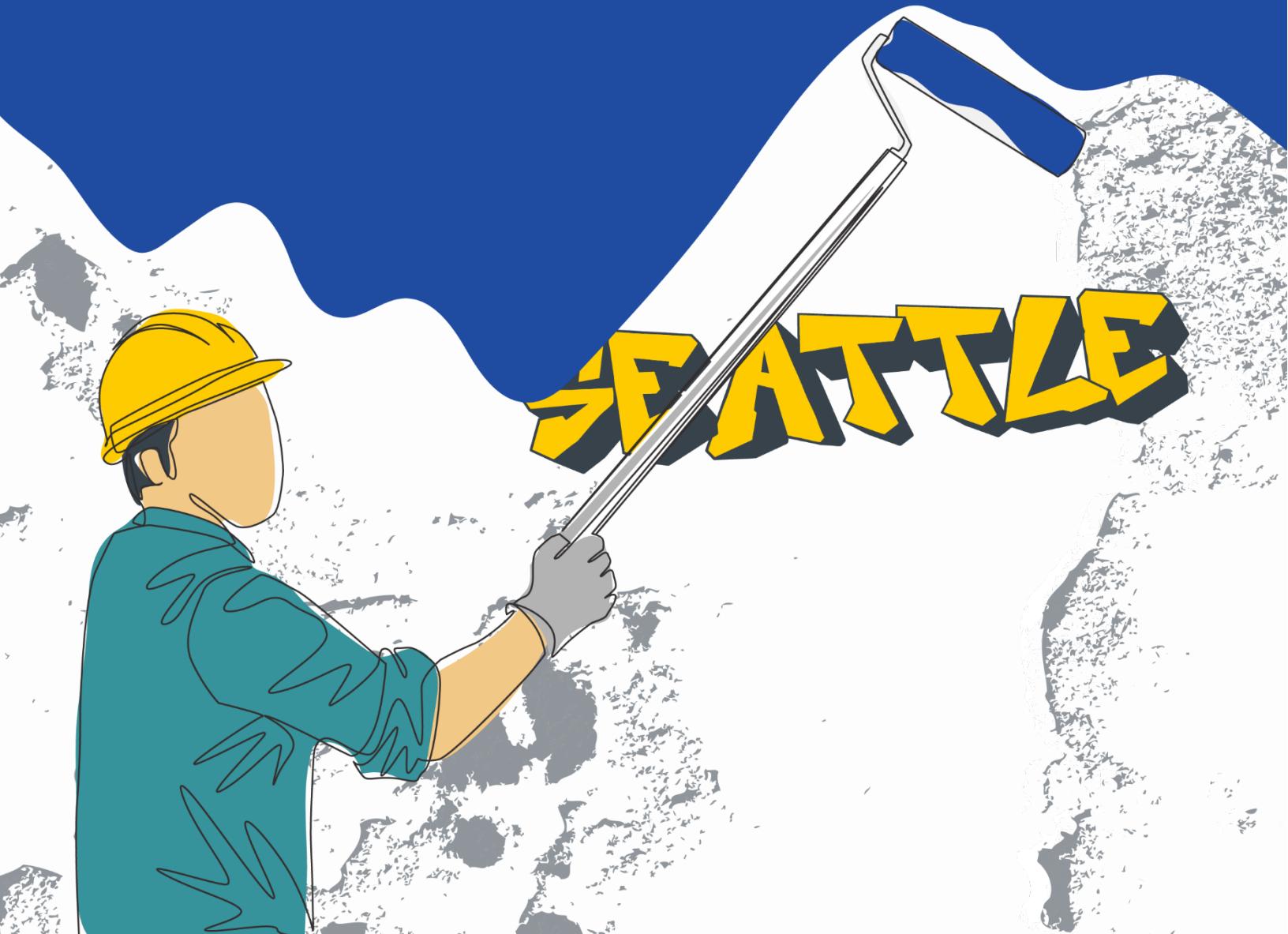


Seattle Public Utilities

Clean City Division

Annual Report | 2022



seattle.gov/utilities/SeattleCleanCity

700 Fifth Avenue | PO Box 34018 | Seattle, WA 98124-4018 | 206-648-3000



**Seattle
Public
Utilities**

Who is SPU's Clean City?

Seattle Public Utilities' (SPU) Clean City is a dedicated team of individuals committed to its mission of **protecting the environment and preserving public health**. This passionate group of individuals work tirelessly to preserve the safety and cleanliness of our environment and ensure that all members of the community have equitable access to public spaces.

What do they do?

SPU's Clean City Division implements and administers a suite of programs that safeguard the environment, maintain access to public spaces, and promote public health and safety. With a range of services from graffiti enforcement to providing essential unsheltered services such as encampment trash removal. Clean City aims to swiftly and efficiently remove litter, graffiti, sharps, illegal dumping, and other hazards that risk the health and safety of residents and visitors. The Clean City team's prompt and efficient resolution of these issues ensures Seattle remains a healthy and safe environment for all.

