

Shower the People

Volunteer Handbook and Operations Manual



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WHO WE ARE



Our mission & goal

Shower the People (STP) gives homeless people in our community access to a hot shower.

Our goal is to be a welcoming, safe, clean, and reliable place to shower.

Our organization

STP was incorporated as a nonprofit 501(c)3 charitable organization in May, 2017. Our Employer Identification Number (EIN) is #82-1552557.

“Radical Hospitality”

A hot shower helps our guests maintain hygiene, feel presentable, and engage with the community. This improves our guests’ outlook and confidence.

As a volunteer, you defend the dignity of people who are often shunned. You create a welcoming space that makes a difference with each shower.

We see our guests not as cases to be managed but as people to be helped.

“You could call what we do Human Services. We think, however, that we’re in the *Hospitality* business. We call those we serve our guests: we built something beautiful for them to use, we know their names, and we learn their stories. And we work hard to ensure that they leave feeling better than when they arrived.”

—Lava Mae (a pioneering mobile showers project from San Francisco)

Our history

Shower the People began in 2014 when a group from the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in San Luis Obispo attended a conference in Santa Barbara where “Showers of Blessing” demonstrated their mobile showers. We agreed that a mobile shower program was needed for people experiencing homelessness in SLO County too.

In November 2016 Rev. Rod Richards and Gwen Watkins set up a “show and tell” event and invited “Showers of Blessing” to demonstrate their mobile shower trailer in SLO. After that event a small group filed the paperwork needed for STP to become a 501c3 non-profit charitable organization.

In April 2017, the First Presbyterian Church of SLO helped secure a \$44,000 “Thanks Grant” from Presbyterian Women USA. South County People’s Kitchen and 5 Cities Homeless Coalition helped recruit our first 20+ volunteers.

In June 2018 we ordered our three-unit mobile shower trailer. We began offering showers in late October 2018.

In April 2019, a grant from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints allowed us to buy a dedicated van to pull the trailer.

At the beginning of the Covid-19 epidemic in 2020, we paused for three months to implement new safety protocols. We have operated continuously since reopening.

Gwen Watkins retired as General Manager at the end of 2024, having led STP from its founding through its first several years of operation.

In 2026, we put into operation a second trailer and van, allowing us greater dependability and the ability to further expand services.

How we got here

We've come a long way



How we're sustained and supported

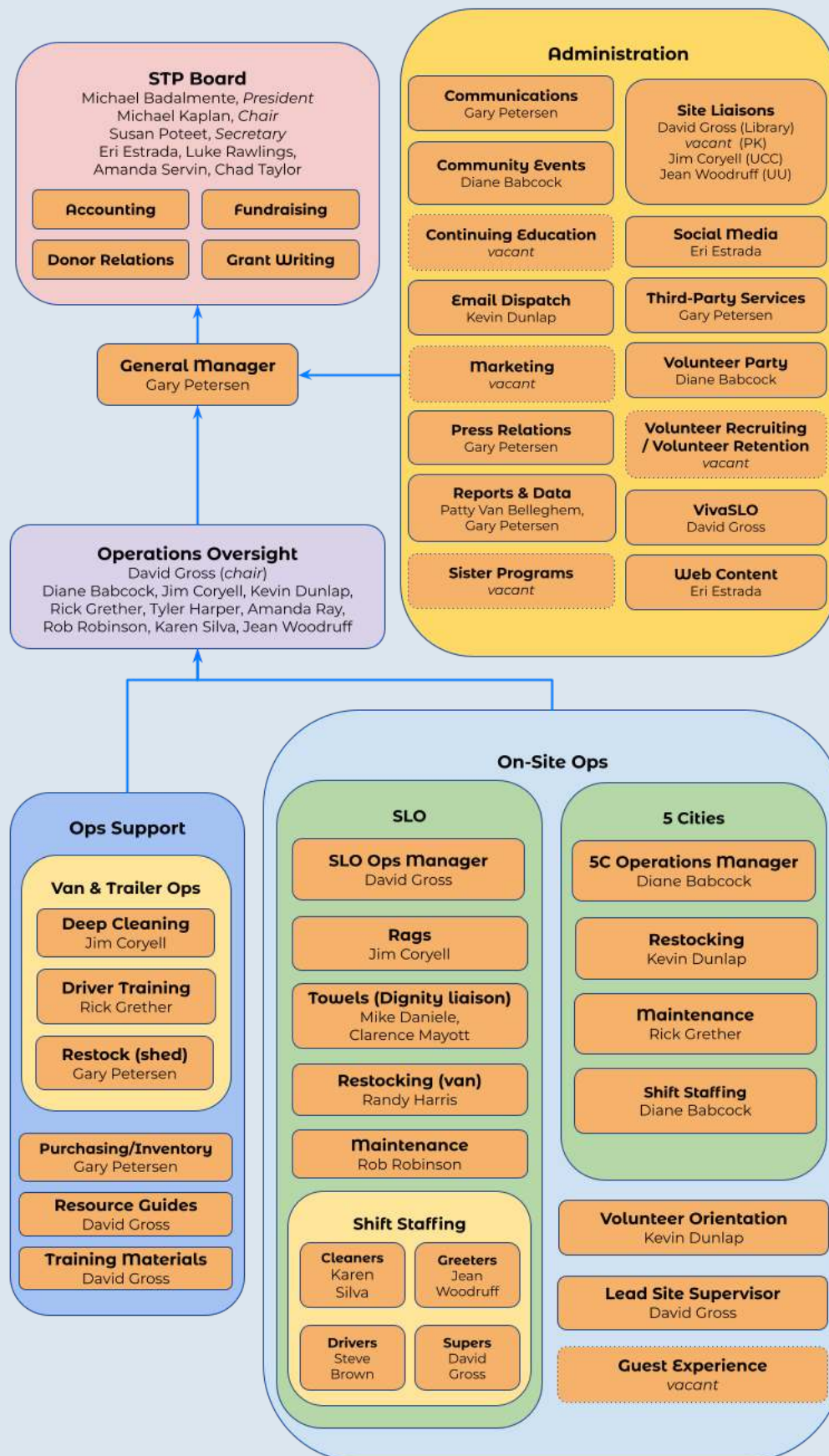
STP is financially supported by grants and donations from local churches, cities, organizations, and individual donors in our community. STP is operated by volunteers from our community.

Dignity Health's Arroyo Grande Community Hospital provides and launders our towels and Paul's Dry Cleaners in SLO launders our cleaning rags, both free of charge. Bombas donates most of the socks that we give to guests.

Our board of directors

STP's unpaid Board of Directors meets monthly. The Board's focus is on strategy, financial oversight, fundraising, and the accountability of the organization.

Our operations team



See [Our volunteer positions. in brief](#) for more information about these jobs.

Contact information

Team Member	Email	Phone
Diane Babcock	dianembabcock@gmail.com	805.674.3195
Steve Brown	Stevebrown47@live.com	805.234.8207
Jim Coryell <i>SLO UCC site liaison</i>	Jdc735@gmail.com	805.440.9585
Kevin Dunlap	krdunlap196@gmail.com	805.459.5236
Rick Grether	rickgrether@charter.net	805.305.0063
David Gross <i>SLO library site liaison</i>	moorlock@gmail.com	415.341.4048
Gary Petersen	gdrjspetersen@gmail.com	805.710.7845
Rob Robinson	Rob900sl@mac.com	805.235.8928
Karen Silva	kareemiah@gmail.com	805.975.7267
Jean Woodruff <i>SLO UU site liaison</i>	fandog88@gmail.com	831.998.1443

VOLUNTEERING WITH SHOWER THE PEOPLE



We're all volunteers

STP operates entirely with volunteers—we have no paid staff.

Basic requirements

Every volunteer must

- be at least 18 years old.¹
- complete a Volunteer Application form, with its liability and photo releases.

Our volunteer positions, in brief

If you're interested in working a volunteer position for which you are not yet trained, just ask (for example ask a site supervisor or the volunteer orientation coordinator). STP will arrange training for you.

There are four on-site volunteer positions and several more logistics and administration positions:

¹ A volunteer who is 17 years old may volunteer on-site if their parent or guardian is also volunteering on-site during the same shift.

Greeter

Greet and assist guests, distribute clean clothes and toiletries, maintain records of showers and supplies, and manage the shower queue. See [How To Be An Excellent Greeter](#) For details.

Shower Cleaners

Sanitize shower units between guests and prepare them for next use. We aim to have three cleaners per shift, one for each shower unit. See [How To Be An Excellent Shower Cleaner](#) for details.

Driver

Transport the shower trailer to and from service locations, manage utility connections (electrical, water, sewer), and ensure proper trailer storage. See [How To Be An Excellent Driver \(Old Trailer & Van\)](#) and [How To Be An Excellent Driver \(New Trailer & Van\)](#) for details.

Site Supervisor

Oversee operations, train volunteers, resolve problems, answer questions from guests and community members, and ensure smooth operations. See [How To Be An Excellent Site Supervisor](#) for details.

Other Operations, Logistics, and Administration Jobs

It takes a lot of behind-the-scenes work to keep the showers flowing. These are some of our logistics and administration jobs. There isn't a perfect one-to-one match between people and jobs; sometimes some people do more than one job, and sometimes a job gets split between multiple people:

- **Board of Directors**—Govern the 501(c)3 that is the corporate legal structure of STP. Provide policy guidance to the operations team. Oversee administrative positions. Do fundraising, accounting, grant writing, and donor relations tasks.
- **Communications**—Handle communications between STP and our volunteer base, the public, our donors, our host sites, other community social services, and federal, state, and local governments.
- **Community Events**—Get STP before the public, for example in parades, homeless services fairs, volunteering fairs, and other such events.
- **Continuing Education**—Organize additional training and skills-sharing sessions that go beyond our job-specific trainings. This includes, for example, conflict de-escalation training.
- **Deep Cleaning Organizer**—Organize a quarterly extra-thorough cleaning of the vans & trailers.
- **Driver Training**—Set policy about driver training and driver qualifications, and train new drivers.
- **Email Dispatch**—Field incoming email to STP and route it to the appropriate recipients.
- **Fundraising**—Keep existing donors informed and inspired, and reach out to new potential donors.

- **General Manager**—Be responsible for all of STP's operations and assure that the policies agreed to by the Board of Directors are carried out in-budget and on time.
- **Grant Writing**—Apply for grants from our frequent grantors, discover new grant opportunities, follow-up as required with grantors.
- **Guest Experience Advocate**—Interview STP guests and potential guests to help identify their needs and to learn about their experiences with us, so we can improve our processes to be an ever more welcoming, safe, clean, and reliable place to shower.
- **Hospital Towels Coordination**—Pick up our blue bags of used towels and washcloths and take them to be laundered by the hospital, also picking up freshly laundered towels and washcloths from the hospital and restocking our inventory with them.
- **Lead Site Supervisor**—Train and mentor site supervisors, establish on-site processes and procedures, and field troubleshooting questions from on-site teams.
- **Maintenance**—Keep track of periodic and sporadic maintenance needs of the van, trailer, and other mechanical necessities, and perform this maintenance or have it performed so as to make sure we can keep STP on the road.
- **Marketing**—Develop and deploy ways to make sure everyone who can benefit from STP is aware of it, including potential guests and other service providers.
- **Operations Manager and Operations Oversight Committee**—Confer about onsite operations issues and consider ideas for improvement.
- **Press Relations**—Handle communications between STP and the press, maintain our press kit, compose press releases.
- **Purchasing/Inventory**—Bargain shop for and purchase or otherwise obtain supplies as needed. Audit our inventory.
- **Rag Washing**—Take our used pink cleaning rags to Paul's Dry Cleaners and Laundry in SLO to be cleaned, and pick up the clean ones from there to restock the bins in the van.
- **Reports & Data**—Enter data from our handwritten site logs into spreadsheets so that we can use this data to show how many guests, how many veterans, etc. use our services, and how quickly we are going through supplies.
- **Resource Card Maintenance**—Make sure the information on our guest resource cards is correct, complete, and up-to-date; have new ones printed up and stocked in the greeter supplies bin when we get low.
- **Shift Staffing**—Make sure there are enough volunteers to cover each of our shifts. Volunteers sign up for shifts on their own via ivolunteer, but when a shift is short-staffed, ask additional volunteers if they can fill in.

- **Sister Programs Liaison**—Keep the lines of communication open between STP and similar mobile hygiene programs operated by other groups elsewhere. Share best practices and innovations and help us to learn from the successes (and mistakes) of other programs.
- **Site Liaison**—Maintain good working relationships with the owners of the sites where STP operates, and work through the process of establishing a new site when this is advantageous.
- **Social Media**—Maintain our Facebook and Instagram accounts and keep them up-to-date with inspiring stories of STP.
- **Supplies Stocking**—Make sure there are sufficient quantities of supplies (cleaning supplies, toiletries and soap, clothing, propane, etc.) on the vans/trailers and in our storage areas so that every shift has the supplies it needs.
- **Third-Party Services Liaison**—Work with third-party service providers who want to coordinate their work with STP operations. Help them understand how to operate respectfully with regard to our operation, our guests, and our site hosts. Find new third-party service providers who can help meet our guests' needs without putting undue strain on STP activities.
- **Training Materials**—Maintain the contents of this guide and produce other guides and occasional policy / process documentation and announcements for volunteers. Keep the *Shower Thoughts* AI troubleshooting chatbot current.
- **VivaSLO Maintenance**—Keep the VivaSLO web application (which lists and describes resources of use to homeless people in SLO County) up-to-date.
- **Volunteer Orientation**—Keep track of STP volunteers as they join us, and make sure they get signed up for the training they need for the jobs they would like to do.
- **Volunteer Party Planning**—Organize the parties held periodically for volunteers, to provide time for off-site informal socializing and for people from different teams to meet.
- **Volunteer Recruiting & Retention**—Find people in our community who want to commit to volunteer roles with STP. Find additional sources for volunteers such as churches, corporate give-back days, veterans associations, service organizations, etc. Use social media outlets to retain and attract volunteers. Get to know our volunteers to discover other skills and talents they might wish to contribute. Track volunteer satisfaction and enjoyment.
- **Web Content**—Make sure our showerthepeopleslo.org website is up-to-date and reflects well on our organization.

If you are interested in any behind-the-scenes jobs like these, please contact our general manager.

How to volunteer for shifts

For on-site positions, you volunteer for individual shifts through a web-based interface that you can access from your phone, tablet, or computer.

If you plan to volunteer for more than one role at a shift (for example: driver + shower cleaner), please repeat this process for each of the roles.

On a larger-screen device like a PC:

1. Visit <https://showerthepeople.ivolunteer.com/>.
2. Click the link that reads **Month Year SIGNUP FOR ALL SITES** for the month in which you want to sign up. This opens an ivolunteer page for that month.
3. On that page, shifts appear in tables organized by the day of the week and the site. Find the row that corresponds to the date/site for which you want to volunteer. Then click the **Volunteer** button in the column for the role you want to volunteer for: **GREETER, CLEANING SHOWERS, SITE SUPERVISOR**, or **DRIVER**. If there is no **Volunteer** button, either the shift is already staffed or it is in the past.
4. A pop-up appears, asking for your name and email address. Enter those, then click **Volunteer**. You will receive an email confirmation.

On a phone or small-screen device:

1. Visit <https://showerthepeople.ivolunteer.com/>.
2. Scroll down to the link that reads **Month Year SIGNUP FOR ALL SITES** for the month in which you want to sign up. Tap this link to open an ivolunteer page for that month.
3. On that page, shifts appear in tables organized by the day of the week and the site. Find the row that corresponds to the date/site for which you want to volunteer. Then tap the **Volunteer** button in the column for the role you want to volunteer for: **GREETER, CLEANING SHOWERS, SITE SUPERVISOR**, or **DRIVER**. If there is no **Volunteer** button, either the shift is already staffed or it is in the past.
4. A pop-up appears, asking for your name and email address. Enter those, then tap **Volunteer**. You will receive an email confirmation.

Tip: Add ivolunteer to your home screen.

You can add an ivolunteer icon to the home screen on your phone. To do this:

iPhone (Safari browser only):

1. Visit <https://showerthepeople.ivolunteer.com/>.
2. Tap the  (share) icon in the toolbar. Select **Add to Home Screen**. Tap **Add** in the **Add to Home Screen** dialog.

Android:

1. Visit <https://showerthepeople.ivolunteer.com/>.
2. Open the browser menu (tap  or , depending on the browser).
 - a. *Chrome:* Select **Add to Home screen** from the menu. Click **Install** in the **Install app** dialog.

