

You may be a veteran of the Volunteer Home Repair Program. You may be the coordinator for a Corporation, Church, Organization, or School who, generally, pulls in at least one to two hundred people to join their group for both the spring and fall programs. If so, you should be writing this section of the Handbook! You will understand our need to answer questions for those joining us for the first time, or for those having trouble recruiting enough volunteers to finish an assignment without over-burdening those who show up.

RT Houston recruits for new crews from Houston area corporations, congregations, organizations, and schools on an on-going basis. We send invitation/information letters and Crew Commitment Forms asking for the number of volunteers, their skill level, door and lock installation ability, etc. Please return the Crew Commitment Form to RT Houston by the deadline. This representation by Crew Leaders is an essential piece of our system. For clarification on our needs and crew skill level, let's review the skill levels:

Level One: PARTIAL CREW ONLY; Mostly unskilled: little home repair experience (can replace some siding, fascia, soffet, scrape, caulk, paint, yard cleanup). Requires crew size of 10 or less for 1 full day of work.

Level Two: Semi skilled: Two or more skilled members. Crews can make repairs (siding replacement, fascia, soffet, screen work, window glass replacement, porch decking, stairs with handrails, prehung doors/locks).

Level Three: Skilled: Many members are skilled in building trades; others have some experience. Crew can do significant repair jobs (window unit replacement, wheelchair ramp).

Level Four: Highly skilled: Crew can do major repair projects requiring diverse skills (could restore house sides, and other highly skilled work).

The Crew Commitment Form should be sent in when the crew size is known or the Leader has a good indication as such.

If you feel your organization will want to participate, send out a notice to employees, members, etc. that gives the dates and details about your group's involvement with RT Houston's VHRP. Ask who will participate, what their skills are, and if they will work one Saturday or both Saturdays. Make sure they have a way to respond to your request – your phone, fax, e-mail, etc. Does your group have a lobby or central bulletin board? If so, put up a display about the VHRP. This is hard to do for first-timers; but, veterans have great "before and after" pictures, and networks that bring people back time and time again.

If your company policy permits, hold a meeting and invite everyone who is interested in volunteering. Explain the program and share your enthusiasm – it works! Now, send in the Crew Commitment Form when you have more reliable information. Finally, if you are shooting for a crew of 30, sign up 30 to 35. That way you have good prospects that 30 show up, and you will easily get the job done. If more show up, break out the rakes and do

clean-up detail. Remember, it will work in your favor if you finish early. Your volunteers will be just as proud of their accomplishments and will still have a part of the day left for their family or other things they would like to do.

You can also request that RT Houston staff or Housing Committee members come to your place of business or organization with a slide presentation, pictures, or video examples.