Clean City programs services meet the specific needs of the community and encourage participation. For example, the Clean City public place litter and recycling can program; cans are strategically placed in public spaces and serve as a convenient option for residents and visitors to dispose of waste properly. By making it convenient for people to dispose of their waste responsibly, the Clean City team helps to promote a cleaner and more sustainable city.

Seattle Adopt a Street, another notable Clean City program, offers volunteerism opportunities for residents interested in positively affecting their community. These opportunities include cleaning public spaces, litter pick-up, and graffiti removal. By encouraging community involvement, the Clean City team helps to foster a sense of responsibility and pride among Seattle residents.

As a vital component of Seattle's efforts to maintain its cleanliness and safety, SPU's Clean City Division is committed to managing various programs and initiatives for the well-being of the environment and the community. Their hard work and dedication are a testament to their commitment to the community ensuring Seattle remains a vibrant, safe, and eco-friendly city that everyone can enjoy.



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Clean City Programs



Adopt a Street



Illegal Dumping



Graffiti Abatement
& Enforcement



Litter Abatement



Public Place Litter &
Recycling Cans



Sharps Collection



Unsheltered Services

Adopt a Street

The **Adopt a Street (AAS)** program was established in the late 1980s to promote civic responsibility and community pride while enhancing the quality of life in Seattle through clean streets and beautiful neighborhoods. Since its inception, thousands of volunteers have dedicated their time to stewarding hundreds of miles of city streets in Seattle. Today, the program boasts over 1,100 active participants, a testament to its enduring success and popularity.

Participants are provided with the necessary tools and resources to keep their designated street segment free from litter and debris. By actively engaging residents in the upkeep of their streets, the Adopt a Street program helps to foster a sense of community and connectedness. Participants can meet their neighbors and work together towards a common goal of improving their local environment. This collaboration and teamwork are key to the program's success, as it encourages a shared responsibility for the community's well-being.

The Adopt a Street program has been a resounding success, with thousands of dedicated volunteers working tirelessly to keep Seattle's streets clean and beautiful. Its enduring popularity and success can be attributed to its ability to promote civic responsibility, community pride, and environmental stewardship while fostering a strong sense of community among Seattle residents.

The AAS program support volunteer cleanup efforts in the following ways



Create street adoptions on public map



Provide street cleanup supplies



Trash collection following cleanup



Track volunteer cleanup activities



Publicly recognize volunteer efforts

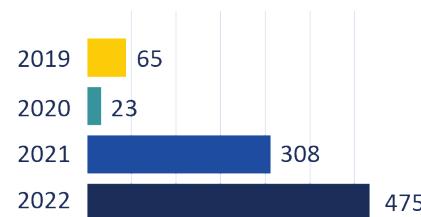
2022 Highlights:

- + **A New Volunteer Database & Online Reporting Forms:** AAS launched a new volunteer database that includes new maps that showcase adopted streets and cleanups that have occurred, new sign-up and cleanup forms that upload volunteer information into our database, and a robust database that allows staff to efficiently visualize, analyze, and download program data.
- + **One Seattle Day of Service:** On May 21, AAS played a key role in engaging over 3,000 volunteers in a day of service. Most of the volunteer activities included litter pick-up and graffiti paint-out, all activities led by the Adopt a Street program.
- + **Outreach & Education:** AAS continued its partnership with the Department of Neighborhoods Community Liaison Program, working with liaisons to help reach the Chinese, Spanish, Amharic, Tigrinya, Oromo, and Somali-speaking communities. In 2022, the AAS team tabled ten distinct community events to share information about the Adopt a Street program and register new volunteers onsite. New volunteers received litter kits to get started with picking up litter in their neighborhoods. In-person outreach contributed to over 90 new sign-ups.

2022 Results:

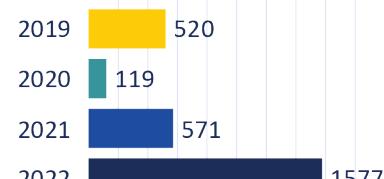
New Adopt a Street Volunteer Sign-ups

AAS signed up **475 new volunteers** in 2022, **over a 50% increase** from sign-ups in 2021. This rise in participation gives partial credit to a more accessible online sign-up process and a focus on direct program outreach at events.



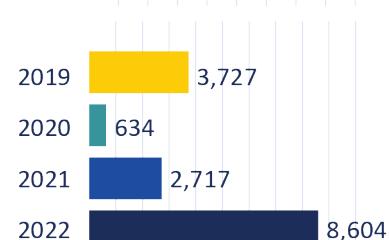
Cleanups Reported

In 2022, Adopt a Street volunteers reported **1,577 cleanups**. This is over **triple the number** of cleanups reported before the pandemic. This rise in reporting is due to volunteer participation in the program.



