



AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS SOCIETY OF ONTARIO
SOCIÉTÉ ONTARIENNE DE LA SCLÉROSE LATÉRALE AMYOTROPHIQUE

CAR WASHES

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

Although car washes are an excellent way to increase your Chapter's visibility and require only very basic supplies and organization, they are extremely labour-intensive. Therefore, before undertaking a car wash, consider whether or not this kind of event is the most effective way to make use of your volunteer resources. If you have a large volunteer base or a local support group ready to assist you en masse, are looking for an opportunity to generate PR for your Chapter, and enhance volunteer camaraderie as well as raise money, this may be the right event for your Chapter.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

- ❖ One or more locations with adequate space, water supply, and drainage
- ❖ Permits (if using public property)
- ❖ A volunteer supervisor for the day of wash
- ❖ Volunteers to wash, direct traffic, sell and rip tickets, talk to media
- ❖ Sponges
- ❖ Buckets
- ❖ Hoses
- ❖ Soap
- ❖ Towels
- ❖ Chamois
- ❖ Paper towels
- ❖ Glass cleaner
- ❖ Garbage bags (for clean-up and to wear if it rains)
- ❖ ALS posters
- ❖ Large, colourful signs
- ❖ Lunch for volunteers
- ❖ Liability insurance

PRE-EVENT ACTIVITIES:

- ❖ Set car wash date
- ❖ Choose location(s) and secure necessary permits and/or written permission
- ❖ Produce information sheets for potential volunteers
- ❖ Recruit volunteer washers; keep record of contact information
- ❖ Secure donations of supplies
- ❖ Print advance tickets

PRE-EVENT ACTIVITIES-CON'T:

- ❖ Distribute tickets to volunteers and friends for sale
- ❖ Invite print and TV media to event
- ❖ Make reminder phone-calls to volunteers
- ❖ Collect funds from advance ticket sales
- ❖ Count advance tickets; this will help you predict how busy your car wash will be
- ❖ Prepare separate area for counting and storage of money
- ❖ Make signs for on-site promotion; plan costumes or sandwich boards to lure people driving by
- ❖ Ensure that supplies are at site the day before event
- ❖ Alert police – your car wash may have an impact on the flow of traffic

EVENT ACTIVITIES:

- ❖ Set up as early as possible
- ❖ There should be one person in charge of the over-all car wash
- ❖ Have one person in charge of selling tickets and ripping them once they are redeemed
- ❖ Motivate your washers by encouraging a fun atmosphere; water fights are good for morale, provided they don't get out of hand; play music (but make sure it is not too harsh or loud)
- ❖ Have one person who is knowledgeable about ALS to speak to media
- ❖ Have someone in charge of directing traffic
- ❖ Have lunch delivered for volunteers (but not all at the same time or you won't have anyone left to wash)
- ❖ Place volunteers ½ block away with signs to alert passing drivers

POST-EVENT ACTIVITIES:

- ❖ Clean site
- ❖ Count money and deposit in safe place
- ❖ Contact media with results of car wash
- ❖ Send thank-you notes to volunteers, donors, and proprietor(s) of wash location(s)
- ❖ Count, clean, and store supplies for next year
- ❖ Return borrowed items
- ❖ Finalize accounting

A VARIATION: THE WINDSHIELD WASH:

The windshield wash is a less labour-intensive project, requiring only the most basic supplies. Volunteer recruitment is also less of a problem because the project can be carried out with only a few volunteers, yet extra volunteers can be easily put to work. Here's how to organize one:

- ❖ Ask a local fast-food restaurant for permission to wash windshields in its parking lot.

VARIATION CON'T:

- ❖ You will need windshield cleaner, spray bottles, wipers, towels, donation buckets, Chapter t-shirts (or other clothing identifying your affiliation), and ALS posters.
- ❖ While people are in the restaurant, clean their windshield and leave a note explaining your cause and asking them to make a donation. The note might read something like this: “We have cleaned your windshield in hopes of having brightened your day. We are working today in support of the ALS Society. If you can, please help brighten our hope of finding a cure or control for ALS by leaving a donation in the bucket as you exit. THANK YOU!”
- ❖ Have one or two volunteers stand at the exits to ask for donations.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

- Recruit outside groups (e.g. swim club, soccer team, etc.) to help with your wash.
- Coordinate promotion along the street leading up to the car wash.
- If your car wash is to be an annual event, consider buying rather than borrowing your disposable supplies. This will save you the effort of rounding up supplies year after year, leaving you more time to focus on volunteer recruitment.
- Don't undervalue your service. The price of your car wash should reflect the significant amount of labour that goes into it. When pricing your car wash, find out the going rate in your community and then charge slightly less.
- It is difficult to predict accurately the volunteer requirements for this kind of event. However, when assessing your volunteer needs, keep in mind that you will have to recruit extras since not everyone will show up. You will need enough volunteers to prevent long lineups. You shouldn't have volunteers standing around because there aren't enough supplies or because the event is over-staffed.
- Don't have everyone break for lunch at the same time; lunchtime is one of the busiest times of the day, so at least half your staff should be working.
- HAVE FUN! The more positive the atmosphere, the more successful your car wash will be.
- Take advantage of the excellent photo opportunities afforded by your car wash. Invite a special guest, such as your mayor, police chief, or other well-known member of the community, to have his or her car washed at a specific time and ask the media to be there.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

The ALS Society of Ontario, 265 Yorkland Blvd., Suite 300, North York, Ontario.
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