



TIPS FOR CREW LEADERS

House Inspection

Visit your house ahead of the job, ideally upon receipt of your assignment. Upon arrival introduce yourself to the homeowner and explain why you are there.

Your work/materials list is based on a prior external assessment. Quite often additional work and materials are needed. You make that determination and request additional items from RTH in advance of the work days.

Evaluate the job site. The area around the house can be very crowded. Plan where vehicles and trailers will be parked and where you will set up work stations, painting areas and refreshments. Eradicate wasp nests, ant mounds and poison ivy in advance. Identify tripping hazards. Plan for working safely near power lines. Verify that materials can be securely stored on the premises between work days.

You, your other crew leaders or skilled volunteers should thoroughly assess the house exterior, review the work order and form the work plan. Plan to leave the house in a safe and weather-tight condition at the close of each work day.

Look for a suitable electrical supply for power tools and water spigot for paint cleanup. Check with the homeowner if you can use their water, electricity and bathroom during work days. Explain to the homeowner what they can expect on work days.

Power Washing

If possible, power wash your house ahead of the scheduled work days. Remove dirt, debris and loose paint from surfaces to be repainted. Skip surfaces that will be replaced. Control pressure and distance of the jet stream to prevent water penetration and wood damage. Spray lightly around windows, doorways, eaves vents, holes in the siding and wherever water could be forced into the house. Stay clear of electrical lines. Do not spray near electrical, phone or cable service boxes.

Crew Organization

Secure at least 15 volunteers. With enough people you can assign roles to work more efficiently and complete most projects within 2 work days. Typical responsibilities: minimum 2 crew leaders plan and direct the work; beverages and lunches organizer; runner picks up/returns warehouse materials, purchases store items and disposes trash at dumpsters; head of carpentry; head of painting; head of special projects such as doors, windows, hand rails

and wheelchair ramps; first-aid. In the event of a rainout, have a plan to communicate with your volunteers and insure their availability on scheduled make-up dates. For more detailed information please refer to the Volunteer Home Repair Program crew leader manual 2006 edition.

Tools and Equipment

RTH provides materials to complete the project (paint, caulk, lumber, etc.). You supply tools (ladders, hammers, saws, scrapers, brushes, pails, drop cloths, roller frames and covers, roller pans and extension poles, caulking guns and putty knives).

Think about the demolition, construction, finishing and painting phases and the requirements of each. Sometimes special equipment must be borrowed or rented. You may want to bring a generator if the job requires air compressors or concurrent use of multiple power tools and electrical outlets.

Please return unused materials to the warehouse. Call the warehouse staff to confirm their hours and insure that someone will be there to assist you.

Safety

Have each volunteer sign the "Waiver and Release" form. Communicate and adhere to an effective safety plan. Bring a well equipped first-aid kit. At least one volunteer should have qualified first-aid training. Assign one volunteer as designated driver in case someone requires immediate medical care. The driver should always be present, ensure their vehicle is accessible and know the nearest emergency medical services locations. The same person should be prepared to call 911 and have ready access to the house address should on-site care be required.

Lead a safety discussion with all volunteers before starting work. Your objective is zero accidents, injuries or near-misses. Review ladder safety, electrical safety, lifting practices and staying alert to others around you. Provide eye protection, hearing protection, dust masks and work gloves to your volunteers. Only certain capable people should be designated to operate power saws and pneumatic nailers. Remind all to stay hydrated, take frequent breaks and watch out for traffic while going to and from their vehicles.

RTH Contacts

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