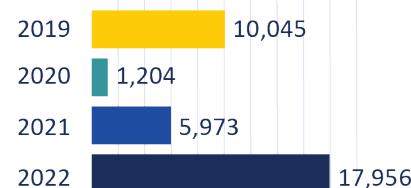
Bags Collected

In 2022, volunteers reported collecting **8,604 bags** (33-gal) of litter. This is a **230% increase** from the number of bags that were collected in 2019. We attribute this increase to greater participation levels in the program and more consistent volunteer reporting.



Hours Volunteered

In 2022, we welcomed back Spring Clean and held the first One Seattle Day of Service. These large-scale community cleanup events contributed to a **78% increase** in volunteer hours from pre-pandemic years.



Graffiti Abatement & Enforcement

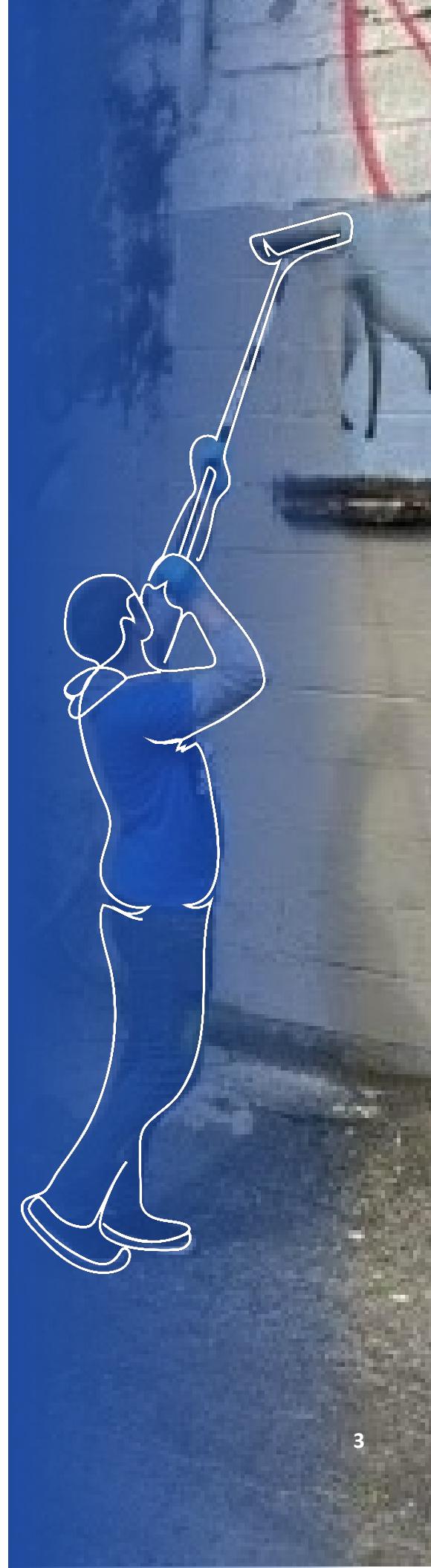
Public Property Graffiti Abatement

SPU's Clean City graffiti intake is responsible for responding to city-wide graffiti reports on public property. The program dispatches requests and complaints to the appropriate city departments and agencies within 48 hours after receiving a service request. Each department aims to clean up reported graffiti within 10 business days. Additionally, SPU Graffiti Rangers are in communities daily, responding to graffiti abatement requests and performing proactive sweeps diligently and equitable, to remove graffiti in the public right of way and city assets. Graffiti Rangers plan routes in each city sector to ensure each sector of the city is visited once per week.

Private Property Graffiti Enforcement

SPU's Clean City enforces the [Graffiti Nuisance Ordinance](#) on private property. This ordinance requires property owners to remove graffiti promptly. Failure to comply may result in the property being considered a nuisance and initiates the enforcement process. The Graffiti Nuisance Ordinance was adopted in 1994 to encourage the rapid cleanup of graffiti and prevent its spread throughout the community.