- b. *Edge*: Select **Add to phone**. Click **Install** in the **Install app** dialog. Then click **Add to home screen** in the home screen launcher.
- c. *Firefox*: Select **Add to Home screen**. Click **Add** in the **Add to Home Screen** dialog that appears. Then click **Add to home screen** in the home screen launcher.
- d. *Brave*: Select **Add to Home screen**. Click **Install** in the **Install app** dialog. Then click **Add to home screen** in the home screen launcher.

Canceling a shift

If you volunteer for a shift and later you must cancel, do this in the same web interface. This notifies the Shift Staffing Supervisor so they know there is a staffing need to be filled:

On a larger-screen device like a PC:

1. Visit <https://showerthepeople.ivolunteer.com>.
2. At the bottom of that page, click **My Commitments**.
3. If requested, enter the email address you used when you signed up for the shift. This sends a link to that email address that you use for the rest of this process.
4. You see a list of your **Upcoming Commitments**. Click the one to cancel.
5. This opens a page with details about that shift. Click **Cancel** to cancel your commitment to cover that shift.

On a phone or small-screen device:

1. Visit <https://showerthepeople.ivolunteer.com>.
2. At the bottom of that page, tap **My Commitments**.
3. If requested, enter the email address you used when you signed up for the shift. This sends a link to that email address that you use for the rest of this process.
4. Tap **Upcoming Commitments**. You see a list of your **Upcoming Commitments**.
5. Tap the one you want to cancel. This opens a page with details about that shift. Tap **×Cancel** to cancel your commitment to cover that shift.

Our Google Groups list

STP has a “Google Group” email list for all volunteers. STP administrators sometimes send announcements of interest to this group, and volunteers can also use the group to discuss things among ourselves.

Signing up for this group is optional. The volunteer orientation manager should invite you to the group when you sign up to be a volunteer. If you did not receive an invitation, ask the volunteer orientation manager (see [Our operations team](#) for contact information).

After you join, you can send emails to shower-the-people@googlegroups.com and those emails are automatically sent to other group members and stored in the Group archives.

You can change how often you receive emails, or can withdraw from the group, by visiting <https://groups.google.com/g/shower-the-people/membership>.

There are also smaller Google Groups specifically for Drivers, for Greeters, and for Site Supervisors.



“Shower Thoughts” AI assistant

The “Shower Thoughts” AI Assistant has memorized this entire manual, as well as the manuals for our van, trailer, water heater, and other mechanical equipment. You can install it on your phone and ask it questions—by text or voice—about Shower the People operations and mechanical troubleshooting and it responds quickly with all the information you need. Ask your site supervisor or the new volunteer coordinator for a link to this AI Assistant.

Tips for all on-site volunteers

Prepare for the sun

On-site volunteers work outdoors. Begin your shift well-hydrated and bring a water bottle, perhaps loaded up with an over-the-counter electrolyte-replenishing supplement. Use sunscreen, a hat, and/or other protective clothes to protect yourself from sun exposure. A wet bandana around your neck can help keep you cool.

At many of our locations, we work atop asphalt, which absorbs sunlight and radiates heat, making already hot days even hotter. You can counteract this by using a bucket or hose to wet down the asphalt in the working area.

On a hot day, if you experience lightheadedness, dizziness, headache, or nausea, you need to take a break. Tell your supervisor you need to take a breather, and find a shady and cool place to sit or lie down for a while.

Prepare for the rain

We operate in all weather except very severe storms. Check the forecast, and bring appropriate gear.



If we cancel a shift because of severe weather, the site supervisor will reach out to you to let you know. If the shift is not cancelled, but you do not feel comfortable coming out because of the weather, call the site supervisor so they can make arrangements or adjust services.

Ask for help

If you need help or clarification, or if you get overwhelmed, ask your site supervisor (if you *are* the site supervisor, call the Lead Site Supervisor—see [Our operations team](#) for contact information).

Keep a lookout for burnout

Compassion fatigue and burnout sometimes happen in volunteer service. If you notice and take action, it can be temporary (or can be the impetus for positive change). Pay attention if you start having feelings like these:

- *It doesn't feel like we're making a difference.*
- *The problems are so big and our work is so limited.*
- *I'm getting overwhelmed by the demands of the job.*
- *The stories of trauma and misfortune I'm hearing are rubbing off on me.*
- *I don't feel like my work is appreciated.*

Here are some ways to prevent concerns like these from boiling over into burnout:

1. Take a break. Take a week or two off and give yourself some time to reset.
2. Raise your concerns to others on your team or to someone on the operations oversight committee (see [Our operations team](#) for contact information), or start a discussion on the stp-volunteers Google Group email list (see [Our Google Groups list](#)). Maybe we can change our processes to help matters.

Compassionate listening

Part of the hospitality we offer to our guests is to lend them an ear. If you can listen whole-heartedly and compassionately, you're giving something that can be as valuable as a shower and a change of clothes.

That said, this sort of listening can sometimes be exhausting emotional labor. If you don't feel up to it some days, that's okay. Feel free to ask for help from others on your team.

Don't bring your children

All STP on-site volunteers must be at least 18 years old.² Volunteering on-site often requires your full attention. STP does not provide childcare and cannot be responsible for the children of volunteers at its sites. Please do not bring your minor children with you when you volunteer on-site with STP.

Professional boundaries

Maintain professional boundaries. For example: Do not give guests your address or phone number. Do not give or loan them money (if they ask for money, remind them that panhandling is against our site rules). Do not offer to give guests rides. Do not buy things from them.

A good practice is to respond to such requests with a simple "no" or "no, sorry." Remain engaged but firm in your refusal. Sometimes you can recommend to guests some other resource in the community that might meet their needs.

At STP we do a very good job at meeting certain needs of our guests, but we don't try, and we shouldn't try, to meet all of them. Maintaining good professional boundaries enables us to offer help confidently and sustainably.

² A volunteer who is 17 years old may volunteer on-site if their parent or guardian is also volunteering on-site during the same shift.

Exercise caution around animals

Ask the pet owner if the pet is okay with being touched by strangers before petting it. Even if they say “yes,” be careful, as animals can be unpredictable around strangers.

If you bring dog treats or other food for animals, do not feed the animal yourself, but give the food to the owner of the animal so they can feed it.

If you are bitten by an animal and the bite breaks the skin, seek medical attention soon. Animal bites can transmit diseases. Alert the site supervisor. The site supervisor should file an incident report that identifies the animal and the animal's owner if known, and the circumstances surrounding the bite.

Ask dog owners to keep dogs on leash around the showers where volunteers are working and guests are gathering.

If an animal is dangerous or unruly, or makes guests or volunteers uncomfortable, ask the owner to keep the dog tied up or otherwise confined away from the shower area.

Service dogs are always permitted on-site and in the shower area, but can be required to remain on-leash.

While a dog-owner is in the shower, the dog must be tied up or otherwise confined away from the shower area (unless it is a service dog going into the shower with the owner).

If an animal is dangerous to people or other animals, or if it shows signs of being abused or neglected, call Animal Services at 805.781.4400. If an animal needs medical attention, bring our resource card about veterinary and pet care options (and/or that section of the *VivaSLO* app) to the owner's attention.

Some of what we don't do

The following are not proper parts of our roles as STP volunteers.

✗ Provide medical care

STP volunteers do not diagnose or treat medical issues. You can hand out band-aids, but that's about it. In a medical emergency, alert the site supervisor who will call 911 or designate someone to do so.

✗ Interrogate guests

Don't ask probing questions that could pressure guests to share more than they might be comfortable with. Instead, listen and ask open-ended questions that invite them to share only what they are comfortable or eager to share.

✗ Tell others where guests are or have been

We do not tell people—either other guests, members of the community, social workers, or law enforcement—whether or when particular guests have come to our sites. If asked, respond that for reasons of confidentiality we do not give out such information.

✗ Photograph or make recordings of guests

Do not photograph or record guests. Do not include identifiable images of guests in our outreach materials.

✗ Escalate drama

Sometimes personality conflicts or full-on soap operas go on at our sites, or continue at our sites from camps, streets, and shelters. Except when necessary to ensure the safety and tranquility of our sites, we do not participate in these dramas or take sides.

See [De-escalation process: “First Aid for Aggressive Behavior”](#) for tips on how to cool things down.

✗ Gossip about guests in earshot of other guests

Sometimes among ourselves we share stories or commiserate about particular guests. This is usually harmless if done in a good-spirited way, and can be helpful in disseminating useful information. But do not discuss particular guests, their eccentricities, and your opinions of them, in earshot of other guests.

✗ Discriminate between “deserving” and “undeserving” guests

Some guests try to be helpful, have a strong sense of dignity and honor, and are grateful for our help. Others seem bent on self-sabotage, have annoying habits, and complain about everything. To STP, both types of guests are equally-valued customers, and we try to give them the same high-quality service.

✗ Proselytize or politick

STP is non-partisan. Do not wear or display political stickers, buttons, hats, shirts, etc. or discuss partisan politics or elections at our sites.

Do not give the impression, for instance through what you say or what you wear, that STP is a religious organization. Refrain from either promoting or denigrating religious beliefs or practices while on duty.

How you can make suggestions for improvement

If you have recommendations for how we can improve our services and operations, improve the volunteer experience, expand our services, or partner with other groups, reach out to someone on the Operations Oversight Committee or to an operations manager (see [Our operations team](#) for contact information).

Community service hours

STP can validate court-mandated or program-required community service hours. Contact the general manager if you need official documentation of your hours (see [Our operations team](#) for contact information).

We will base our count of your hours on what you sign up for on iVolunteer, unless we make arrangements to account for them in some other way ahead of time. If you volunteer for us in some other way (for example, in some of our off-site, behind-the-scenes jobs) you may need to keep track of your hours separately.

Senior Volunteer Services benefits

You can volunteer for STP through the local Senior Volunteer Services program as an “AmeriCorps Seniors (RSVP)” volunteer (ages 55+) or as a “Central Coast Community Volunteer” (ages 50+) volunteer.

This makes you eligible for mileage reimbursement for travel to and from STP sites, and for supplemental liability, medical, and auto insurance that applies while you are volunteering.

To qualify for these benefits, register for one of these programs and submit a monthly report to the program that lists dates/hours worked and mileage traveled, signed by a site supervisor.

To register, fill out an enrollment form found at www.seniorvolunteers.org/forms.php and send it to engage@srvolunteer.org or to 270 Scott Street, Paso Robles, CA 93446. They should eventually reply with a welcome packet that explains the program and how to submit your hours/mileage.

HOW TO BE AN EXCELLENT GREETER

Overview

Greeters are the first point of contact for our guests. They exemplify our commitment to radical hospitality.

As a greeter, you sign up guests for showers and keep track of the order in which they will shower. You help guests learn what we offer, and about other helpful resources. You hand out toiletries, clothes, and information cards. You also help set up and shut down the greeter station.

Greeter announcements and discussion

Greeters share a dedicated email list for announcements and discussion. For example, you can use this list to find someone to cover for you if you need to cancel your shift.

Contact the new volunteer orientation coordinator for access to this list.

Responsibilities

In short, the responsibilities of greeters are:

- Welcome shower guests and learn their first names.
- If the guest wants a shower, ask them to sign the Release.
- Collect and record some demographic information.
- Distribute supplies as needed (e.g. toiletries, clothing), and record what you have given away.
- Set up and break down the greeter station.
- Maintain a neat & uncluttered station where supplies are accessible to you but guests do not just help themselves.
- Keep track of the showering order on the dry-erase board.
- Notify the site supervisor of any problems or if we are low on supplies.
- Provide resource information to guests.
- Restock clothing bins for the next shift.
- Sum up how many guests showered at the end of the shift.

The following sections explain your responsibilities in greater detail:

How to set up the table & supplies

Your first task is to set up the greeter station, with its table and the containers of supplies. There are many steps; ask for help if needed from other volunteers. Sometimes guests offer to help, also.

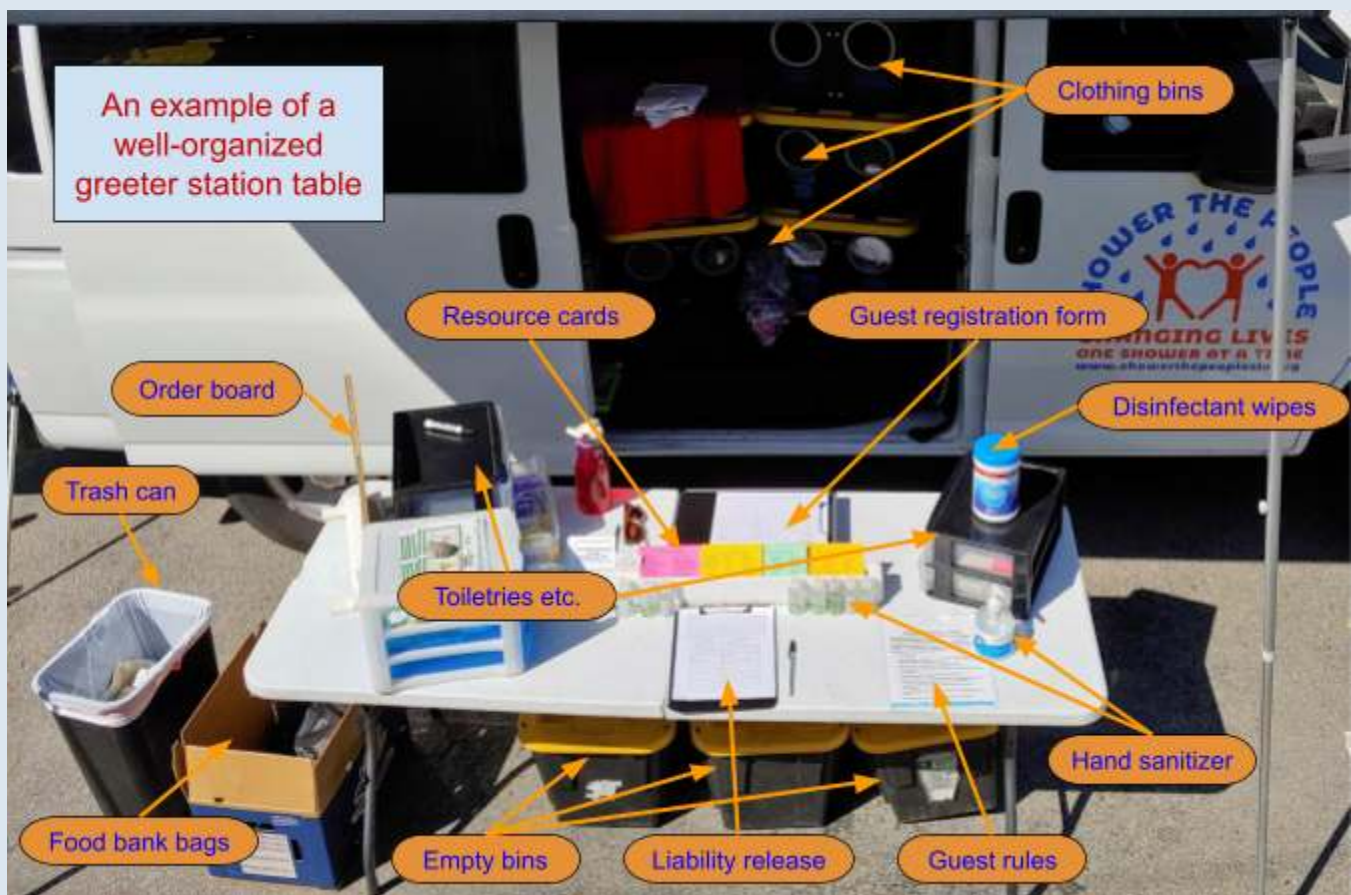
1. If you wish, deploy the awning for shade on hot days or shelter on rainy days. On very windy days, it can be more trouble than it's worth (see [Stormy Days](#) below for a possible alternative). The site supervisor can help (see [Deploying the awning](#) in the Site Supervisor chapter).



