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**Keep Houston Beautiful Day
Kicks Off Great American Cleanup**
TxDOT's "Don't Mess with Texas" Trash-Off Joins Cleanup

Keep Houston Beautiful volunteers got down and dirty April 6 as they planted, mulched, picked up litter and generally made Houston a prettier place to live.

Keep Houston Beautiful Day is part of the Great American Cleanup, which continues through May 30, and this year was joined by the Texas Department of Transportation and its "Don't Mess with Texas" Trash-Off.

Dozens of volunteers participated in projects to clean up and beautify their communities across the city. Trees were planted, ditches cleaned, esplanades beautified and litter picked up. Projects included Congressman Gene Green's North Channel Cleanup, City Council District D Day of Caring with the OST/South Union GO Neighborhood Community Cleanup, and Keep Council District K Beautiful activities.

"One of the things that makes Houston such a special city is that Houstonians are willing to roll up their sleeves and get their hands dirty to make this a better place to live, work and raise a family," said Mayor Annise Parker at a news conference at Beulah Maxie Park. Mayor Parker joined volunteers planting some 200 trees along Almeda Plaza Drive.

Keep Houston Beautiful Chairman Jim Tates also praised the many volunteers working Saturday. "Volunteers come from all walks of life: students, business leaders, civic and non-profit organizations, individuals, families and community groups," said Tates.

"Keep Houston Beautiful Day brings people together to improve their neighborhoods, and we know that when people join together in a common cause they can do great things," said Robin Blut, Keep Houston Beautiful Executive Director. "

Keep Houston Beautiful thanks the volunteers working Saturday to help plant trees and paint the bridges along Almeda Plaza Drive: Almeda Plaza Drive Civic Club members, ARI Fleet Management's TRC Call Center partners, Scotts Miracle-Gro Company, Dupont Company, University of Houston students, Good Will Industries, Houston Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees) and Iota Phi Theta fraternity members.

Keep Houston Beautiful Day 2013 partners included District K Council Member Larry Green and his Chief of Staff Donald Perkins, who had seven cleanup and beautification projects in District K; the City of Houston's Public Works Department's Engineering, Street and Drainage Division, which improved the flow of the water in the centerline ditch on Almeda Plaza Drive by re-grading and de-silting the buildup of sand and other materials in the ditch; the Department of Neighborhoods, Inspections and Public

Services; the Parks and Recreation Department; and the Department of Solid Waste Management.

Keep Houston Beautiful is the city's leading organization in beautification, litter reduction and recycling education. For 30 years, Keep Houston Beautiful has been reaching out to all segments of our community to educate and empower individuals to take greater responsibility for beautifying and enhancing Houston's environment. Each year's successes have created a cleaner and healthier city for all Houstonians.

The 2012 Keep Houston Beautiful Day event brought out 26,000 volunteers who cleaned up 614 neighborhoods, removed one million pounds of trash, cleared 52 illegal dumps and disposed 2,000 old tires. We cleaned trash out of more than 500 vacant lots and over 300 ditches.