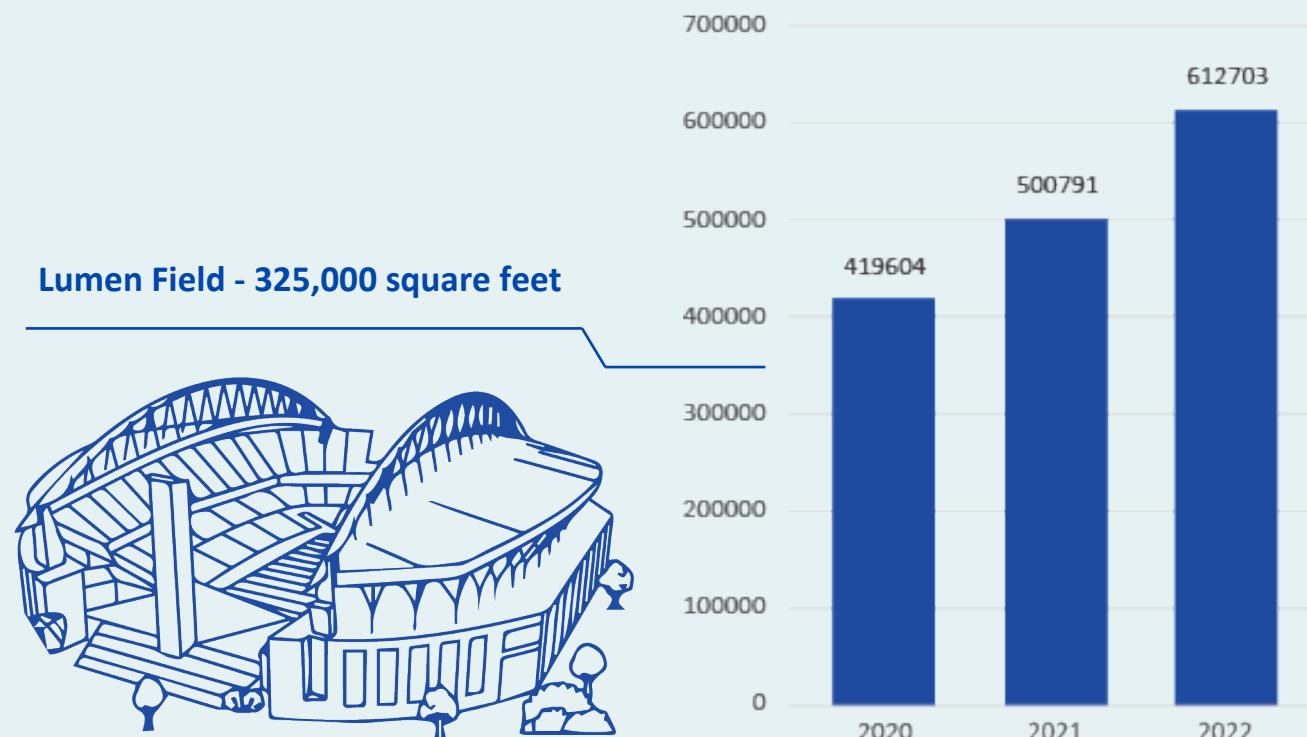
Moreover, SPU provides paint and other resources to property owners to assist in graffiti paint-out efforts, ensuring the prompt removal of graffiti and maintaining the city's cleanliness. Property owners can enter the waiver program, permitting SPU Graffiti Rangers or volunteers to paint out graffiti on private property.



2022 Highlights & Results

- + In 2022, SPU's Graffiti Rangers removed graffiti covering **612,703 square feet** of public property, representing a **22% increase in square footage** compared to the previous year. The program received **22,015 reports** of graffiti, which is a **12% increase** from 2021. SPU continues to work diligently to respond to graffiti reports and abate graffiti on public property to keep Seattle clean and beautiful.
- + SPU's waiver program saw a significant increase in 2022, with **244 properties** added to the program, marking a **154% increase** from the previous year. In alignment with the city's One Seattle Graffiti Plan, this increase allowed the Graffiti Rangers to aid private property graffiti abatement resulting in painting out graffiti on **205 private properties**. Additionally, SPU provided paint and supplies to community members upon request.

Graffiti Removed from Public Property by SPU from 2020 – 2022 (in Square Feet)



Illegal Dumping & Edu-Enforcement

Illegal dumping poses severe health and safety risks and places a heavy financial burden on property owners and taxpayers for cleanup costs. In 2022 alone, the City of Seattle had to allocate over \$1.7 million to address illegal dumping and remove over 8.5 million pounds of waste. To address this issue, SPU's Illegal Dumping Program established daily routes to cleanup illegal dumping hot spots throughout the city. And responds to complaints through the [Find it, Fix it mobile app](#), online at [seattle.gov/customer-service-bureau](#), and by phone at [\(206\) 684-7587](#).