2. Pull the table out of the van and set it up in front of the van door.
3. Pull out the benches and sandwich-boards and put them aside (you can put these out in their proper spots later, or another volunteer will do this while you set up the greeter station).
4. Pull out the trash cans and traffic cones and put them aside where the shower cleaners can retrieve them. Save one trash can for the greeter station: line it with a white trash bag.
5. Pull out the admin bin and the toiletries bin. Remove the toiletries trays from the toiletries bin and put them on the table. Put the empty toiletries bin out of your way.
6. From the admin bin, remove the black clipboard case and put it on the table. It contains the paperwork you need (blank guest registration sheets, and a clipboard for guest Release forms). Take out a fresh guest registration sheet and put it in the clipboard on the outside of the case. Write the date and location on the sheet. Wait until later, however, to put a Release form in the clipboard.)
7. Retrieve the tiered tray from the van and put it on the table. Fill it with schedule cards, resource cards, health care pamphlets, and other informational handouts (you find these in the admin bin).
8. Pull out the dry-erase order board and stand. Set this up on the side of the table facing the shower cleaner area.
9. Arrange any other supplies you need on the table (pens, dry-erase pen, hand sanitizer dispenser).
10. Position the clothing bins from the van where you can retrieve clothing from them easily. Some greeters stack them behind the table, others prefer to keep them in the van.
11. If you want a folding chair, retrieve one from the shower cleaner station or ask a cleaner to bring you one. (Some greeters sit in the van doorway rather than using a chair. It's up to you.)
12. Attach relevant magnetic signs to the side of the van. Optionally, also use magnetic clips to attach temporary announcement sheets to the side of the van, or use the flexible dry-erase board for written announcements. Put out the warming center magnetic notices if you know the status of the warming centers (see infobox below).
13. Finally, put a blank Release form in its clipboard, write the location and date on it, and invite the first guest to sign in. (Do this step last so guests do not try to sign in while you are still busy setting up.)



Some sites have additional resources to distribute. For example, on Thursdays at the UU-SLO site, you often have bags of no-cook/no-refrigeration food from the Food Bank. If so, the site supervisor or a food bank volunteer will bring them to you.



Warming Center Notices and Other Announcements: Warming centers in San Luis Obispo and Five Cities provide overnight shelter during especially cold and/or wet overnight weather: when the forecast predicts that the temperature will drop below 38°F or there will be a 50% or greater chance of rain.

It can be difficult to determine whether or not the warming centers will be open on any particular night.

You can call the SLO warming center directly at 805.544.4004 (however they don't always answer, and don't always know whether or not they'll be open). The Five Cities warming center has a recorded message at 805.295.1501 but listen to it carefully to make sure it is up-to-date. You can also try 805.202.3615.

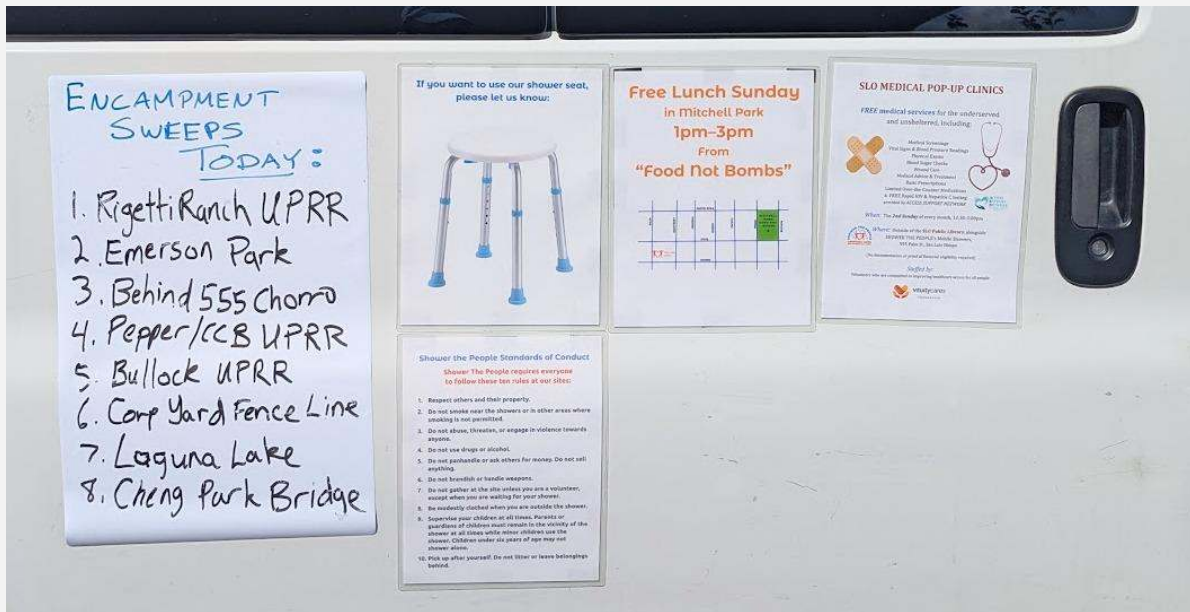
5 Cities Warming Center
open tonight
SLO Warming Center
open tonight

You can get on the 40 Prado warming center status announcement email list by contacting Jack Lahey, Homeless Services Director, at jlahey@capslo.org. You can get on the South County / 5 Cities warming center status announcement email list by contacting the 5 Cities Homeless Coalition at stephanie.leblanc@5chc.org. These lists usually get an announcement on days when the

warming centers will be open, but are silent otherwise. Sometimes the announcement does not go out until late in the day on which the shelter will be open, unfortunately.

If you determine that a warming center is open (or closed) tonight *for certain*, put our magnetic signs on the side of the van to inform guests. You can find these signs in the admin bin. Additional information about the warming centers is found on our pink resource card.

There are also some magnetically-affixable laminated signs with some useful announcements for our guests, and a magnetically-affixable, flexible, dry-erase sheet (stored in a cardboard tube among the admin supplies) with which you can post temporary announcements:



Among the things that are worth announcing in this way are upcoming encampment sweeps. You can get on the SLO City “Encampment Outreach” (sweeps) notification email list by contacting Sarah Cooper, the city’s Homelessness Response Administrative Specialist, at Scooper@slocity.org. They typically send out an email a few days before sweeps to announce where and when they will occur. Sometimes you can also learn of CalTrans sweeps this way.

The guest sign-in process

Finish setting up the greeter station before you begin signing in guests. Sign up guests one at a time and wait until you finish with one guest before starting the next. Otherwise it gets too confusing.

What if a guest wants to sign up someone else?

Every adult who showers must sign the *Re/lease* themselves in person, each time they visit to take a shower.

In general, guests may only sign up themselves, not others. We make occasional exceptions for couples and families, when one member of the couple or family may sign up and get supplies for the others.

If anything comes up that distracts you from checking in guests well, or that is outside of your comfort zone—or if you get swamped with a lot of guests all trying to get your attention at once—let the site supervisor know. One of the site supervisor’s duties is to help you to manage such situations.

You control the sign-in order. Sometimes guests form an orderly line and make your job easy. Other times they bicker about who is next. Your decision reigns supreme and can be as arbitrary as you’d like it to be. Don’t feel you have to collect testimony and examine witnesses. Your word is the law.

1. Welcome the guest (by name, if you know their name; if not, ask their name and also introduce yourself). Ask if they want a shower. Listen carefully and attentively.
2. If the guest wants a shower, offer them the Release clipboard and ask them to read and sign it.

If the guest does *not* want a shower, but only wants supplies or information, they do not need to sign the release: Skip to step #6 and then stop after that.

3. After the guest signs the Release, recover the clipboard. This prevents other people in line from trying to sign the Release while you are still attending to the current guest.
4. Ask the guest for the basic information we collect: their first name (and last initial if they have a common first name), gender, the age range they fall into, and veteran status. Begin to fill out the guest sign-in sheet with this information.

If the guest is reluctant to share this information, let them know that **information we’re collecting is optional—even their name**. They can shower even if they’re not comfortable sharing this information. However we need some identifier so we can call them for their shower.

Why do we ask for all this information? We collect demographic data because this helps us to apply for grants. We also keep track of how much demand for showers we have at each site, and of how many supplies we are using. This helps us maintain and expand our program, and is important feedback for our financial supporters.

5. For first-time guests only:
 - a. Ask them to read the rules sheet.
 - b. Note that they’re a first-time visitor, both on the sign-in sheet and with an asterisk by their name on the dry-erase order board.
 - c. Let them know about available resources and informational resource cards, and also our water-bottle refill and phone charging stations.
 - d. Offer them our schedule card, and let them know we’re here every week at the same time.

6. Ask the guest what supplies they need. Tally what you give away on the guest sign-in sheet.

Tip: Ask the guest what supplies they need, *then* mark this on the guest sign-in sheet, and *only then* reach for the supplies and hand them to the guest. That way you won't forget what you handed out.

- a. Limit supplies (e.g. t-shirts) to two per person. It's best to offer one of everything, and give the guest two only if they request it. Sometimes guests ask for more than two (e.g. for people "back at camp" or for family members elsewhere); we typically do not allow this.
- b. Sometimes we have additional supplies (e.g. sack lunches, food bank bags, bottled water, covid tests, narcan, deodorant). Offer those too if they are available.
- c. We usually also have razors, but these are stored at the cleaner station. If a guest wants a razor, tell them they can ask one of the cleaners.
7. Add the guest's name to the dry-erase shower order board. Make sure the board is visible from the cleaner station. Different greeters have different annotation styles. The following notation is one good example:

- a. ✓ a checkmark marks people who have showered or who are in the shower currently.
- b. **Cross-out** the names of people who are not showering after all for whatever reason.
- c. **Circle** the names of people who have been skipped but who may still want a shower.
- d. * an asterisk marks anyone who is showering with us for the first time.
- e. So, for example, on the following order board, Alice, Bernardo, Deon, and Federica have showered or are currently showering. Carla is not showering after all. Elaine was skipped when her turn came up but may still want a shower. George, Henrietta, and Ivan also have not showered yet. Henrietta will be showering with us for the first time:

✓ Alice T.	✓ Federica	
✓ Bernardo	George B.	
Carla	Henrietta *	
✓ Deon	Ivan	
Elaine		

8. If a shower is open and the guest you are checking in is the next guest in line, announce to the shower cleaners, "[GUEST NAME] is ready for their shower" (if the guest is a first-timer, also mention that). The shower cleaners will then usher the guest into their shower.

Otherwise, give the guest an estimated wait time, but stress that it's approximate. Let the guest know we may skip them if they're not around when their turn comes up. Invite them to sit on one of our benches.

A good rule of thumb is that a shower and cleaning takes about 20 minutes. Because we have three shower units, we can do about nine showers per hour.

9. Repeat this process with the next guest.

What if a guest asks for a lost & found item?

Lost & found items are in a plastic tub in the van. These items are labeled by the shift that found them with the date the item was found, and the name of the person believed to have left it behind if this is known. Ask the guest to describe the lost item and when they lost it, then see if an item that matches that description is in the tub. After a lost-and-found item has been in the tub for more than a week, we may move it to another location and eventually we may give it away or dispose of it.

Stormy days

On very rainy and windy days when the awning isn't enough to keep you and your supplies dry, it can be wise to improvise, like our greeter Judy did during the storms of '23, and set up *inside* the van:

Restocking supplies

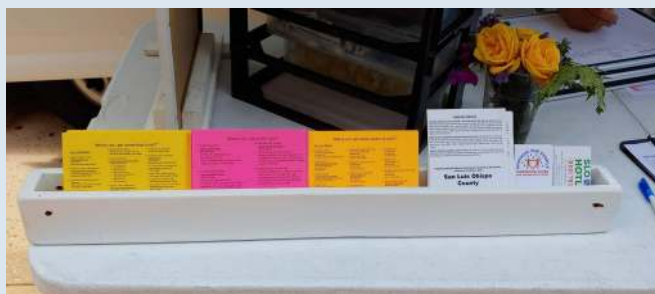
When you have time, attend to the stock of supplies in the distribution bins and trays. If any are running low, restock them. There are usually more supplies in bins, trays, or boxes in other areas of the van. If those stocks are empty, ask the site supervisor to get some from the storage closet in shower #1 or from some other location (see [Where to find things](#) in the appendices). Try to leave the distribution bins and trays well-stocked at the end of your shift so that the next shift can get off to a good start.



Our informational resources

We have a variety of informational resources available for guests, including:

- **STP schedule cards**—The addresses and days/times of operation of our sites.
- **VivaSLO**—This progressive web app, designed by STP and available at vivaslo.org, lists a variety of resources useful to homeless and other low-income people.
- **San Luis Obispo (city) Homeless Resources Pocket Guide**—This includes a city map with bus routes and locations of various services (including our showers). There is also a Spanish-language version.
- **Health and Medical Care Resources in San Luis Obispo and the Five Cities Area**—A pamphlet produced by STP that explains how to get health and medical care in our area even if you're broke.
- **Color-coded resource cards**—STP produces these. They contain information



about resources in SLO and the Five Cities area that are helpful to people experiencing homelessness:

- **Where can I spend the night?** —shelter, warming center, and safe parking options
- **Where can I find some clothes to wear?**—free clothing closets and low-cost thrift stores
- **Where can I find something to eat?**—food pantries, free meals, and food boxes
- **Where can I refill my water bottle?**—public potable water dispensers in the city of SLO
- **Where can I get help for my pet?**—pet food and veterinary care options
- **Miscellaneous leaflets and cards**—We sometimes get leaflets and cards from other groups that provide services for homeless and low-income people.

Find the cards and other physical media in the Admin bin. If we are running out of any, let the site supervisor know.

Record-keeping

Keep good records by completing guest sign-in sheets as you go. It is difficult to reconstruct the details from memory after the fact.

At the end of the shift, add up the total number of guests who showered, how many left without a shower, how many only wanted supplies, the number of guests in each age category, of each gender, how many were first-timers, how many were veterans, and how many of the various types of supplies we gave out. After you add up the numbers, sanity check them to make sure they make sense.

Tell the site supervisor and the driver the total number of showers. Alert the site supervisor if you're running out of forms or other supplies.

Put the completed guest sign-in sheets and guest Release forms in the appropriate folder inside the van passenger-side door.

Shutting down and packing up

Put things back into the van in consistent places. This helps the next greeter during their set-up process, and also protects the driver from things moving in the van during transport. See the [Van-packing layout and storage locations](#) appendix to see where things belong.

HOW TO BE AN EXCELLENT SHOWER CLEANER

Overview

Shower cleaners prepare showers at the beginning of the shift, clean showers between guests, and close down showers at the end of the shift.

Responsibilities

In short, the responsibilities of shower cleaners are:

- Provide a respectful, welcoming, clean, and safe environment for guests.
- Open the showers and prepare them for the first guests.
- Guide guests to the showers in the proper order (according to the Greeter's order board).
- Help guests as necessary (e.g. help them carry their belongings into the shower, help them up the stairs, ask if they need help positioning the showerhead or if they need a stool to sit on).
- Knock to remind guests when their time is almost up.
- Clean shower units between guests by using the cleaning process described in this guide, and restock the unit with a floor mat, towel & washcloth, and toilet paper.
- Follow safety and security procedures.
- Report problems or maintenance needs to the site supervisor.
- Keep supplies well-stocked, easily accessible, and not in the way.



The following sections describe some of these responsibilities in greater detail.

Open showers at the beginning of the shift

At the beginning of the shift, about a half hour before our official opening time, begin the process of opening the showers and preparing them for the first guests.

1. Deploy the stairs:
 - a. **On the old trailer:** Unhook the chain and release the hooks that hold the stairs against the van. Ease the stairs to the ground. After the driver levels the van (ask if you're not sure if this has been done yet), retract the stair legs if necessary to make the stairs parallel with the ground. If one of the legs floats a bit above the ground (the stairs rattle when you step on them), put a wooden wedge under that leg (see [Where to find things](#) to learn where these wedges are stored).
 - b. **On the new trailer:** *If you do not know how, let the driver or supervisor deploy the stairs.* It is tricky and can injure your hands if you do it incorrectly. This involves both deploying

the stairs and deploying and adjusting the stair stabilizer legs. Wait until the driver levels the trailer to do this.

2. Deploy the handrail (lift it and rotate it into position alongside the stairs)
3. Put a doormat at the base of the stairs.
4. Open the door and prop it open with the elastic band and hook attached to the trailer. **On the new trailer:** If the door is locked, ask the supervisor or driver to unlock it.
5. Turn on the ceiling fan inside:
 - a. **On the old trailer:** Pull the chain attached to the fan.
 - b. **On the new trailer:** If the fan is not on, flip the switch in the electrical panel (there is one switch for all three fans). The driver will usually do this during the start-up process.
6. Remove any storage bins or chairs that may have been stored in the shower unit. Set these outside out of the way.
7. Clean the shower if it was not left clean or if greywater splashed up during transport.
8. Sweep the shower curtain to the side furthest from the showerhead. Tuck the bottom of the curtain (or the inner curtain if there is both an inner and outer curtain) inside the shower.
9. Fill the toilet about $\frac{1}{3}$ -full with water. (See “What if the toilet will not refill with water?” in the [Clean showers and prepare them for the next guest](#) section below for some tips if the toilet won’t fill.) **In the new trailer**, you have to open the valve behind the toilet first.
10. Check the toilet paper roll. Replace it if it is getting very low.

