outreach services to people living in and along the River prior to and during the event. In addition, LAHSA representatives will be available at each CleanUp site to answer any questions or concerns volunteers may have.

What do I do if I find toxic or hazardous waste in the River?

Please refrain from picking up any toxic or hazardous waste, including feces, needles, dead animals, etc. If you come across any toxic or hazardous waste, please alert a FoLAR employee, who can help with properly disposing the waste.

Fundraising and Donation FAQs

Do I need to fundraise or donate to participate?

Fundraising or donating is optional, but all contributions will go towards FoLAR's community programs and advocacy efforts, ensuring that we have a positive impact on the River year-round.

Are donations tax deductible?

Yes! FoLAR is a non-profit and tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization as recognized by the Internal Revenue Service and donations are tax-deductible within the guidelines of U.S. law. To claim a donation as a deduction on your U.S. taxes, please keep your email donation receipt as your official record. We'll send it to you upon successful completion of your donation.

If the question you have is not listed here, please email contact@folar.org or call our office at 323.223.0585.