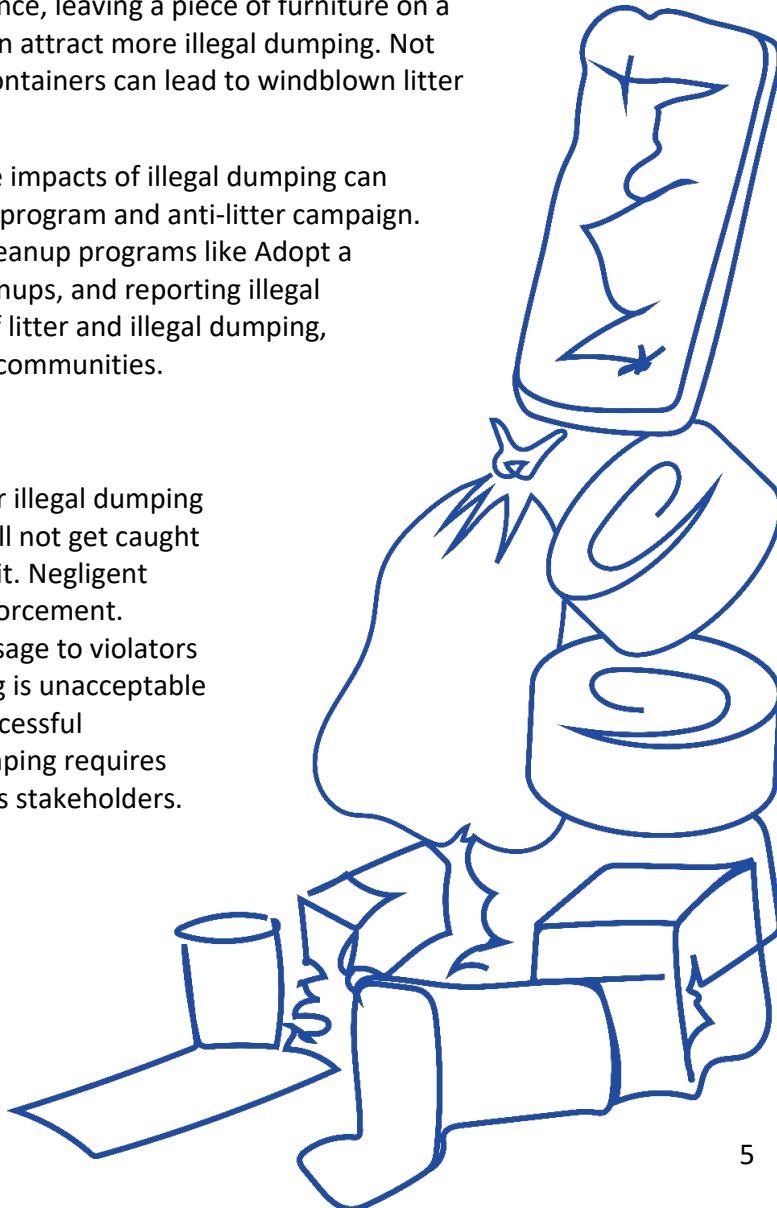
Outreach, Education, and Community Involvement

Educating businesses and citizens about litter and illegal dumping enforcement is crucial to enforcement efforts. Many Seattle residents are unaware of litter's negative impact on their community, and they may not know the penalties for violating illegal dumping laws. For instance, leaving a piece of furniture on a planting strip with a "Free" sign on it can attract more illegal dumping. Not properly covering trash and recycling containers can lead to windblown litter in the neighborhood.

Increasing community awareness of the impacts of illegal dumping can be achieved through a robust outreach program and anti-litter campaign. Encouraging citizens to participate in cleanup programs like Adopt a Street, coordinating neighborhood cleanups, and reporting illegal dumping can help reduce the burden of litter and illegal dumping, promoting safe, clean, and sustainable communities.

Enforcement

Effective enforcement is crucial to deter illegal dumping behavior. Violators may believe they will not get caught or face minimal consequences without it. Negligent littering can be reduced with active enforcement. Consistent enforcement sends the message to violators and the community that illegal dumping is unacceptable and carries legal repercussions. The successful enforcement of laws against illegal dumping requires the collaboration and support of various stakeholders. Alongside enforcement and education, cleaning up litter is also vital since litter can attract more litter.



2022 highlight

- Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) launched a new pilot program to reduce illegal dumping in Seattle. SPU installed a motion activated camera in an industrial section of West Seattle, the pilot aims to tackle a costly and unsafe problem in neighborhoods across Seattle. SPU anticipates installing a camera on City-owned land, with a high frequency of illegal dumping.

For more information about SPU's Illegal Dumping Camera Pilot, visit:
www.seattle.gov/utilities/IllegalDumpingCameras

Cost of Removing Illegal Dumping from the Public Right of Way



2022 Results



Received and processed
31,016
illegal dumping complaints.

Removed and disposed of **1,094,360** pounds



or
547.18 tons

of illegally dumped material. (That's about **90** adult Orca whales!)

99% of verified illegal dumping complaints were responded to, and debris removed, within **10** days or less.



Litter Abatement

The **Litter Abatement Program (LAP)** was launched as a pilot in July 2016, providing proactive routes to address litter and illegal dumping concerns in neighborhoods throughout Seattle. These proactive litter abatement routes are designed to remove litter, sharps, illegal dumping, and other debris from the public right of way, ensuring our neighborhoods remain clean and safe.

Services provided by LAP include:

- Litter clean-up on streets and sidewalks.
- Removing accumulations of litter overflowing from litter cans, as well as sharps collection.
- Pick-up of bulky items and abandoned appliances from neighborhood cores and sidewalk areas.
- Outreach and education to retail and food service businesses, and multifamily dwellings on proper food waste, recycling, composting, and garbage disposal.