How to change the toilet paper.

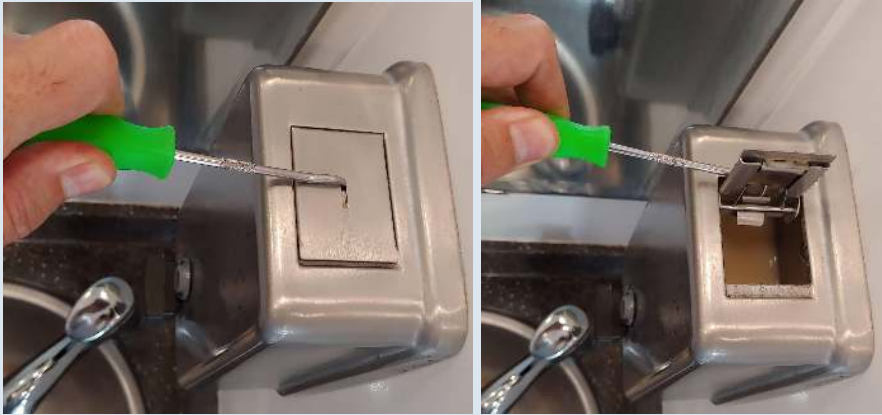
Our toilet paper dispensers are “vandal-resistant”. It’s not easy to take the roll of toilet paper off of the dispenser (which discourages people from walking away with them). But that means it’s not easy for us either!

There is a flexible metal shim, bent into a hook, attached to the rod that holds the toilet paper. That hook fits into a slot on one of the arms that holds the rod away from the wall. To remove the toilet paper roll, you must squeeze the shim toward the rod so that the hook can slide out of the slot. This is difficult to do when the toilet paper roll is in the way! We have a tool (a repurposed putty knife) that you can slide alongside the toilet paper roll to press the hook. This is easier than trying to do it by hand. You can usually find this tool in the mechanical room or the supplies closet.



You also may need to squeeze the hook against the rod when you reattach the arm after you reload the dispenser with a new roll of toilet paper. You can use the same tool for that.

11. Check the soap dispensers and add soap if necessary. To open the soap dispensers, use a dental pick, screwdriver, paperclip or something like that to slide the latch, and then lift the door:



12. Add a trash can liner to the small trash can inside the shower unit if the liner is missing (see [Where to find things](#) to learn where these are stored).
13. Put down a paper floor mat and put a towel and washcloth on the toilet seat (**old trailer**) or bench (**new trailer**).
14. When the driver verifies that the water heater is on, test shower #1 to verify that it gets warm. (This may take several seconds; see [Supplies & equipment issues](#) in the [Troubleshooting](#) chapter if the water never gets warm.) After you verify this, announce to the greeter that you are ready to accept guests into their showers.
15. **New trailer only:** Prop open the supplies closet door. Attach the shelf below that door. It is easiest to slide the shelf into place from the side. (If the door is locked, ask the supervisor or driver to unlock it.)

Tip: Help set up the greeter station if you can.

Setting up the greeter station is just as involved as setting up the showers, but usually there is only one greeter but multiple shower-cleaners. If you have some time after you have prepared the showers, see if the greeter needs help.

Arrange the shower cleaner supplies at the beginning of the shift

1. Put liners in the bins:
 - a. The pink rag bin gets a red liner.
 - b. The three towel bins get blue liners.
 - c. The trash bins get white liners.

The red and blue bags are larger than the bins, so we have elastic bands or bungies to hold them in place. You typically find these bands already on the bins; you just need to slip them over the ends of the bags.

2. Put the clock where you can easily see it when you write entrance-times on the shower doors.
3. Set the boxes of gloves, one or more pump-bottles of hand sanitizer, and a dry-erase marker in easy reach on the shelf.
4. Position the chairs in convenient locations for cleaners to rest when they are not working and for guests when they're waiting or putting on their shoes.
5. Place the bins of towels, washcloths, and paper floor-mats, the bucket of pink rags, the hazmat cleaning supplies box, and the toilet brush where you can easily access them, but also where they won't impede foot traffic.
6. Check the CaviCide disinfectant bottles. If they need filling, refill them from the large container (there is a funnel in the mechanical room of the old trailer or the storage closet of the new trailer for this purpose).

Warning: CaviCide is alcohol-based and therefore flammable. Fill bottles away from the water heater in the mechanical room, open flames, or people smoking.

CaviCide will also sting if it gets in your eyes. Take care that nobody's face is down-range when you spray it. Consider wearing glasses or eye-protection goggles when spraying.

If you do get CaviCide in your eye, there is an eyewash bottle mounted to the inside of the mechanical room door. To use it, remove it from its mount, turn the nozzle one-quarter turn to break the seal, and put the opening against your eye. Then, keeping your eye open, squeeze the bottle to flush your eye.

These eyewash bottles are single-use only. So if you use one, please report this to our inventory manager so we can replace it with a fresh bottle.



7. Keep a good supply of towel candles ready. Fold more if you're running low.

How to fold towel candles

Our decorative towel and washcloth sets enhance our hospitable atmosphere. They are reminiscent of a cruise line or hotel. The compact shape also makes it easier for you to quickly grab and place the set.



Sanitize your hands or put on gloves before you begin.



1. Place a washcloth in a diamond shape. If the washcloth has a tag, position it at one of the side corners.



2. Fold the washcloth along the horizontal diagonal to make a triangle.



3. Fold the left corner along the long side of the triangle, like this.



4. Starting at the left edge, roll the washcloth into a tight cylinder.



5. Roll it along the bottom edge. The bottom edge of the cylinder remains flat, while the top tapers to a point.



6. The bottom of one of the large towel bin lids is a good working surface. It has notches along the outside edge that hold these rolled-up washcloths perfectly.



7. So if you want you can do several washcloth rolls before moving on to the next step.



8. Fold one of the larger towels approximately in half to form a square.



9. Fold the towel along either diagonal to make a triangle. Arrange it so the longest side of the triangle faces you.



10. Fold *under* the bottom two inches of that long side of the triangle.



11. Fold down the top corner so its peak meets the top of the seam you made in the previous step.



12. Place one of the washcloth cylinders so the flat end is flush against the top of the seam, and so the cylinder meets the top edge of the towel where the top corner begins its fold.



13. Fold the left side of the towel over, so as to sandwich the washcloth.



14. From left to right, begin to roll the whole assembly into a tight cylinder.



15. Keep rolling until only a stub of the towel on the right remains loose.



16. Tuck that stub into the seam created by the fold you made in step #10.

You now have a completed towel candle.

Prepare guests for their shower

Tip: Ask guests to get ready while their shower is being cleaned.

It is a good practice to ask the next guest to be ready with their supplies nearby while their shower is being cleaned, so that they are ready to go as soon as their shower is ready for them.

1. Check the order-board at the greeter station, or ask the greeter, to determine which guest is next in line for a shower.
2. Call that guest by name and let them know their shower is ready. If you cannot find them and they do not respond to your call, try the next person on the list.
3. Visually verify that the bathroom has been cleaned, that there is a clean towel/washcloth on the toilet lid, that the shower curtain (or inner curtain if there is both an inner and outer curtain) is tucked inside the shower, that there is sufficient toilet paper on the roll, and that there is a fresh bath mat on the floor. Correct any deficiencies you notice.
4. If this is the guest's first visit (check for an asterisk by their name on the order-board, or ask them), give them the first-timer introduction to how the showers work. See [First-time guest introduction](#) below for an example script.
5. Remind guests that they have 15 minutes to be in the shower room (particularly if they are new or if they tend to dawdle). If you know they have trouble sticking to 15 minutes, offer to knock at ten minutes (or at five & ten minutes) to let them know how the time is progressing (if so, use a kitchen timer if one is available or a phone app to remind you to do this).
6. If the guest fails to lock the door behind them, knock and call through the door to remind them to. If that doesn't work, well, you tried.
7. Write the guest's name and time-of-entry with a *dry-erase* marker in the dry-erase portion of the door margin. This helps us keep track of who is in which shower and whether anyone is taking too much time. It's best to write this clearly, in letters big enough to be read throughout the shower cleaner station.

In wet weather, when dry-erase markers stop working well, you may be able to use some etch-a-sketch-like boards to write down the names and times. Ask your supervisor where to find these.

What if a guest asks for extra time in the shower?

Some guests may ask us ahead of time for a little extra time beyond the 15 minutes they are ordinarily allotted. If this is for reasons like difficulty with coordination or mobility, be flexible and allow an extra five minutes or so. If this is because they are also showering a child or infant, you might give them an extra 15 minutes. You might put an asterisk next to their name on the door margin to remind yourself to give them a little extra slack.

If they say they need extra time because they need to shave, dye their hair, launder their clothes, wax their mustache, spike their mohawk, or something along those lines, explain to them that they'll have to do that elsewhere and that we only give basic 15-minute showers here so that we can ensure as many people as possible can get their showers.

If you are unsure what policy to apply, ask the site supervisor to make the call.

What if a guest has mobility issues / trouble with stairs / difficulty operating shower controls?

There's a stool available for guests who want to be seated in the shower. See [Where to find things](#) for information on how to locate it.

Guests who cannot reach the showerhead may need help adjusting it. Anticipate this and ask if they would like help.

Someone who needs assistance in the shower can have another guest accompany them. Children also can accompany one of their parents in the shower (or *must* if they are under the age of six). "Recreational" doubling-up, on the other hand, isn't permitted.

When a guest comes out of the shower

1. Hold the door open for them, then hook it open with one of the elastic bands.
2. Let the guest know what to do with their towel & washcloth if they are still carrying them (either discard them in the blue bins or leave them on the floor in the shower unit).
3. Ask them how their shower went (for example, "how was the water pressure and temperature?"). Listen for feedback that might be helpful to us in improving things. Let the supervisor know if there were any malfunctions or other issues.
4. Offer them one of the chairs if they still need to tie their shoes or something.

What if a guest leaves something behind?

If the guest is still on-site, try to track them down and hand the item to them personally. (If they're still by the door of the shower, just ask them "do you still want your X ?")

If you cannot locate them: If the item is something disposable (e.g. soap, shampoo, moisturizer, toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, or used clothing), assume it is unwanted and toss it out. If the item seems like something the person may value (e.g. jewelry, a watch, a hat, a phone, a pocket-knife), give it to the supervisor, explaining that it is a "lost and found" item and whom you suppose it belongs to. Which category any particular item belongs in is an uncertain judgment call on our part, but don't beat yourself up if your judgment doesn't match a guest's. It's up to them to keep track of their things.

If we keep an item in the "lost and found" bin in the van, the supervisor should put a note or tag on the item with the date and (if known) whom it is supposed to belong to. We typically keep lost-and-found items for one week to try to restore them to their owners. After that week passes we will stow items in the shed, or dispose of or donate them.

What if guests want to shower back-to-back without a full cleaning in-between?

Occasionally guests who are a couple will offer to shower back-to-back without us doing a full shower cleaning in-between, to save time—the logic being that as they are already in intimate contact, it is unnecessary to do as thorough a cleaning between their showers.

In such a case, it is acceptable to do a more minimal cleaning: Simply wipe up any moisture on the floor and replace the floor mat, towel, and washcloth.

If you're not sure whether this is okay in any particular case, ask the site supervisor.

Clean showers and prepare them for the next guest

You *must* wear protective gloves (find them at the shower-cleaning station) while you clean showers. It's a good idea to wear slip-resistant, close-toed, flat-heeled shoes. If you wear glasses or protective goggles, this can help prevent disinfectant spray from accidentally getting in your eyes.

1. When the guest comes out, wipe the guest's name and time-of-entry off the outside of the door with a *dry* rag or magic-eraser sponge. (If the writing on the door resists coming off, try using a dab of hand sanitizer. Do not use the CaviCide or detergent sprays for this purpose as they may degrade the dry-erase surface. See [Where to find things](#) to learn how to locate magic-eraser sponges.) Prop open the door with the elastic cord.
2. Wait 30 seconds after the guest comes out before you go in. If the guest left a towel or washcloth behind, discard those in the blue-bag bins. Dry any water pooling on the floor or elsewhere with a towel or rag.

What if I notice greywater backing up in the shower?

If greywater backs up in the showers, this likely means the greywater tanks are over-full. We must either dump greywater (which we can do mid-shift if we are at a site where we can irrigate with greywater—see [Park the trailer on-site and prepare it for showers](#) for instructions), or transfer some greywater into the blackwater tank (see [Monitor the greywater tank level](#) for instructions).

We may need to temporarily stop giving showers until the greywater tank is sufficiently drained to make room for more shower water. Report greywater backup to the supervisor.

3. If there is any dirt, debris, or hair in the shower, sink, or on the floor, remove it with a red rag and then dispose of the rag. If the toilet was used, flush it. If any gross debris remains, scrub it away with the toilet brush or a *white* handcloth. If you need detergent of some sort to remove dirt, scuff marks, or something like that, use bathroom cleanser or a wet-wipe or a moist washcloth and soap. Do not use the CaviCide for that purpose: CaviCide is a disinfectant, not a cleaning product.

What if water seems to be seeping out from under the toilet?

The seals at the base of the toilet tend to fail after a while. You may notice a little water pooling around the base of the toilet, especially during or immediately after operating the flusher. If you notice this, let the site supervisor know, and we'll schedule maintenance on the toilet to fix the problem.

4. If any feces, vomit, blood, or other human waste remains on the toilet or elsewhere in the room, notify the site supervisor who may decide to take over from here. Remove this sort of waste with moistened *white* washcloths or towels and then discard those in the blue bags. Spray those areas with CaviCide and leave them wet for at least a minute before drying them (again with *white* washcloths or towels, which you discard in the blue bags after use).

If there is a great deal of human waste in the room, the site supervisor should do a more thorough cleaning by following the steps described in [Special procedure to decontaminate an infectious room](#) below. Then skip ahead to step #9. Otherwise, continue with the steps below:

5. Exit the shower to empty the trash (and the used floor mat and any discarded items) into the external trash bin (the one with the white bag). Get a new trash-can liner if necessary, or reuse the same one.

Warning: Never tamp down trash with your hands or feet. Use the bottom of another trash bin to do this instead.

6. Reenter the shower unit and spray the CaviCide spray on surfaces that may be touched by guests. Spray from about 18 inches away from the surface, in a circular motion. Surfaces worth spraying include:

Tip: Begin spraying from the shower and then move outwards toward the door, spraying other items as you go. This minimizes your exposure to the smelly isopropyl alcohol vapors as the CaviCide evaporates.

A little CaviCide goes a long way, so don't over-do it.

- a. The handrail along the stairs (tip: spray CaviCide on your gloved hand and then use your hand to apply it to the rail, so that less CaviCide is sprayed into the air)
- b. The interior grab bars
- c. The walls, at arm-level
- d. The interior door handle and lock
- e. The light switch
- f. The soap dispenser knob
- g. The shower fixtures
- h. The faucet, and all sink surfaces
- i. The shower walls
- j. The inside of the shower curtain
- k. The shower stall floor
- l. The floor
- m. The toilet lid
- n. **New trailer only:** the bench seat
- o. *If the toilet was used,* the toilet seat

Warning: Keep the spray bottles in a coarse-spray mode; do *not* adjust them to a fine-mist mode. You want the CaviCide on the surfaces, not in the air.

Do *not* spray CaviCide on your rag and use the wet rag to wipe surfaces, as this deactivates the CaviCide.

7. Exit the room and wait one minute for the CaviCide to take full effect. Let the site supervisor and/or greeter know that your shower will soon be ready for another guest. This gives them time to find that guest and make sure they're prepared.
8. When the one minute elapses, return to the shower. If the sink, handrails, bench seat (**new trailer**), or toilet seat are still damp, dry them with clean, dry red rags. Wipe any condensation off the mirror. You do not need to dry other surfaces.
9. Tuck the shower curtain (or inner shower curtain if there is both an inner and outer curtain) back in the shower and sweep it to the side of the shower entrance furthest from the showerhead.
10. Refill the toilet bowl with water if it is empty. Close the toilet lid.

What if the toilet will not refill with water?

