THE GREAT MILWAUKEE VICTORY GARDEN BLITZ

2022 GROUP VOLUNTEER GUIDE

This is a grassroots movement. Move grass. Grow food.
The Great Milwaukee Victory Garden BLITZ is the nation's largest garden-building event, building over 500 raised garden beds, engaging over 300 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 April 30th - May 14th. We will be delivering gardens and soil every day during these days!

How do I sign my group up to volunteer?

✔️ Call/text Lexie at 920-358-3777 or email her at lexie@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.

Where do we meet each day?

✔️ All BLITZ volunteers will be gathering each day at our Habitat for Humanity headquarters (see address below). Volunteers will arrive at 8am for a brief orientation and will proceed to help our BLITZ Coordinator, Lexie, load the trucks!

Volunteers will be meeting at 3726 N. Booth St. Milwaukee, WI 53212. Please park on the street at meet at the gate on E Nash.
What will my team be expected to do during the BLITZ?

** Each day, volunteers will perform one or more of the following tasks

- Loading the trucks with supplies at Habitat for Humanity
- Hauling lumber from the truck to the garden placement location and constructing the raised bed.
- Laying down a weed barrier (burlap or cardboard) if necessary and using wheelbarrows to transfer soil from trailer to the bed.
- Rake out the soil in the bed to level and fill.
- Dropping off welcome kits for the bed recipients.
- Cleaning up any spilled soil of the street around the truck and trailer.

** While volunteers will generally perform multiple of the tasks above, it is often more efficient and easier if volunteers split the duties at each build site and focus on one task. For example, at an individual build site 2 volunteers will stand in the trailer and fill wheelbarrows with soil while 2 other volunteers will go back and forth to fill the garden beds. A 4th volunteer will lay down weed barrier, drop off the welcome packet, and level out the soil in the bed. At the next build site, volunteers often switch off tasks to experience all the activities and stretch their muscles in different ways!

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 safely, so once that limit is reached, the sign-up for some volunteer shifts may close.

How many people can be on a team?

Due to Covid-19, we are trying to keep our group numbers low and to ideally consist of groups that are already part of each others social circle, such as a family group or work group that is already near each other in their job.

Each team will be met by a VGI staff/experienced volunteer with the truck and to keep this person safe, the maximum number of volunteers we will have at a build site is 6. If you have a larger group, we will split your team at different build sites and your group will not actually see each other throughout the day.

Sometimes we do have larger build sites where we will have multiple teams working together. These are often before/after the normal Blitz weeks. If you wish to keep your team in one group, please ask us specifically if we have any of those shifts available.
What should my group bring to volunteer?
- Water
- Lunch, if volunteering all day
- Camera / smartphone. We love when you take pictures of your day and share them with us or tag us on social media! Use our hashtags, #MoveGrassGrowFood and #VGIblitz2021 to be featured on our social media and entered to win a prize!
- VGI has tools including 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!).

What should we wear to volunteer?
- Closed-toed shoes are required.
- Masks are optional if you do not have one, disposable masks will be available.
- Wear clothes you don't mind getting dirty!
- Clothes appropriate for the weather (rain coat, hat, sunscreen, etc.) and work gloves.

What do we do if it's raining or cold or windy or...?
- We BLITZ rain or shine! Please come prepared. A shift will only be cancelled due to storms.

My group can't make it during the Blitz dates. Do you have other volunteer opportunities?
- We ALWAYS have other volunteer opportunities, including dates leading up to the BLITZ: cutting lumber, prepping welcome kits, and more. We also need plenty of help at our Urban Farm. Please call/text (920) 358-3777 or email lexi@victorygardeninitiative.org to find out about 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 2021 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 Milwaukee County. We can also install multiple beds at one site, if your school, place of worship or organization would like!

https://victorygardeninitiative.org/services/blitz/

- The Victory Garden Initiative Team