The Great Milwaukee Victory Garden BLITZ 2020 Group Volunteer Guide

The Great Milwaukee Victory Garden BLITZ is the nation's largest garden-building event, building over 500 raised garden beds, engaging over 350 volunteers, and empowering communities to grow their own food every May! Victory Gardening grew out of WWII and was a way to support the war effort. People throughout the United States grew their own produce in yards, parks and all available community spaces to allow more resources to go towards the war.

Today, we are fighting a different kind of war - against health-related diseases and for resilient and healthy communities that support one another. So how does one become a Victory Gardener of today, you ask? We become vegetable gardeners! We find creative ways to grow food right where we are, in our yards, on our rooftops, in our schools - no piece of earth should be over-looked.

Groups of volunteers from businesses, nonprofits, social organizations, schools, and government offices make up the bulk of our BLITZ volunteers. We couldn't put in 500 gardens across Milwaukee without you!

Thank you for your efforts to make this world a healthier, more productive place!

When is the BLITZ?

✔️ This year's BLITZ will take place **May 9-23, 2020.** We will be delivering gardens and soil every day during these 15 days!

How do I sign my group up to volunteer?

✔️ Call us at **(414) 431-0888** or email **montana@victorygardeninitiative.org.**

What time shifts are available to volunteer?

✔️ **There are 3 shifts to choose from each day:**

- **All Day:** 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
- **Morning:** 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
- **Afternoon:** 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Please arrive on time with your team. Lunch will not be provided, please DO NOT take our work trucks to lunch if you need to pick something up.

Where do we meet each day?

✔️ No matter what shift you signed up for, you should meet at Habitat for Humanity's office headquarters located at:

    3726 N. Booth St. Milwaukee, WI 53212

Please park on the street, NOT IN THE PARKING LOT.
What will my team be expected to do during the BLITZ?

Each day, volunteers will be asked to perform one or more of the following tasks (each person on your team will have multiple jobs):

- **The Driver** (1 person): Drive a truck slowly and safely (Chevy 2500-series or similar) with attached trailer filled with wood, soil, shovels, rakes, signs, and wheelbarrows. If there isn't anyone on your team experienced enough to drive a truck, we will have someone who is comfortable driving take over that task.

- **The Informant** (1 person): Call homeowner/garden recipient before leaving BLITZ Headquarters to let them know you're on your way to build their garden. You'll need your own phone for this part.

- **The Navigator** (1 person): We'll provide you with a map and list of addresses with directions - it's your job to guide your crew to the right spots. Got a smartphone?

- **The Builders** (entire team): Haul lumber to garden sites (in backyards, front yards, schools, churches, etc.) and construct raised garden beds using electric drills and wood screws. Place burlap sacks or cardboard down as a weed barrier if homeowner hasn't already. Get burly.

- **The Fillers** (entire team): Haul and fill gardens with 1 ton (!) of soil, using wheelbarrows and shovels. Continue to get burly.

- **The Smooth Operator** (1 person): Rake soil to ensure evenness in the raised bed.

- **The Delivery Person** (1 person): Drop off a pack of seeds and garden information to each BLITZ garden recipient.

- **The Hammer** (1 person): Install VGI "Move Grass Grow Food" sign in BLITZ recipient's front yard (or wherever they tell you if they're home) with a rubber mallet.

How do I know which day(s) we should volunteer?

Please feel free to sign up for as many days or shifts as possible! We generally need more help during the weekdays, but any day that your team can come help out will be greatly appreciated! However, we do have a maximum number of volunteers we can accommodate comfortably, so once that limit is reached, the sign-up for some volunteer shifts may close.

How many people can be on a team?

Because teams go out in a two-row pickup truck, the ideal number on a team is 5 (4 if no one in your group is comfortable driving). However, if you have more or less than that, we can definitely make it work. If you have just a few more than five and really want to stick together, we will ask that one of you drive in your own car and "chase" the truck. We also have other volunteers that can often fill in to make sure we have full teams. Additionally, if a member of your team needs to leave early from their shift, we ask that they drive in their own car so that the rest of the team can continue building gardens in a timely manner.
What should my group bring to volunteer?
- Water
- Lunch, if volunteering all day
- Camera / smartphone (send us pics of your team, post them to Facebook and tag us, tweet them to us, upload them to our Flickr page, put it on Instagram, anything you can think of to share your day!)

VGI has tools including electric drills, shovels, wheelbarrows and rakes that you can use to build and fill gardens. However, you can feel free to bring your own (remember to label it!). If anyone in your group has a pickup truck and/or trailer that they’re willing to drive, please let us know!

What should we wear to volunteer?
- Closed-toed shoes (no sandals or flip-flops, please!)
- Clothes you don’t mind getting dirty
- Clothes appropriate for the weather (rain coat, hat, sunscreen, etc.)

What do we do if it's raining or cold or windy or...?
- We BLITZ rain or shine! Please come prepared.

My group can't make it during May 9-23rd. Do you have other volunteer opportunities?
- We ALWAYS have other volunteer opportunities, including dates leading up to the BLITZ: painting signs, cutting wood, moving soil. We also need plenty of help at our Urban Farm. Please call (414) 431-0888 or email montana@victorygardeninitiative.org to find out other dates that are available for groups to volunteer.

Can my company sponsor the BLITZ?
- Of course! We have many different sponsorship levels to fit your company's needs and budget. We even have an option to have a Designated Volunteer Day! Please go to our website to get more information and download the 2020 Sponsorship Packet.

Can I buy a BLITZ garden?
- Yes! Just about anyone can buy a BLITZ garden bed from VGI. You can register to get a garden through our website, as long as you live within or near Milwaukee County (there's a link to a map of our delivery areas on the site). We can also install multiple beds at one site, if your school, place of worship or organization would like!

Go to: VictoryGardenInitiative.org and click on the Registration link to register for your BLITZ garden.

- The Victory Garden Initiative Team

Victory Garden Initiative
249 E. Concordia Ave
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VictoryGardenInitiative.org