Make sure you only hold the foot pedal down far enough to start the flow of water—not so far that you open the valve that flushes water to the blackwater tank. You can visually verify this by looking in the bowl.

Check (or ask the driver or supervisor to check) that either:

1. The water tank has sufficient water in it and the water pump is on, or
2. The trailer is connected to a hose that is in turn connected to the on-site water supply, the valve where the hose connects to the trailer is on, the “city water” valve in the mechanical room is open, and the site water supply spigot is turned on to start the flow of water.

New trailer only: Verify that the valve behind the toilet is open.

Note that at the beginning of the shift, if the hose was not correctly flushed of air, air may sputter through the pipes rather than water for a few seconds. If you suspect this is the case, wait to see if water comes through eventually. (See [Park the trailer on-site and prepare it for showers](#) in the Driver chapter for instructions on how to prevent this issue of air in the pipes.)

11. Discard used pink cleaning rags in the red bin at the shower cleaning station (if any pink rags are stained with human waste, discard them in the trash instead). If you used white towels or washcloths to clean, discard those in the blue bins.
12. Check the toilet paper roll and replace it if necessary.
13. Exit the shower unit and let the greeter station know that your shower is ready for a new guest.
14. Rub some hand sanitizer on your gloved hands, or remove and discard your gloves.
15. Place a fresh towel/washcloth and floor mat in the shower unit.
16. Usher in the next guest.

What if there are stains you can't clean, like from hair dye?

Just clean things up as best you can. Let the site supervisor know so they can talk with the guest about not using staining products in the showers. We'll do what we can to get the stains out off-site at some point with other cleaning products.

Special procedure to decontaminate an infectious room

Use these procedures if human waste is extensive, or if the guest is known to have a highly contagious illness such as multiple staph infections, measles, chickenpox, or whooping cough. Notify the supervisor if you believe these steps are necessary. Typically the supervisor will then take over the shower cleaning process at least through the following steps. Wear a mask, gloves, and eye-protective goggles when performing these steps.

Warning: CaviCide is flammable

This procedure uses a lot of CaviCide spray. Since this product is alcohol-based and alcohol vapor is flammable, exercise caution when using this procedure, especially on hot days which speed evaporation. Keep the door open and make sure the fan is operating.

1. Wear a mask, gloves, and protective goggles. Make sure that the overhead fan is operating.
2. If any feces, vomit, blood, or other human waste are in the room, remove it with moistened *white* washcloths or towels and then discard those in the blue bags. Use detergent cleanser if necessary. When the affected areas are clean, spray them with CaviCide spray.
3. Spray *all* surfaces with CaviCide spray, except for the ceiling.
4. Remove the trash bag from the in-room trash bin and dispose of it in the external trash bin. Exit the room, leaving the door open. Wait three minutes.
5. Re-enter the room and dry the floor first (it may be slippery), then the other surfaces. Use *white* washcloths or towels rather than the usual pink ones. Put a new trash bag in the in-room trash bin. Discard the used white washcloths or towels in a blue bin.
6. Continue with the normal cleaning procedure starting with step #9. Dispose of your gloves, mask, and protective goggles in the trash when you are done.

Why do we use white rather than pink rags here?

Our red rags are laundered at a commercial laundry. It is not equipped to handle potentially infectious waste. Our white washcloths and towels are laundered at a hospital laundry at which infectious waste is all in a day's work.

Shut down showers at the end of the shift

At the end of the shift, close down the showers and prepare them for transport:

1. Clean the unit as is usually done between showers (but don't refill the toilet—***new trailer only:*** shut the valve behind the toilet).
2. Spread the shower curtain across the rod and pull the bottom of it outside of the shower.
3. Once a week, we add some of the TST Max tank treatment to the blackwater and greywater tanks by flushing it down the toilet and pouring it into the shower drains.
4. Empty the toilet of water as much as you can by flushing with the foot pedal. Lower the toilet seat and lid.
5. Turn off the lights and (***old trailer only***) the ceiling fan. (In the new trailer, the fans are turned on and off via a switch in the electrical panel; the driver will do this.)

6. Put any loose shower-cleaning items like boxes of gloves, bottles of hand sanitizer, etc. in the bucket. Put the spray bottles of CaviCide in the pockets of the holster around the blue bucket.
7. Load the chairs and any remaining towel/washcloth/floormat bins into unit #3. Spread a towel on the floor under the chairs to avoid floor scratches. If you need room for additional towel bins, put those in unit #2. (We choose units #3 and #2 rather than #1 so that we don't put extra weight on the trailer hitch.)

In the old trailer, store the toilet brush, one of the shower stools, and the hazmat supplies box in unit #1. **In the new trailer,** store those in the supplies closet.

Rainy Day Exceptions: If it has been raining during the shift and things are still wet, load the following things into shower unit #3 or #2 rather than into the van:

- the small and large rubber floor mats
- the pop-up awnings (if you used them)

This prevents the van from getting musty/mildewy from excess moisture.

8. Close the doors and retract the handrails.
9. **Old trailer only:** Raise and securely attach the stairs and extend their legs (if you retracted the legs earlier).

Warning: On the new trailer, retracting the stabilizer legs and stairs should be done by the driver or supervisor, as the stairs are tricky to operate and can injure your hands.

10. **New trailer only:** lock the storage closet door and each of the shower doors (the driver or supervisor may have this key on their keychain, otherwise it is hanging in the lock box in the mechanical room).
11. Secure each elastic door-open-band such that it will not catch on anything during transport (on the new trailer, you may have to wait until the driver or supervisor retracts the stairs).
12. Remove the bags of used towels and rags from their bins, tie up the bag openings, and toss the bags in the mechanical room of the trailer, in the back of the van, or in the tongue box (ask the driver which they prefer). Remove the trash bag, cinch its opening, and dispose of it in a dumpster or trash bin on-site.
13. Stow the clock (**old van**) inside one of the trash bins or in the rag bin in the back of the van, or (**new trailer**) in the supplies closet.
14. Put the base-of-the-stairs mats away. It's best to store these flat, fuzzy-side down, on the top of a bin lid in the rear of the van. (If you instead roll them up fuzzy-side in or stow them fuzzy-side up, they'll tend to curl up at the edges, which can cause a tripping hazard as in the photo below.)



15. Nest the trash bins into two sets and place them by the sliding door of the van to be put away.

HOW TO BE AN EXCELLENT DRIVER (Old Van/Trailer)



Overview

The driver tows the shower trailer to and from our sites, and establishes electric, water, and sewer hook-ups on-site. The driver puts the trailer in operating mode for giving showers, and shuts it down and puts it in storage mode when it is parked off-site.

Qualifications

Shower the People (and our insurance provider) has the following requirements for drivers:

- You must have a valid California driver's license. You do not need a special class of license.
- You must be at least 18 years old and have at least two years' experience driving.
- You must not have a DUI on your record.
- You must have no major moving violations on your record in the past four years.
- In the past three years, you must have no more than:
 - Two at-fault accidents
 - Three minor moving violations

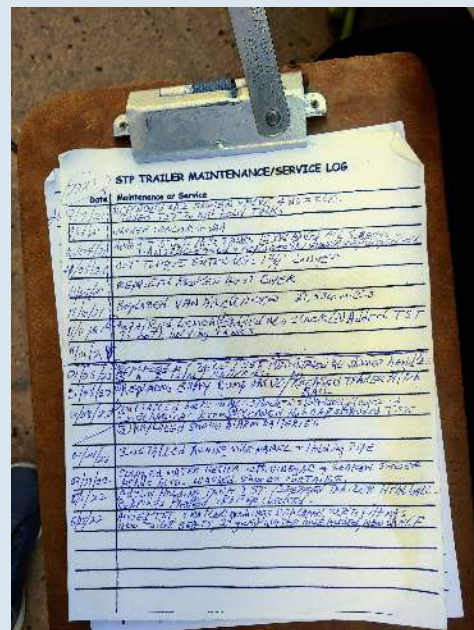
- Four non-moving violations (such as Failure to Appear (FTA), License not in possession, or No Proof of Insurance/Registration)
- Four of any of the above three things in combination
- You must have a motor vehicle record (MVR) check done by our insurance provider. Ask the Driver Trainer to get this process started for you (see [Our operations team](#) for contact information). Submit your name as it appears on your driver's license; your driver's license number, state, and expiration date; and your date of birth.

Responsibilities

In summary, the responsibilities of the driver are:

- Tow a trailer to and from our shower sites, safely and in compliance with traffic laws.
- Manage the set-up, activation, deactivation, and shut-down of a trailer, and monitor it to ensure it is working properly during the shift. This includes hooking up water, electric, and (sometimes) sewer connections.
- Report maintenance issues to the regional Maintenance Manager. Log mileage.
- (For some shifts and sites) dump waste tanks at authorized sites.
- Operate the transfer pump to transfer wastewater between tanks if needed.
- Follow all checklists, policies, procedures, and safety protocols in order to safely operate a van and trailer.

If you make any minor repairs or workarounds, note this on the “STP Trailer Maintenance/Service Log” which is located on the same clipboard as the “STP Trailer Log” inside the mechanical room door.



Note: Drivers *may* also take one of the other roles (greeter, cleaner, supervisor). If you decide you want to do a second role in addition to driver, please sign up for both roles at [ivolunteer](#). This helps us avoid having more volunteers than we need.

Pick up the trailer and drive to the site

Go to the St. Barnabas' Episcopal Church on 301 Trinity Ave. in Arroyo Grande where the van and trailer are parked. You have been issued a key to the trailer's mechanical room (other keys you may need are in the lockbox in the mechanical room).

1. Turn on the battery power inside the electrical panel. This allows the trailer batteries to charge from the van engine as you drive to the site. When the battery is well-charged its power readout should read over 12V.



2. Retrieve the van keys from the lock box in the mechanical room. Unlock the van.



3. Securely close the mechanical room door and the utility panel door if they are open.
4. Check that the corner trailer jack stands are retracted and their handles are correctly secured. Check that each of the shower unit stairs are attached with both of the rigid hooks and also the failsafe chain, and that the elastic cables used to hold the doors open are not dragging or hanging loose.
5. Check that the van and trailer tires look well-inflated.

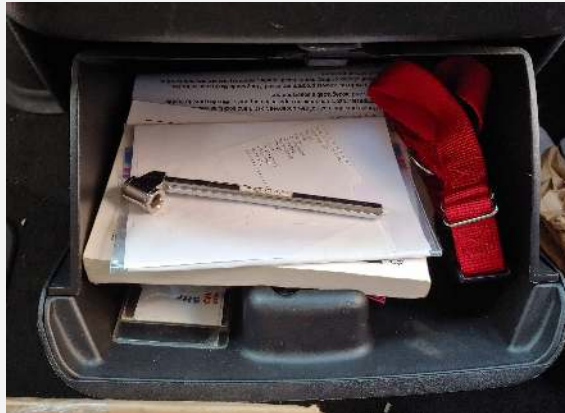
What if the tires look under-inflated?

The correct pressure for the van front tires is 55 psi, for the van back tires 80psi, and for the trailer tires 75 psi. Add air if necessary (at a service station) if the tires are significantly below these levels.

Note that at locations where we raise the back of the trailer to level it, this puts extra weight on the back of the van, so the tires may look flat even if they are properly inflated.

You can test the pressure of the van tires, while the van is in motion, by pressing the  button on the dashboard multiple times. This scrolls through a number of dashboard readouts, which include tire pressure readings for the front and rear van tires.

To test tire pressure manually, use the gauge in the glove compartment (between the seats below the dashboard):



You can use a pump to inflate a tire if you cannot get to a service station. It is in a black bag in the mechanical room:



To power this pump, clamp it to the wires in the electrical panel (red clamp to red wire, black clamp to black wire):



Note: the battery switch must be in the on position to power the pump this way.

6. Remove the three wheel chocks. Put these in the van where you'll see them (to remind you to use them at your destination, and so you can verify you removed them before you drive away).
7. Check that the trailer hitch padlock is locked, the electrical cord and breakaway cables are connected, and the chains are securely attached. You may need to more firmly fasten the electrical cord if the electric brakes, turn signals, or brake lights are malfunctioning. Be careful never to step on the thin, easily-broken emergency brake cable.



8. Fully retract the trailer jack (see [How to retract the trailer jack](#) below).
9. Move any cones from in front of the van.
10. Double-check that the side mirrors are both deployed, not retracted.

11. Turn on the external hazard blinking lights with the switch on top of the steering column, then walk to the back of the trailer to verify that the lights are working. If not, try more firmly attaching the electrical cord at the connection between the van and the trailer, near the trailer hitch.
12. Fold up and stow the windshield sun-screen.
13. Start the van engine.
14. Check the oil pressure using the gauge on the dashboard. Normal pressure is between 25 and 65. If it is below 25, alert the Maintenance Manager (see [Our operations team](#) for contact details):



15. Check the van battery using the gauge on the dashboard. If the reading is below 12, alert the Maintenance Manager (see [Our operations team](#) for contact details):



16. Record the odometer reading in the driver's log (on a clipboard inside the driver-side door).



17. Put the van in tow/haul mode by pressing the tow switch and verifying that the associated dashboard light comes on.



18. Disengage the parking brake (use the handle below and to the left side of the steering wheel). Confirm that the BRAKE indicator on the dashboard turns off.



19. Test the electric trailer brakes:

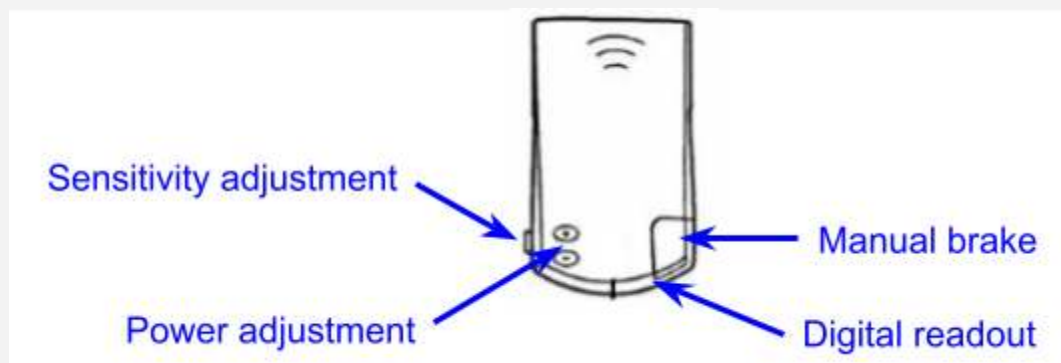
- a. Under the dashboard on the driver's side is a box labeled "Quest"



- b. There should be a red dot in the lower-right corner of the digital readout, as in the photo above. This indicates that the trailer is connected to the van. If this light does not appear, try more firmly connecting the electrical cord between the trailer and the van, near the trailer hitch. If the dot still fails to appear, or if the digital readout reads "SC" (short circuit), alert the Maintenance Manager (see [Our operations team](#) for contact details). The van may not be safe to drive until this is corrected.
- c. To test the trailer brakes, press your foot on the van brakes, put the van in neutral, rotate the steering wheel so that the van wheels face forward, then press and hold the manual brake button on the Quest box and release your foot from the brake pedal. This should apply the trailer brakes and the trailer should not move. If the trailer nonetheless rolls forward, the brakes are not working correctly. Reapply the foot brake, put the van in Park, apply the emergency brake, and alert the Maintenance Manager (see [Our operations team](#) for contact details).

How to adjust the power and sensitivity of the trailer brakes

You can adjust the sensitivity of the trailer brakes (how soon they come on) and their power (how much additional stopping force they apply). To see the current settings and to adjust them, use the digital readout on the front and the four buttons arrayed across the top and left side of the Quest box. The normal settings are 75 for power and 4 for sensitivity:



To change the sensitivity, press the sensitivity adjustment button. You will see the value change on the digital readout. Keep pressing it until it reads “4” or your desired value. To adjust the power, use the two buttons labeled + and -. Press those buttons to adjust the power until it reads “75” or your desired value.

20. Drive to the site. See [Recommended route](#) below.

What if I find the van/trailer poorly-secured, vandalized, or tampered with at pick-up?

Check that the van and trailer can be made safe for travel. Take extra care with the pre-drive checklist. If the van and trailer cannot be made safe for travel, follow the steps in “What if the van/trailer is not safe to drive or is out of order and cannot be driven?” below.

When you can, contact the General Manager and tell them about the problem.

What if the van/trailer is not safe to drive or is out of order and cannot be driven?

If this is the state of the van/trailer when you find it in the storage lot, first alert the shift’s site supervisor so they can let volunteers and guests know that the shift is canceled.