2022 Results:

In 2022, LAP operated 38 routes, removing **1,726,475 pounds** of debris from **1,549 blocks** across the city's right of ways. Since 2017, LAP has collected **5,781,000 pounds** of debris from Seattle's public areas.

Before & After



Detroit Ave SW



South Park



SODO



Rainer Beach

Public Place Litter & Recycling Cans

The **Public Place Litter & Recycling (PPLR)** Can program is vital to keep Seattle streets clean and litter-free. By placing litter and recycling receptacles within or near neighborhood business districts, the program aims to reduce litter on the streets. The Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) has partnered with Waste Management and Recology to service over 1150 public litter and recycling cans, with service levels ranging from 4 to 14 times a week. Almost all public litter cans are paired with a recycling can in each location, helping to promote recycling and reduce waste.

The program's core elements include inventory management, can maintenance to ensure they are in working order, regularly cleaning, and timely pick-up, and contract management to ensure appropriate service levels. The program also highly values customer service and is responsive to customer requests, complaints, and inquiries.

2022 Metric Results

# Cans in Service:	1101
% Cans Cleaned:	12%
# New Can Placements:	11
# Cans Removed:	6
# Cans Missed:	392
# of Total Collections	74,844
# Performance Fees:	42
Can maintenance and Service requests Submitted: (also known as Field Activities)	1653
Average Response Time:	5.4 days

2022 Highlights

- + New litter can design has been adopted:** The most recent litter can design piloted in late 2021, featuring a 35-gal rolled poly cart that can be lifted by truck arm and a locked side door that protects against vandalism has proven successful in its performance in its first full year of service. There are fewer damaged cans and instances of overflows and scatter around the can. In 2022, we upgraded 180 additional, bringing the total of new style cans to 300. PPLR staff also consulted about new can design with Seattle Parks & Recreation staff, who have also recently adopted the new can style in their downtown parks.
- + Can Stewards:** In 2022, we engaged more business district partners and community members to help us look after the cans. Additionally, targeted fieldwork and Find It, Fix It reports helped to identify when cans were not being picked up when scheduled. These reports and added eyes have helped us to better track maintenance issues, missed collections, and make decisions about can placement and service increase/decreases.



A picture of our newest cans placed near Alki Beach. The new style greatly reduces the amount of litter on the street due to birds.



Celebrating with Youth in Focus, and Brenda P., the youth responsible for the image on our new public garbage cans.



Thursday 9:09 AM

These cans were severely tagged days before this image was taken. Through a partnership with the Broadway BIA, their crews were able to bring the can back to its original condition with a quick use of Sensitive Surface graffiti remover.



An example of common issues this type of can experiences; we are in the process of replacing this can style with the newest cans.



Capturing the rare moment when both contractors are at the same location! Shout out to Corey, from Recology and Anthony, from WM.



The biggest challenges with this can style are the liners and lids often go missing, rain increases weight of can, and illegal dumping is common. We are also working to replace this style with the newest cans.

Sharps Collection

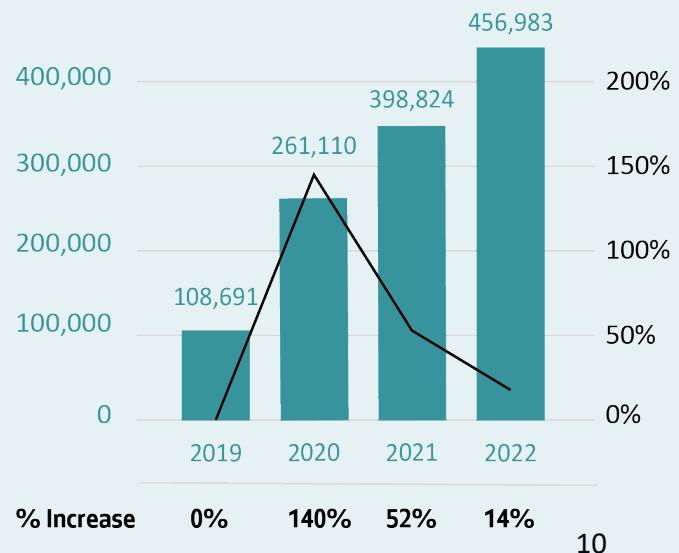
The Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) Sharps Collection Program is essential in keeping the city clean and safe by providing a safe disposal method for "sharps" such as needles, syringes, and lancets. The program offers the removal of sharps from public property within 24 hours and ensures that sharps disposal boxes throughout the city are operable 24-hours, 7-days a week. Residents can dispose of sharps safely and efficiently, reducing the risk of injury or illness for the public and sanitation workers. Residents and community groups can also request free training on how to dispose of sharps safely. The Sharps Collection Program actively participates in neighborhood events to educate the public and offer free sharp collection kits, plus training and tips.

