



House Captain Handbook

The Work Day

Introduction

This section provides some guidance for the work day. A checklist at the end includes some of the important things you need to do.

Doing the best we can: What does that mean?

Our job on work day is more than fixing a staircase, painting a wall or fixing a broken light fixture. We are providing homeowners with a sense of renewal about a very important part of their lives: their homes, places where they have raised children, broken bread and experienced the joys and difficulties of life.

Therefore, doing the best we can means leaving the home better than we found it. It means doing only what the time and resources allow and making sure we clean up after our labors. Finally, it means leaving the homeowners with their heads held high and the warm feeling that is shared by those who are involved.

Interacting with the homeowner

During the rebuilding event, it is important to remember we are guests in the home. Make the homeowners part of the day. Involve them if possible. Tell them that this day is important to you.

At the beginning of the day

Get to the house before the volunteers to make sure the homeowners are prepared. Answer any questions they have and let them know where you will start working. Meet the family and friends who will be helping.

Morning Meeting/Pep Rally

Once all of the volunteers arrive, meet as a group to:

- ☐ Thank the volunteers for coming.
- ☐ Introduce yourself, your Volunteer Coordinator, Homeowner Companion, Safety Captain and supply runner.
- ☐ Explain your roles.
- ☐ Acknowledge the help provided by skilled trades, house sponsor, volunteer groups etc.
- ☐ Give volunteers the bigger Rebuilding Together picture. Tell them they are part of a nationwide effort involving 250,000 volunteers rehabbing almost 8,000 houses and community centers this year.
- ☐ Introduce the homeowner and ask him or her to say a few words.
- ☐ Provide an overview of the work to be done.
- ☐ Tell volunteers where the supplies are located.
- ☐ Tell volunteers whom to ask if they can't find supplies, or have questions.
- ☐ Emphasize safety and refer to the safety posters on the job site.
- ☐ Insist that everyone sign the Volunteer Liability Waiver Form (NO exceptions).
- ☐ Describe what to do if someone gets hurt, reintroduce the Safety Captain, and point out the first-aid kit location.
- ☐ Assign tasks to volunteers who have not been assigned prior to the work day.
- ☐ **Pump them up** for a great day of **hard** and **rewarding** work!

During the day

Keep volunteers busy but remember many are not accustomed to a full day of physical labor.

Keep in contact with the homeowner throughout the day, showing him or her progress that has been made. Involve the homeowner in certain decisions where possible. If anything unexpected needs to take place, ask the homeowner's permission.

At the end of the day

Walk through the house with the homeowner and explain what has been accomplished and, if necessary, what was not accomplished. Provide any necessary instructions. **Have the homeowner sign the Homeowner Satisfaction Form.**

Be sure to help the homeowner and their families get to the picnic or any other post-event celebration if one is planned.

Typical Problems — Be Prepared

It is inevitable that you will run into work day problems. It is hard to say what they will be, as each house and situation is different. Some of the more typical problems are briefly discussed below.

More Extensive Repairs

Sometimes when you rip into something, you discover more extensive damage than expected. If this is the case, you have to make some decisions. Can you still make the repairs that day? Do you have the necessary materials and skilled volunteers?

If you cannot make the repairs immediately, see if some volunteers will commit to return the next day or within the week to complete the work. ***If something must be repaired and no one at your site can do it, call headquarters immediately.*** DO NOT START SOMETHING YOU CANNOT FINISH!

If you do not have the necessary supplies, see if you can get them. Maybe the homeowner has some things in his or her basement? Maybe another house has extra supplies? Call headquarters for advice if necessary.

If you don't have the necessary volunteers for the additional work, call headquarters to see if others can be sent to your house.

Missing Materials

If materials are missing, call headquarters as soon as possible. Hopefully this won't be a problem since you checked your materials and supplies before the workday. You may need to purchase them or get creative. Again, another house may have extra supplies.

No-Shows

Sometimes volunteers fail to show up. If you can get by without them, do so. If not, call headquarters ASAP and they will make every effort to send additional volunteers over.

If skilled volunteers do not show up, this may be a problem. However, in many cases skilled volunteers are moving from house to house and will be at your house soon if you were told to expect them. If you get worried, call headquarters to check on them.

Too many volunteers

If you find you have too many volunteers, extras can pick up trash in the neighborhood or do “extra” projects. Please call headquarters. Perhaps they can be used at another house.

Use Your Imagination

Though there are a variety of resources designed to assist you, the nature of Rebuilding Together does not lend itself to taking a long time to solve problems. At times you will need to use your imagination and creativity and do the best you can.

Don't Open Up a Can of Worms

You may run into problems that may grow and become more serious.

If you leave a homeowner with more work than when you came, he or she may not have the resources to deal with it. This will leave bad feelings. You must balance what you do and try not to create problems.

If you can get more extensive repairs completed, please do so. If some volunteers can help at a later date, do this. However, please remember NOT to make promises that may be difficult to keep. Please inform headquarters of any problems immediately.

Working With the Media

As you work on your house, you may be visited by the press. As the House Captain, you are responsible for interacting with them and being their host.

Make sure you ask the homeowner's permission to show or discuss the home before they start.

Introduce yourself to the media, your volunteer coordinator and the homeowner, spelling names if necessary.

Be honest in answering questions. Talk about the “neighbor-helping-neighbor” aspect of the program and the good that comes from this project.

Be familiar with Rebuilding Together’s history. (Brochures or a Fact Sheet can be obtained from your local program leader).

Remember to mention **we are a volunteer effort reaching out to those who cannot afford to have the work done themselves. They are in need of our services to make their home and lives more safe and secure. BE PROUD OF REBUILDING TOGETHER AND YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH IT!!!!**

Please take advantage of any opportunity you have to highlight sponsors, skilled trade groups, donors and donations. If the press arrives at your house, get the name of the reporter, cameraman, etc., and a phone number for follow-up.

Cleaning Up

Leave the home in better shape than you found it.

For one-day events, target clean-up starting around 2:00 or 3:00 p.m. By mid-afternoon, many volunteers are worn out.

Trash should be placed in garbage bags or Dumpsters provided. **Paint brushes, rollers, and pans should be washed out for use again next year. If paint is water soluble**, brushes, rollers, pans, and buckets can be washed in a garage sink or with a garden hose and bucket. Assign specific volunteers to this task. Otherwise, it will not get done.

Open paint should be left with the homeowner. Unopened paint and leftovers and reusable supplies should be returned to the warehouse or headquarters.

If you run into any last-minute problems or have major disposal concerns, call **503-943-7515** Leave a message on the answering machine if he/she is not there.

Homeowner Satisfaction Form

At the end of the day, have the homeowner complete and sign the Homeowner Satisfaction Form.

Checklist for Work Day Tasks

- ☐ Have a morning meeting/pep rally with all volunteers, first thing in the morning to go over the day's project.
- ☐ Make sure each volunteer signs The Volunteer Liability Waiver form.
- ☐ At the end of the day, review with the homeowner all the work that has been completed and go over any necessary instructions.
- ☐ Clean up all traces of labor.
- ☐ Collect all affiliate materials and supplies and return them.
- ☐ Invite everyone to any post-event celebration and assist with transportation if necessary.
- ☐ Have homeowner complete and sign the Homeowner Satisfaction Form.
- ☐ Thank all volunteers.
- ☐ Celebrate your accomplishments!

AFTER WORK DAY Evaluation Form

Please take some time to complete the Evaluation Form. Your feedback will help us to improve the process for years to come.