Contact the Maintenance Manager and let them know the details of the problem. See [Our operations team](#) for contact details.

Park the trailer on-site and prepare it for showers

When you reach the day’s shower site, position the trailer correctly and prepare it for operation.

1. Make sure the trailer and van are positioned so it’s easy for guests to come and go without having to squeeze around things, so there’s plenty of space to deploy the greeter table, so the shower stairs come down on level ground, and so you don’t block traffic or driveways.
2. Set the parking brake (with the foot pedal at the far left).
3. Chock the wheels.
4. Level the trailer. There are bubble levels on the outside of the trailer that you can use to judge how level the trailer is, side-to-side and back-to-front. The bubble rises toward any corners of the trailer that are above-level. If the bubble touches the **0** indicator, the trailer is level on that dimension.



You can use a variety of methods to level the trailer:

- a. **Using the manual corner jacks.** You can deploy the jacks to fine-tune any individual trailer corner. Put a block of wood under the foot to avoid denting the asphalt or concrete.



- b. **Using a ramp.** You can drive a wheel of the trailer onto a small plastic ramp (two are stored in the mechanical room). If you choose this method, do it before chocking the wheels.



- c. **Using the mechanical trailer tongue jack** (see [How to deploy the trailer jack](#) below). This raises the front half of the trailer.

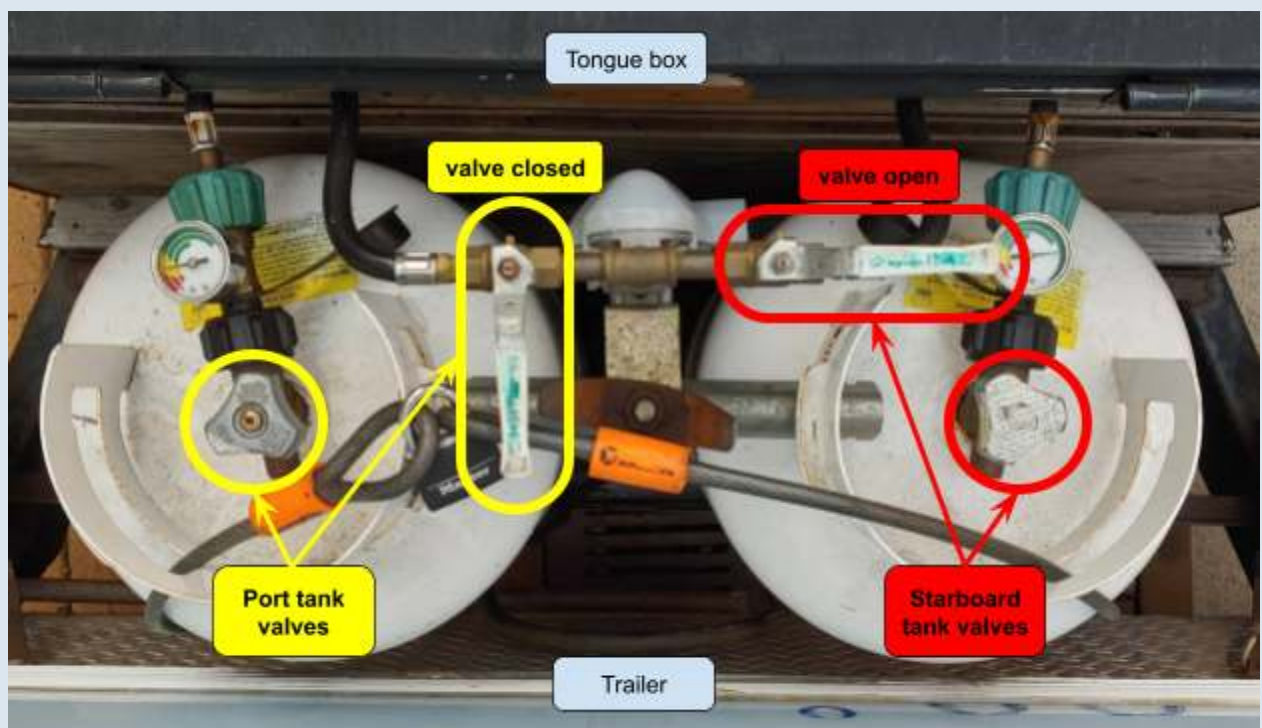
5. In the electrical panel, turn the battery switch on.



6. Turn on the water pump switch on the electric panel.



7. Open both valves for the propane tank that is currently in use. Check its gauge to determine how close to empty it is (monitor it during the shift if it is near empty). Only one tank's valves should be open at any time.



8. Set the AC power selector switch on the electric panel to 3 (INV.) and turn on the inverter by pressing the POWER button on the inverter control until you hear a beep and the POWER light turns green:



9. Turn on the water heater master switch. The readout should eventually go from **000** to **120**. This readout will be on the remote in the electrical panel.



10. Tell the site supervisor that the water heater is on; a volunteer will manually check the water in shower #1 to verify that it is heating up. From this point on, assume that guests may begin their showers, so be sure not to take steps that would interrupt the flow of hot water.
11. Open the mechanical room door and latch it open. It is a good idea to leave this door open throughout the shift to ensure that the water heater is getting a good supply of fresh air and can vent its exhaust (it burns propane).
12. If you will use external, site-supplied AC power (this is what we do usually):

- a. Connect the extension cord between the on-site power outlet and either the #1 or #2 connector adjacent to the utility panel on the trailer. A black adapter cable and orange pigtail plug in the mechanical room translate between the ordinary household AC plug of the electric cord and the plugs of the trailer.
- b. Raise the charging shelf under the connectors until it snaps into place. Plug the power strip into the outlet in the utility panel and secure it to the wall above the shelf. (Some site supervisors may prefer instead to set up the charging station atop the tongue box and to use the power outlet there. See [How to use the alternative charging station.](#))



- c. Set the AC power selector switch on the utility panel to either #1 or #2 depending on where you connected the external power cord to the trailer.



- d. Turn the inverter off, if it was on (the green light is on): Press its **POWER** button and wait for a beep; the green light turns off to indicate that the inverter is off.



13. If you will use city water (this is what we do usually) rather than relying solely on the tank:

- a. Connect one end of a greenish-yellow garden hose to the site water source (see [Site maps and site-specific details](#) for the location of the site water source). Do not use red or blue hoses which are used only for draining waste tanks. Note:
- If you only use one hose, first attach the water filter to the site water source, then attach the hose to the other end of the filter.
 - If you use both hoses, either first attach the water filter to the site water source or attach the filter between the two hoses:



- b. Connect the other end of the hose to the water intake nozzle near the mechanical room door. Give it a little tug to make sure it is firmly attached. Open the valve inside the small hatch door by turning the small black lever to be parallel to the pipe.



(If this nozzle is unavailable or not working, there is a second one between the back tires of the trailer, under the mechanical room door. See [How to dump excess water from the fresh water tank](#) for details, including which valve you need to open to use it. If you use that nozzle as your water input, the incoming water will fill the tank, but it will not feed the water pipes directly; you must use the water pump to push water from the tank to the shower units.)

- c. In the mechanical room, open the “tank fill” valve and close the “city water” valve.



- d. Turn on the site water source spigot to start water flowing through the hose. Because you have the tank fill valve open and the city water valve closed, this will flush the air in the hose into the fresh water tank rather than into the pipes in the shower units.

- e. After that air is flushed, open the “city water” valve in the mechanical room. When the fresh water tank has 40 gallons in it, also close the “tank fill” valve. (A common mistake is to forget to close that valve and overfill the fresh water tank.)



- f. Turn off the water pump switch.

Note: at any sites at which water pressure is too low to give adequate pressure to the showers or to the water heater, you may want to keep the “city water” valve closed and feed showers from the tank by using the water pump. This prevents fluctuations in pressure that can interfere with the operation of the water heater. However, if you do this, you need to monitor the water tank to keep it full enough to supply the showers without running dry but not so full that you will end up with a big surplus at the end of the shift.

What if on-site water is not available?

If on-site water is not available or not functioning, or if you cannot hook the hose up to the trailer water intake, you can run the showers off of the water in the large tank in the mechanical room.

You can only give as many showers this way as the water in that tank is sufficient for (roughly 10 gallons per shower). If you can get clean water from some source (but just cannot connect it to the trailer water intake), you can try to fill the tank by running a hose into the *top* of the water tank (there is a hole with a lid at the top).

If you cannot get water from the site at all, you’ll have to improvise. Can you think of anywhere nearby where you might be able to fill the tank? Is there another spigot on the site property that you can temporarily drive to?

If you run out of options, give as many showers as you can with whatever water is left in the storage tank. Notify guests that water is short and may give out on them. Then cancel the rest of the shift (see “We have to cancel a shift” in the [Troubleshooting](#) section for details).

What if the site water is connected but we don't seem to get much flow from it?

Check the following:

1. There is a continuous hose connection between the site water spigot, the water filter, and the water intake of the trailer.
2. The small black valve immediately next to the trailer water intake is open.
3. The “City Water” or “Tank Fill” valve inside the mechanical room is open.
4. The site water spigot is on. At some sites you need to do this with a sillcock key.
5. There are no kinks in the hose, or places where the hose runs under something heavy (e.g. the trailer wheels).
6. There are no obstructions within the hose itself.
7. The water filter is not clogged (try removing it from the circuit to see if that fixes the problem. If it is clogged, replace the water filter with a new one—see [How to replace the water filter](#) below).

14. Deploy mats and cones to alleviate tripping hazards from hoses and cords.



15. If the greywater tank will be overfull during or after the shift, consider transferring some greywater to the blackwater tank. The following section describes how to do this.

Monitor the greywater tank level

You may need to transfer greywater to the blackwater tank if the level gets too high. This is for two reasons:

1. If greywater exceeds the tank capacity, it backs up into the showers.
2. If the greywater tank is very full, it splashes up into the shower units when the trailer is transported between sites, making a mess for the next shift.

The capacity of the greywater tank is enough for about thirty showers, so you can go from empty to overflowing during a single shift if you are not irrigating with greywater and you do not transfer greywater to the blackwater tank at some point.

You can get a rough estimate of the current level of the greywater tank by means of a gauge in the electrical panel. Click the **WASTE** button on the **GREY WATER** panel and see how many lights on the panel light up.

Note: These readings are not entirely reliable. The blackwater tank gauge in particular is worthless. The gauges are affected by how level the trailer is and by some unknown voodoo factors as well. Do not rely just on these readings, but also on your best judgment based on when the tanks were last emptied and how many showers have been given since then. You can also use the dipstick to manually check the blackwater tank level (see [Monitor the blackwater tank level](#)).

To transfer greywater to the blackwater tank:



1. Unlock the spare tire hitch and lower the spare tire out of the way.



2. Open and secure the tank transfer valve door.



3. Open the valve on the tube between the tanks by rotating the red lever to be parallel to the tube.



4. Turn on the pump switch. Verify that greywater flows through the tube (if so, the greywater tank is well above half-full; if not, the greywater tank is not yet full enough to transfer).



5. Turn off the pump when you have transferred enough greywater, or if the pump begins to “suck air” (the pump changes the sound it makes, or you notice bubbles in the transfer tube.) It is important that you stop the pump if it runs dry to prevent damage to the pump.

The pump transfers about five gallons per minute if the filter is clean. Guests typically use seven to ten gallons of water per shower. Use those figures to estimate how much greywater you need to transfer to accommodate the remaining guests.

6. Close the valve on the tube between the tanks by turning the red lever perpendicular to the tube.



7. Close and secure the tank transfer valve door, raise and lock the spare tire.



Note: transferring greywater into the blackwater tanks displaces air from the blackwater tanks. There is an exhaust tube on the roof of the trailer for this purpose. However, often these gasses also rise up in the sinks of the shower units, which can stink them up. For this reason, if you can, do this transfer when the showers are unoccupied or when their doors are open while they're being cleaned.

What if the transfer pump won't turn on?

The fuse may have blown. There is a small black protrusion on the left side of the transfer pump switch box. Inside is a 20-amp fuse. See [Where to find things](#) for where we keep the replacement fuses.

What if the greywater level does not appear to drop?

The filter attached to the transfer tube may be clogged. To clean the filter, first turn off the pump and close its valve, then unscrew the housing around the filter and remove the filter screen. Clean the filter screen in a sink, by running hose water over it, or by scraping it with a brush. When you reinstall the filter screen be careful to center it.

Note that this process may cause some greywater to spill from the filter housing when you unscrew it, so catch that greywater with a bucket or something and dispose of it properly.

Consider cleaning the filter early in the shift, rather than waiting until it is time to transfer greywater. If you clean the filter early, before the greywater tank fills up, there is less likelihood of greywater spillage and so the process will be less messy.

Monitor the blackwater tank level

The blackwater tank fills more slowly than the greywater tank (they are the same size). Unless you started the day with the blackwater tank more than half full or you transferred a great deal of greywater to that tank, you are unlikely to overfill that tank.

However, the consequences of overfilling it are very bad, so though this is unlikely, it is still worth keeping an eye on.

You can insert a dipstick into one of the toilets to check the level directly. This dipstick hangs in the mechanical room just to the left of the door. To use it:

1. Put on gloves.
2. Take the dipstick into an unoccupied shower unit.
3. Raise the toilet lid and seat.
4. Hold down the foot-pedal to open the flush valve. Carefully lower the dipstick into the toilet, black side down, until it hits the bottom of the tank. Avoid touching the toilet or pipe with the dipstick as this will cause flush-water to run down the dipstick and will interfere with your reading.
5. Raise the dipstick and see how close the residue-level on it is to the “Full” line. Release the foot-pedal.
6. Refill the toilet bowl with water.
7. Wipe off the dipstick with a white washcloth (discard the washcloth in a blue bag), spray the dipstick with CaviCide, and put it away in the mechanical room.



If the blackwater tank is full, we must stop operations and take the trailer to an authorized tank dumping station (if there is such a dumping point on-site and if you have time, you could drive there mid-shift, dump, and then return to operation). You cannot reverse-transfer blackwater to the greywater tank (nor would you want to if you could).

Do not allow the blackwater tank to completely fill, as it may overflow into the toilets and spill over when the trailer is in motion.

Monitor the propane level

It's difficult to judge how many showers we can expect per propane tank. Rule of thumb is about 200, but it can be less in cold weather, more in hot weather. If someone mistakenly opens both propane tanks' valves at the same time, the fuller one may leak into the emptier one, which makes the accounting yet more difficult.

Use the pressure gauge on the tanks to determine when it's time to switch tanks (when the gauge arrow first dips into the red is a good time to switch).

When you switch tanks, make a note in the trailer log (on a clipboard inside the mechanical room door) and estimate how many showers you gave on the original tank. For example:

Date	Location	# of Showers	Propane Totals: S or P	Dumped: Gray/Black	Event / Fault / Description
4/20/26	PK-GN	24	S208	Both	

Date	Location	# of Showers	Propane Totals: S or P	Dumped: Gray/Black	Event / Fault / Description
4/22/26	PK-GB	27 (13/14)	S221 / P14	Both	Switched propane tanks
4/27/26	PK-GB	31	P45	Both	

Each tank has a tag on it. Initially the tag reads “**EMPTY**/**IN USE**/**FULL**”. When you begin to use a tank, rip off the part of the tag that reads “**FULL**” so that it reads “**EMPTY**/**IN USE**”. When the tank empties and you switch to a new tank, rip off the part of the tag on the empty tank that reads “**IN USE**” so that it reads “**EMPTY**”:



If a bottle is completely empty, replace it with a full one. See [How to replace a propane bottle](#) below.

Shut down the trailer at the end of the shift

You can usually get a jump on the shut-down process by partially shutting things down while the final few showers of the shift are still ongoing. This works only if you have enough water in the fresh water tank (figure on 10 gallons per shower plus a little extra) and the trailer batteries are reasonably well-charged.

To do this you disconnect the trailer from the site water and site power and rely solely on the trailer’s own water tank and batteries:

1. If you were using site water:
 - a. Make sure the water pump is on (in the electrical panel).



- b. Close the “city water” valve in the mechanical room and open the “tank fill” valve.



- c. Turn off the site water spigot.
 - d. Close the “tank fill” valve.
 - e. Disconnect the hose on both ends, drain the hose, coil it, and stow it in the tongue box. If you are using the tongue box as a charging station, leave the coiled hose nearby until guests have retrieved their electronics from the charging station.
 - f. Disconnect the water filter and stow it in the mechanical closet.
 - g. Cap the trailer water intake connector and turn off the valve at that connection. Secure the small door there.