2022 Highlight:

- + A total of 23 Collection Needle Boxes across the city.
- + SPU's Clean City team conducted a Sharps Survey to gather community feedback on the Sharps Collection Program. The results showed:
 - Awareness of needle collection boxes is at an all-time high since the survey began in 2018.
 - Responders have expressed that they feel safer knowing that there is a needle box in their neighborhood, and this feeling of safety has increased every year.
 - 83.72% of responders support the City of Seattle in its efforts to help with sharps disposal and cleanup, and this percentage has increased every year.

2022 Results:

- + **456,983 sharps** were collected from sharp collection boxes
 - **14% increase** from the previous year
- + **2,569 Sharps Service Requests** received
- + **15,111 sharps** collected from service requests
- + **98% of service requests** were responded to within 24 hours



Unsheltered Services

Encampment Trash Program

The **Encampment Trash Removal Program (ETP)**, also referred to as the Purple Bag program, provides proactive weekly garbage service to nearly 30 selected unsanctioned homeless encampments (UHEs). The goal is to improve encampment conditions and minimize public health and safety hazards by reducing community trash.

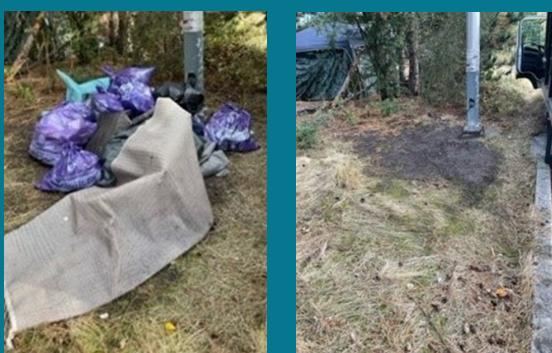
SPU works closely with city agencies such as SDOT and Parks, community stakeholders, and advocates to address encampment trash. SPU provides purple garbage bags issued to encampment residents by contracted outreach partners.

The program activities include collecting and disposing of authorized garbage, bulky items, and hazardous materials, as well as distributing authorized purple garbage bags to encampment residents. On-call trash collection is available at least 20 feet away from UHEs to avoid collecting personal property. Site assessments, data collection, and outcome reporting are also conducted.

2022 Results:

SPU serviced an average of **30** unsanctioned homeless encampments and collected over **782,000 pounds** of trash and debris. The utility also engaged with over **2,900** encampment residents, distributing over **11,000** Purple Bags.

Before & After



Geo Cleans

To address growing community concerns associated with public health and safety risks involving clusters of RVs, SPU conducts Geo Cleans to provide a swift and consistent response to mitigate ongoing trash and debris from RVs located throughout City neighborhoods. The Geo Clean sites identified for routes are addressed weekly.

The main objectives include improved access to the right-of-way and minimizing public health and safety hazards associated with RV camping.

2022 Results:

In 2022, SPU conducted **155** Geo Cleans collecting over **519,000 total pounds** of trash and debris from RV sites along the right-of-way. As a result of staffing increases during the last quarter of 2022, SPU increased the number of monthly Geo Cleans by **328%**.

Before & After



RV Remediation

The RV Remediation Program addresses the public health and safety impacts of trash and debris produced by recreational vehicles (RVs) and other vehicles occupying the public Right-of-Way. In 2022, these efforts were implemented by Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) and performed in collaboration with the Unified Care Team (UCT), an intradepartmental team formed under Mayor Harrell's administration.

