

Madison County Renews Adopt-A-Highway Program

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EDWARDSVILLE — Local businesses and civic groups can now get more involved in helping keep the county clean.

The Madison County Board voted on in December to renew its Adopt-A-Highway program throughout the county.

County roads are a vital piece of the county's transportation network, connecting the places where residents live, work and play.

"While development, construction and weather treatment are the most critical aspects of road maintenance, it is also important to maintain the areas around roadways through litter clean-up," County Engineer Adam Walden said. "The Adopt-a-Highway Program will allow residents, local businesses and civic groups to participate in beautifying county roadways."

Walden said the county's Adopt-A-Highway program offers an opportunity for organizations or individuals to adopt a section of up to two miles of county-maintained roadways and conduct periodic litter clean-ups to help protect the environment and keep roads welcoming and safe.

"These will only be county roads and it does not include interstate or municipal roads," he said.

There are more than 200 miles of county roads, however not all roads will be available to adopt. To find a list visit the highway department's website <https://www.madisoncountyl.gov/departments/highway2/index.php>.

The state of Illinois adopted the Adopt-A-Highway Act in September 1992, seven years after the first Adopt-A-Highway program was put in place in March 1985 in Tyler, Texas. The county first adopted the program in December 1999 and over time it lost popularity due to a decline in applicants.

"(The County Board) felt it would be beneficial to the public to revitalize and reinstitute the program for highways under the county's jurisdiction," County Board member Bobby Ross of St. Jacob said.

Ross, who serves as chair of the Transportation Committee said, that anyone who applies and is approved for the program will need to meet specific requirements.

During the past three years the county's Building and Zoning Department has offered a free resource tool kit to individuals and groups who want to pick up trash and maintain cleanliness throughout its communities.

"Since we started the Clean Communities program we've distributed more than 4,500 kits to the public," Building and Zoning Administrator Chris Doucleff said.

Doucleff said the board's renewal of the Adopt-A-Highway is another way to help battle the litter problem and allows the public to get involved.

"The county is focused on ways to reduce the amount of litter throughout the county and both these resources help battle that problem," Ross said. "It's not always easy, but this is something we did for those who want to go out and pick up trash themselves. Those who participate in the Adopt-A-Highway program will get to have sign posted after they fulfill two verified litter pickups."

County officials said trash is a constant problem, especially along routes to the county's two landfills. Officials also want to remind waste haulers and citizens alike that when hauling debris they should make certain trash does not blow out of their vehicle because it piles up along the county's roadways and becomes unsightly for area communities and residents.

Doucleff said that resource tool kits are available to the volunteers who will sign up for the Adopt-A-Highway program as well as anyone who would like to pick up trash in their community. To request a kit, visit www.madisoncountybx.com or call (618) 296-4468 for questions or more information about the program.

Walden said the rules for the renewed program can be found on the County's website >Highway Department's page>Adopt-A-Highway. For more information on the renewed program residents can contact the Highway Department at (618) 296-4540.