2. If you were using external AC power:

- a. Turn the battery switch in the electrical panel on if it was off.



- b. Turn on the inverter (press the POWER switch, wait for a beep and for the green POWER light to come on).



- c. Switch the AC power switch on the electrical panel to "INV." (inverter).



- d. Check that the water heater did not turn off during this process. If it did, turn it back on by flipping the Water Heater Master Switch off and then on, so there is little loss of hot water to the showers.
- e. If guests still have things charging at the charging station, let them know the power strip has lost power and they should retrieve their devices. Put the power strip away.

Fold the charging shelf back down against the side of the trailer when it is empty.

(Do not power the charging station while you operate on the inverter, as you need to conserve battery power for the water heater and pump. If you plug the power strip into the top outlet, it draws from the inverter, which is why you need to unplug the power strip if it is plugged in there.)

- f. Disconnect the external power cable and adapter. Coil these and stow them in the mechanical room.
3. Roll up any large mats that were covering the hose and power cable and stow them in the back of the van. Roll them up fuzzy-side out so they are less likely to curl up at the edges when they are next deployed.

When the last showerer exits the shower, complete the process of shutting down the trailer:

1. Complete the STP Trailer Maintenance/Service Log (you may have to wait for the greeter to count the total number of showers for the day).
 - a. Make note of any repairs made, equipment installed, or maintenance done.
 - b. Note if you switched to a new propane tank.
 - c. Note any malfunctions or maintenance needs.
2. Close both propane valves and replace the cover over the propane tanks.
3. Turn off the Water Heater Master Switch.



4. Turn off the inverter (press the POWER switch, wait for a beep and for the green POWER light to turn off).
5. If there are more than 30 gallons of water remaining in the freshwater tank, drain the tank until it has fewer than 30 gallons in it. (See [How to dump excess water from the freshwater tank.](#))
6. Retract and secure the trailer-corner jacks, and strap their handles tightly so they don't dangle. Secure the jacks at the back side of the trailer horizontally, parallel to the ground, long-side in. Secure the jacks at the front side of the trailer vertically, long-side up:



7. Turn off the water pump (but wait until the shower cleaners are through with their work, as they may need to use some water).



8. Turn the battery switch on (during your drive back, to recharge the battery) if it was off.



9. Switch the utility panel AC power switch to "OFF".



Drive the trailer back to its storage spot and secure it

1. Make sure the stuff in the van is well-secured (nothing heavy is loose on top of the bins that could fly forward if you have to brake suddenly).
2. Walk around the site and make sure everything has been retrieved and stowed that is going with you (for example: the sandwich board signs, the benches, the clock, magnetic signs on the van).
3. If you deployed the trailer hitch tongue jack, retract it (see [How to retract the trailer jack](#) below).
4. Close the tongue box.
5. Retrieve and stow the wheel-chocks.
6. Securely close the electric panel, mechanical room, and water intake doors.
7. Check that the van back doors are securely closed.

8. If you used a small ramp, drive forward off of it, then park, retrieve it, and stow it in the mechanical room.
9. Check that both side mirrors are deployed (sometimes people flatten them against the van to keep them out of the way during the shift).
10. (For some sites) stop along the way to dump greywater and/or blackwater tanks at an authorized site (see [How to dump the tanks at a sewer cleanout](#) below). Be sure to close the valves and secure the covers on the outlets when you are done.
11. Drive to the storage site at St. Barnabas' Episcopal Church on 301 Trinity Ave. in Arroyo Grande.
12. Position the van and trailer to best allow access, both to the van-restocker who needs access to the sliding door of the van, and to the next driver who needs access to the mechanical room and electrical panel.
13. Set the parking brake (depress the foot pedal on the far left).
14. Log the odometer reading in the driver's log on the clipboard inside the driver's-side door. Complete the rest of the drivers' log entry.
15. Turn off the engine.
16. Put the folding sun screen in place across the inside of the windshield.
17. Place the three wheel chocks in front of the port-side (driver's side) rear wheel of the van and both front wheels of the trailer.
18. Deploy the trailer hitch jack (see [How to deploy the trailer jack](#) below).
19. Lock the tongue box.
20. Turn off the battery inside the electric panel on the trailer:



21. Remove the bags of used towels and used rags from the mechanical room, the back of the van, or the tongue box and put them in the boxes off to the side of the van (there are two boxes for towels, another for rags). Other volunteers will pick these up to be laundered during the week.
22. Lock the electrical panel door.
23. Lock the van, and put the van keys back in the lockbox in the mechanical room.

24. Lock the mechanical room door (only the bottom lock).

Recommended route

The following is the recommended route between the trailer parking sites and the shower site:

People's Kitchen, Grover Beach

- **To:**

- Exit the parking lot of St. Barnabas' Episcopal Church on 301 Trinity Ave. in Arroyo Grande, turning right onto Trinity Ave.
- Turn right on Traffic Way.
- Turn left on Branch St.
- Take the 101 N onramp on your right.
- Exit the 101 at 4th St.
- Take a left on 4th St.; go up the hill.
- Turn left on Newport.
- Turn right on 10th St.
- Turn right on Rockaway.
- Pass 946 Rockaway Ave. and then back into its parking lot. You will see yellow lines on the pavement that indicate where to position the trailer.



- **From:**

- Turn left out of the parking lot of 946 Rockaway Ave. onto Rockaway Ave.
- Turn right on 9th St.
- Turn right at the next intersection, on W. Grand Ave.
- This turns into E. Grand Ave.
- Cross the 101 and continue briefly on W. Branch St..
- Turn right on Traffic Way.
- Jog left onto S. Traffic Way (just past the Mobil station).
- Turn left on Trinity Ave.
- Turn left into the parking lot at St. Barnabas' Episcopal Church on 301 Trinity Ave.

How-tos

The following sections describe in detail some of the tasks a driver may need to perform.

How to use the alternative charging station

Warning: Use only the USB-only power strips at the alternative charging station. Do not use an AC or AC/USB dual power strip at this location. This reduces the risk of electrical arcing near the propane tanks. If you need to use an AC or AC/USB dual power strip, use the charging station next to the electrical panel at the rear of the trailer instead.

Some site supervisors may prefer to set up the charging station atop the tongue box and to use the power outlet that is built into the box on the port side. To do this:

1. Make sure you have removed everything you will need from the tongue box.

2. There is a yellow electrical plug in the electrical cabinet. Plug it into the outlet there (if it is not already plugged in) in order for power to flow to the outlet at the tongue box.

3. Plug the USB-only power strip into the outlet on the tongue box and put it on top of the box lid.

4. Remove the plastic shell from around the propane tanks and put it on top of the tongue box as a makeshift sun/rain cover for the charging station.

5. Connect the trailer to the building's AC power supply.

6. Verify that the "ON" light is illuminated on the USB power strip.



Note that if you use this alternative charging station you may not be able to return things to the tongue box until after the last guest is out of the shower and has collected their things.

Note also that if you set up the charging station this way, it will only operate while the trailer is hooked up to the building's AC power (it will not work if you are getting your electricity from the inverter or from the van's motor).

The outlet at the tongue box has a ground fault interrupter (GFI) that will cut the power if it detects grounding (which indicates a short, or someone sticking a hairpin in the outlet, or something like that). If you cannot get the outlet to work, maybe the GFI was triggered. If so, the red button on the front plate of the outlet will be extended. Just push it back in place to reset it.

When you shut down the charging station at the end of the day, wait until you disconnect the AC power from the trailer before you disconnect the power strip (this prevents arcing when you remove the plug).

If you smell propane when this alternative charging station is in use, shut off the power to the power strip by unplugging the yellow cord inside the electric panel, and leave it unplugged until such time as you have found and repaired the source of the propane leak.

How to replace a propane bottle

If a propane bottle is completely empty (its tag reads **"EMPTY"** or it emptied during the shift), you can replace it by following these steps:

1. Rip off the part of the tag on the empty tank that reads **"IN USE"** so that it reads **"EMPTY"**, if this has not been done already.
2. Unlock the cable lock from the two propane bottles (the key is on the same keychain as the van keys).
3. Close the valve(s) for the empty tank.

4. Unscrew the black regulator valve connector from the tank.



5. Loosen the bracket wing nut and lift the bracket so that it no longer holds the empty tank.



6. Lift the full bottle into the place where the empty one was. Rotate it so the valve faces the van.
7. Attach the black regulator valve connector to the tank. Hand-tighten this connector—do not use a wrench or other tool.
8. Reattach the bracket so that it secures both tanks in place, and tighten the bracket wing nut.
9. Thread the cable lock through the handles of both tanks so that the tanks will be locked to the trailer, and reattach the padlock to the cable.

How to retract the trailer jack

If the mechanical trailer jack at the trailer hitch has been deployed, you must *fully* retract it before you move the van and trailer. To do so:

1. Unlock and open the tongue box lid (use the “tongue box” key, not the “tongue lock” key).
2. Inside the tongue box is the jack power switch. Flip the switch to “ON”.



3. Retract the jack *as far as it will go* by holding the switch on the jack down. (You don't have to remove the fabric cover from the jack if you can feel through the cover to find the switch.)



4. Turn off the power to the jack by flipping the power switch in the tongue box to “OFF”.
5. Move the wooden block that the base of the jack was resting on. Stow it somewhere convenient and secure.
6. Close the tongue box lid and lock it.

How to deploy the trailer jack

After you park the van and trailer at its storage site, deploy the trailer jack so as to take the weight of the trailer off of the van. You may also want to use the trailer jack occasionally at other sites if you need to raise the front of the trailer to level it. Deploy the trailer jack by following these instructions:

1. Place one or two large wooden blocks below the jack foot, on their sides so that the long sides of the block are parallel to the long sides of the trailer. If you use two blocks, place the smaller block atop the larger block, as they are in the following photo:



2. Unlock the tongue box (use the “tongue box” key, not the “tongue lock” key) and open the lid.
3. Inside the tongue box is the jack power switch. Flip the switch to “ON”.



4. Raise the switch on the jack to deploy it onto the wooden block. If you are parking at our storage site, keep raising the jack until the trailer hitch just begins to uncouple (this is subtle; you have to watch the hitch closely). Otherwise, raise it until the trailer is level. You don't have to remove the fabric cover from the jack if you can feel through the cover to find the switch.

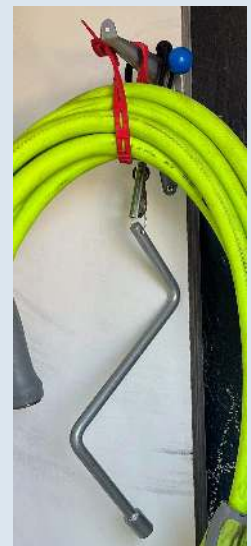


5. Turn off the power to the jack by flipping the power switch in the tongue box to "OFF".
6. Close the tongue box lid and (if you are stowing the trailer at its storage site) lock it.

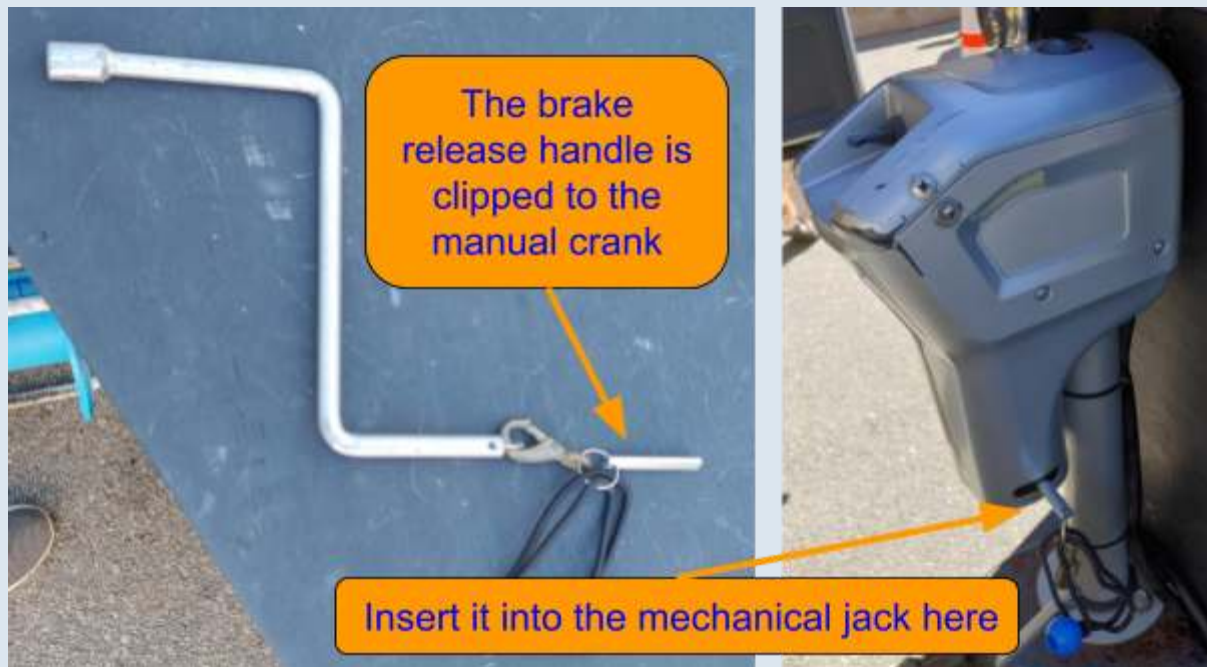
What to do if the trailer hitch jack will not deploy or will not retract

If the trailer hitch jack motor fails, wait 15 seconds for the circuit breaker to close, then try again. If that does not work, check that the battery switch is on inside the electrical panel of the trailer. Turn the power switch inside the tongue box off and then on again and then try again. If that does not work, try turning on the van engine to give the batteries more power.

If none of that works, you have to manually retract or extend the jack. You can find the manual crank in the mechanical room.



1. Turn off the power to the jack at the switch in the tongue box.
2. Remove the fabric cover from the jack, and also remove the rubber access covers on the top of the jack and on the side of the motor cover.
3. Insert the manual crank handle into the access hole on the top of the jack, engaging the drive screw. (**Warning:** Always install the crank handle and hold it firmly in place before releasing the brake on a loaded jack. Due to the low-friction ball screw, if the crank is not held firmly in place, the jack may run away and the crank may spin dangerously when the brake is released.)
4. Unclip the brake release handle from the manual crank. While holding the crank firmly in place, install the brake release handle on the brake lever and pull the lever forward (toward the van) to release the brake:



5. Rotate the manual crank handle counter-clockwise to extend the jack, or clockwise to retract it.
6. When the jack is at the desired height, first re-engage the brake by pushing the brake release handle back (toward the trailer) then remove the crank and brake release handle. Replace the rubber covers and the fabric cover.
7. Reclip the brake release handle to the manual crank and replace these in the mechanical room.

How to dump the tanks at a sewer cleanout

We dump our tanks in the sewer cleanouts at People's Kitchen. This is at a specific location that accesses the sewer lines that go to a sewage treatment plant. *Never* dump *either* tank into a storm drain or gutter. See [Site maps and site-specific details](#) for the locations of these sewer cleanouts.

Important: Always drain blackwater first, then greywater. This flushes out the hose with less-noxious greywater after it has been full of blackwater.

1. Park where you can run the wastewater hose from the tank drains into the sewer cleanout. These drains are located at the front of the trailer on either side: the greywater on the port side and the blackwater on the starboard side.
2. Check the level of the trailer. You may need to raise the back of the trailer above level to fully drain the tanks.

3. Put on the thick rubber gloves that can be found in the tongue box. Retrieve the wastewater draining hose (“stinky slinky”) from the tongue box.



4. Open the sewer cleanout lid(s). Insert the red, right-angle-hooked end of the draining hose into the sewer cleanout.



5. Remove the cap from the blackwater tank drain on the trailer. Attach the other end of the draining hose securely to the blackwater tank drain.

Note that there should be a rubber gasket in the fastener on the end of the hose. If the dog ears on the hose fitting fasten suspiciously easily (without resistance), this may mean the gasket has fallen out. If so, check the bottom of the tongue box to see if the gasket is there, and reinsert it in the fitting. If the gasket is not properly in place, you can expect a messy and unpleasant spill!



6. Double check that the exit end of the draining hose is securely in the sewer cleanout, then open the valve that opens the tank drain. If you are using the drains at the front of the trailer (this is your only option on the old trailer), these valves open by turning a green lever so that it is parallel to the drain pipe.