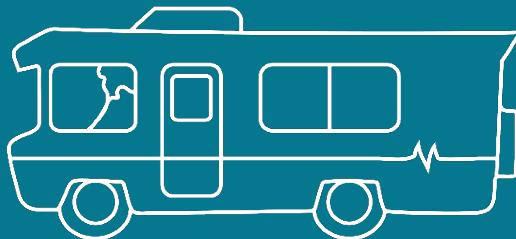
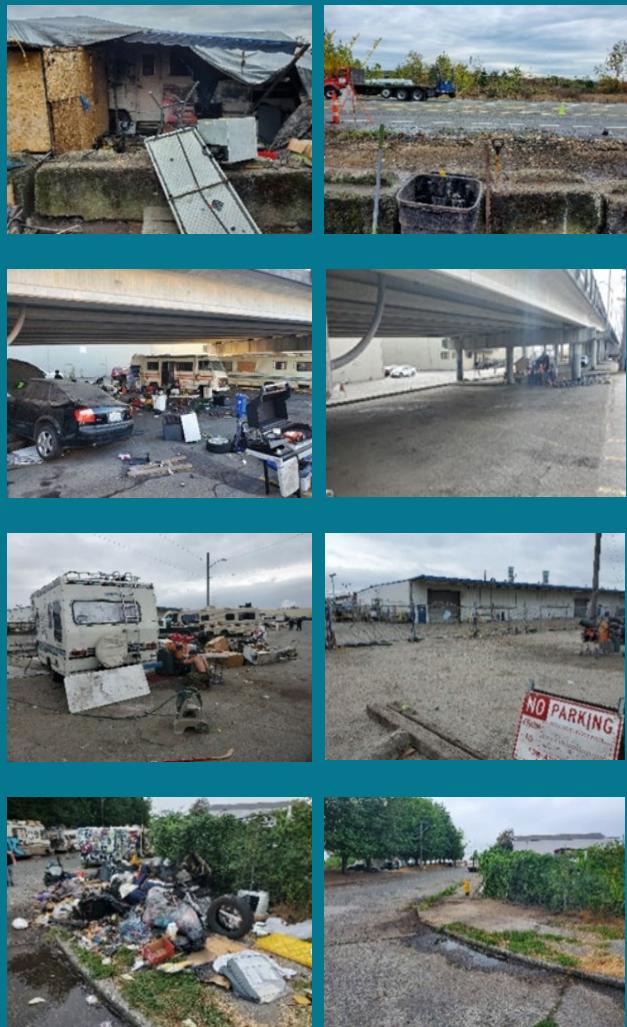
UCT is composed of Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR), Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), Seattle Human Services Department (HSD), Seattle Police and Fire departments, and Seattle Finance and Administrative Services (FAS).

Some of the main objectives are to improve public access to the right-of-way, minimize public health and safety hazards associated with RV camping and increase opportunities for those experiencing homelessness to find stability.

2022 results:

SPU conducted **78** RV Remediations collecting over **883,000** total pounds of trash and debris from RV sites along the right of way.

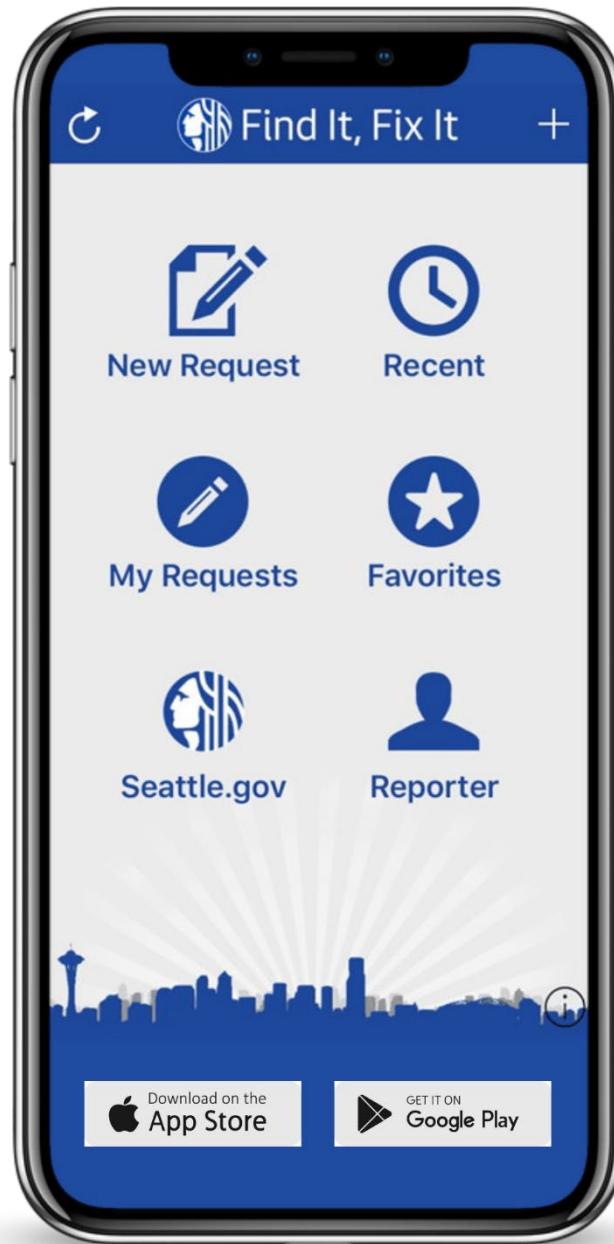
Before & After



Help us keep Seattle clean and safe!

You can report needles, illegal dumping, graffiti, and much more through Seattle's **Find It, Fix It (FIFI)** app. With Find It, Fix It, reporting an issue is as easy as snapping a photo with your smartphone, adding detailed information, and hitting submit. The map's "drag and drop" feature or the phone's own technology can be used to pinpoint the location. You can also report online at seattle.gov/customer-service-bureau and by phone at **(206) 684-7587**.

Download Find It, Fix It (FIFI)
on [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#)



Contact Us!

Call SPU's Clean City at **(206) 684-7587**

For language interpretation, call **(206) 684-3000**

For historic landmark graffiti removal, call **(206) 684-0228**