7. When the tank finishes draining, close its valve (by turning the lever or by pushing the gate valve into place), remove the draining hose from it, and re-cap the drain.
8. Holding the end of the hose somewhat raised, walk it toward the sewer cleanout to drain the last wastewater from it.
9. Attach that end of the hose to the greywater tank drain, then repeat steps #6–8 for the greywater tank.

10. Stow the wastewater draining hose in the tongue box.
11. Reattach the lid(s) on the site sewer cleanout port.
12. Return the gloves to the tongue box or the back panel. Lock the tongue box and continue on your way.

In case of traffic accident

If the van is involved in a traffic accident, follow these guidelines:

1. If you can safely move the van and trailer to a safer location, do so. Otherwise, turn off the engine and turn on the emergency flashers. Deploy the cones from the van if you can and if they'll be helpful.
2. If any vehicle is on fire, call 911. (There is a small fire extinguisher in the mechanical room on the trailer, but it may not be sufficient.)
3. If anyone is badly hurt, call 911.
4. If the accident involved injury to a person or if it was a multiple-vehicle accident that resulted in serious damage to any vehicle, and if you did not already call 911:
 - a. If the accident took place on the highway, call 800.835.5247 and report the accident to the Highway Patrol.
 - b. If the accident happened on a city street, call a non-emergency dispatch phone number and report the accident (see [Important contact numbers](#)).
5. When everything is as safe as it's going to be, fill out an incident report, and also call the Maintenance Manager to report the accident (see [Our operations team](#) for contact details). If you are on your way to a shift, also contact the site supervisor to let them know if you are delayed or will be unable to make it.
6. If you can do so safely, take some photos that might be helpful to us in understanding what happened and the nature of any damage or malfunction.
7. Fill out a traffic accident report (these are different from incident reports; you find them inside the drivers-side door). Note how, when, and where the accident occurred. If you can get this information, write down the names and contact information of any injured persons and witnesses. Attach any request, demand, order, notice, summons, or legal paper you receive as a result of the accident.
8. Do not talk with others at the scene about the cause of the accident. Assume no obligation, make no payment, and incur no expense without authorization from the Shower the People board of directors.

What to do if the van needs to be towed

We have arrangements with "College Towing" 805.489.8600. Call the Maintenance Manager for details on how to charge the cost of towing to STP. See [Our operations team](#) for contact information.

What to do if you need gas

The low fuel warning light appears on the dashboard fuel gauge and a chime sounds when fuel is low. At that point you have about fifteen more miles before you run out of gas.

The Maintenance Manager typically fills the gas tank when needed, so you shouldn't have to worry about this. But if the tank gets unexpectedly low, call the Maintenance Manager for details on how to fill up and charge the cost to STP. See [Our operations team](#) for contact information.

What to do if the on-site electricity is not available

If the on-site electricity fails or if you are unable to connect to it, or if there is no on-site electricity where you are operating, you can instead use the trailer batteries and the inverter. To do so:

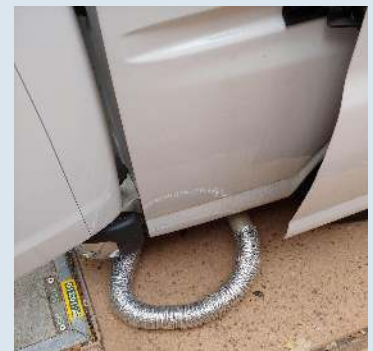
1. Turn on the battery power inside the trailer utility panel. When the battery is well-charged its power readout should read approximately 12V.



2. Turn on the inverter by pressing the POWER button on the inverter control until you hear a beep and the POWER light turns green. Set the AC power selector switch on the utility panel to 3 (INV.).



The trailer batteries may not give you sufficient power for the entire shift. Eventually the power readout will dip well below 12V. To prevent this, you can keep the batteries charged by running the van engine while the batteries are in use. If you do this, use the flexible metal ducting (found in the mechanical room) to redirect van exhaust away from the greeter station:



What to do if you get insufficient voltage

If the voltage meter in the electric panel is showing a lower than expected voltage readout even though you believe you are hooked up to an AC power source, take these steps to troubleshoot:

1. Make sure the AC power selector selects the correct input source (#1 or #2 depending on where you plugged in the cable).
2. Follow the extension cord back to the AC outlet, checking for possible loose connections along the way.
3. Bring some electrical device (such as a power strip with an indicator light) to the AC outlet and plug it in there to verify that the building's electricity is on at the outlet. Some outlets have outlet-specific fuses that can trip and turn off the outlet power, so you may need to reset such a fuse.
4. If the outlet's power is fine, plug in the electrical device at other places along the chain of extension cords to verify that the cords are carrying power correctly.
5. If you're pretty sure you have AC power at the trailer but the voltage meter is still too low, there may be a problem with the "Intelli-Power" AC/DC converter. Check that it is plugged in (the red circle in the image). It should always be plugged in, as we typically have no reason to unplug it.
6. If none of these steps fixes the problem, contact the Maintenance Manager for advice (see [Our operations team](#) for contact information).



How to replace the water filter

If the water flow rate is low, the filter may be clogged. If so, it must be replaced. We also replace the filter as a matter of course every three months.

You can find replacement water filters on the shelf in the mechanical room.

To replace the filter mid-shift:

1. Switch the showers from city water to tank water by closing the "City Water" valve in the mechanical room. (Make sure the tank is sufficiently full first and that the water pump is on).
2. Turn off the spigot at the site water source.
3. Turn on the "Tank Fill" valve in the mechanical room for a few seconds to depressurize the hose, then turn it off again.
4. Disconnect the filter from the hose and from the site source spigot (or from between the hoses if you use two hoses). Expect some water to drain from the filter and the hose when you do.
5. Discard the old filter. Write today's date in permanent marker on the new filter.
6. Attach the new filter to the hose and the spigot (or between the hoses if you use both hoses).
7. Turn on the "Tank Fill" valve in the mechanical room.

8. Turn on the spigot at the site water source.
9. When air flushes from the hose, turn off the “Tank Fill” valve and turn on the “City Water” valve.

What to do about a flat tire on the van or trailer

Call the Maintenance Manager for help changing or replacing a tire. See [Our operations team](#) for contact information.

What to do if the van battery is dead

Call the Maintenance Manager for help with a dead van battery. See [Our operations team](#) for contact information.

How to dump excess water from the fresh water tank

It is best to have fewer than 30 gallons in the freshwater tank when you drive the trailer. If the tank is very full, you may want to switch to using tank water (rather than hose water) early in the shift so as to drain the tank.

If the fresh water tank is too full (for instance, if it was accidentally over-filled at the beginning of the shift), this makes the trailer more difficult to manage on the road and puts more strain on the axles and on the van. In such a case, you should dump extra water (lowering the level in the tank to 30 gallons or fewer) before you drive.

Between the wheels of the trailer beneath the mechanical room door is a water outlet. There is a key in the mechanical room with which you can open the valve (which is also in the mechanical room) to regulate the flow of water through this outlet. It will dump straight to the ground, so be prepared for the splash, and try to dump where it won't cause issues with mud or what-have-you:



HOW TO BE AN EXCELLENT DRIVER (New Van/Trailer)



Overview

The driver tows the shower trailer to and from our sites, and establishes electric, water, and sewer hook-ups on-site. The driver puts the trailer in operating mode for giving showers, and shuts it down and puts it in storage mode when it is parked off-site.

Qualifications

Shower the People (and our insurance provider) has the following requirements for drivers:

- You must have a valid California driver's license. You do not need a special class of license.
- You must be at least 18 years old and have at least two years' experience driving.
- You must not have a DUI on your record.
- You must have no major moving violations on your record in the past four years.
- In the past three years, you must have no more than:
 - Two at-fault accidents
 - Three minor moving violations

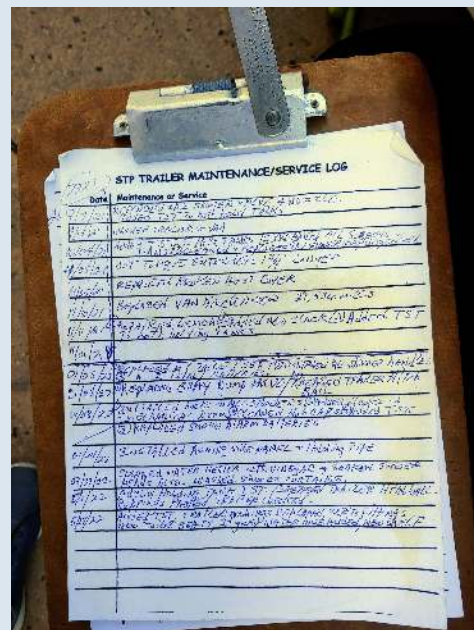
- Four non-moving violations (such as Failure to Appear (FTA), License not in possession, or No Proof of Insurance/Registration)
- Four of any of the above three things in combination
- You must have a motor vehicle record (MVR) check done by our insurance provider. Ask the Driver Trainer to get this process started for you (see [Our operations team](#) for contact information). Submit your name as it appears on your driver's license; your driver's license number, state, and expiration date; and your date of birth.

Responsibilities

In summary, the responsibilities of the driver are:

- Tow a trailer to and from our shower sites, safely and in compliance with traffic laws.
- Manage the set-up, activation, deactivation, and shut-down of a trailer, and monitor it to ensure it is working properly during the shift. This includes hooking up water, electric, and (sometimes) sewer connections.
- Report maintenance issues to the regional Maintenance Manager. Log mileage.
- (For some shifts and sites) dump waste tanks at authorized sites.
- (For some shifts and sites) attach and roll out the greywater irrigation hose, then stow it at the end of the shift.
- Follow all checklists, policies, procedures, and safety protocols in order to safely operate a van and trailer.

If you make any minor repairs or workarounds, note this on the “STP Trailer Maintenance/Service Log” which is located on the same clipboard as the “STP Trailer Log” inside the mechanical room door.



Note: Drivers *may* also take one of the other roles (greeter, cleaner, supervisor). If you decide you want to do a second role in addition to driver, please sign up for both roles at ivolunteer. This helps us avoid having more volunteers than we need.

Pick up the trailer and drive to the site

Go to the United Methodist Church on 1515 Fredericks St. in SLO where the van and trailer are parked. You have been issued a key to the trailer's mechanical room (other keys you may need are in the lockbox in the mechanical room).

1. Retrieve the van keys from the lock box in the mechanical room. Unlock the van.



2. Securely close the mechanical room door, the utility panel door, and the supplies closet door if any are open.
3. Check that the corner trailer jack stands are retracted and their handles are correctly secured. Check that each of the shower unit stairs are fully-retracted, and that the elastic cables to hold the doors open are not dragging or hanging loose.
4. Check that the van and trailer tires look well-inflated.

What if the tires look under-inflated?

The correct pressure for the van front tires is 55 psi, for the van back tires 80psi, and for the trailer tires 75 psi. Add air if necessary (at a service station) if the tires are significantly below these levels.

Note that at some locations where we raise the back of the trailer to level it (such as the SLO Library), this puts extra weight on the back of the van, so the tires may look flat even if they are properly inflated.

You can test the pressure of the van tires, while the van is in motion, by pressing the 🚗 button on the dashboard multiple times. This scrolls through a number of dashboard readouts, which include tire pressure readings for the front and rear van tires.

To test tire pressure manually, use the gauge in the glove compartment (between the seats below the dashboard):





5. Remove the three wheel chocks. Put these in the van where you'll see them (to remind you to use them at your destination, and so you can verify you removed them before you drive away).
6. Check that the trailer hitch padlock is locked, the electrical cord and breakaway cables are connected, and the chains are securely attached. You may need to more firmly fasten the electrical cord if the electric brakes, turn signals, or brake lights are malfunctioning. Be careful never to step on the thin, easily-broken emergency brake cable.



7. Fully retract the trailer jack (see [How to retract the trailer jack](#) below).
8. Move any cones from in front of the van.
9. Double-check that the side mirrors are both deployed, not retracted.
10. Turn on the external hazard blinking lights with the switch on top of the steering column, then walk to the back of the trailer to verify that the lights are working. If not, try more firmly attaching the electrical cord at the connection between the van and the trailer, near the trailer hitch.
11. Fold up and stow the windshield sun-screen.
12. Start the van engine.

13. Check the oil pressure using the gauge on the dashboard. Normal pressure is between 25 and 65. If it is below 25, alert the Maintenance Manager (see [Our operations team](#) for contact details):



14. Check the van battery using the gauge on the dashboard. If the reading is below 12, alert the Maintenance Manager (see [Our operations team](#) for contact details):



15. Record the odometer reading in the driver's log (on a clipboard inside the driver-side door).



16. Put the van in tow/haul mode by pressing the tow switch and verifying that the associated dashboard light comes on.



17. Disengage the parking brake (use the handle below and to the left side of the steering wheel). Confirm that the BRAKE indicator on the dashboard turns off.



18. Test the electric trailer brakes:

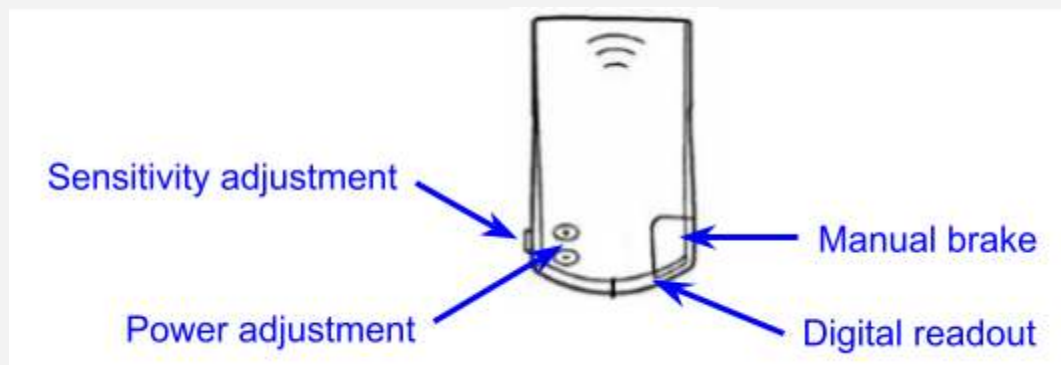
- a. Under the dashboard on the driver's side is a box labeled "Quest"



- b. There should be a red dot in the lower-right corner of the digital readout, as in the photo above. This indicates that the trailer is connected to the van. If this light does not appear, try more firmly connecting the electrical cord between the trailer and the van, near the trailer hitch. If the dot still fails to appear, or if the digital readout reads "SC" (short circuit), alert the Maintenance Manager (see [Our operations team](#) for contact details). The van may not be safe to drive until this is corrected.
- c. To test the trailer brakes, press your foot on the van brakes, put the van in neutral, rotate the steering wheel so that the van wheels face forward, then press and hold the manual brake button on the Quest box and release your foot from the brake pedal. This should apply the trailer brakes and the trailer should not move. If the trailer nonetheless rolls forward, the brakes are not working correctly. Reapply the foot brake, put the van in Park, apply the emergency brake, and alert the Maintenance Manager (see [Our operations team](#) for contact details).

How to adjust the power and sensitivity of the trailer brakes

You can adjust the sensitivity of the trailer brakes (how soon they come on) and their power (how much additional stopping force they apply). To see the current settings and to adjust them, use the digital readout on the front and the four buttons arrayed across the top and left side of the Quest box. The normal settings are 75 for power and 4 for sensitivity:



To change the sensitivity, press the sensitivity adjustment button. You will see the value change on the digital readout. Keep pressing it until it reads "4" or your desired value. To adjust the power, use the two buttons labeled + and -. Press those buttons to adjust the power until it reads "75" or your desired value.

19. Drive to the site. See [Recommended routes](#) below.



What if I find the van/trailer poorly-secured, vandalized, or tampered with at pick-up?

Check that the van and trailer can be made safe for travel. Take extra care with the pre-drive checklist. If the van and trailer cannot be made safe for travel, follow the steps in “What if the van/trailer is not safe to drive or is out of order and cannot be driven?” below.

When you can, contact the General Manager and tell them about the problem.

What if the van/trailer is not safe to drive or is out of order and cannot be driven?

If this is the state of the van/trailer when you find it in the storage lot, first alert the shift’s site supervisor so they can let volunteers and guests know that the shift is canceled.

Contact the Maintenance Manager and let them know the details of the problem. See [Our operations team](#) for contact details.

Park the trailer on-site and prepare it for showers

When you reach the day’s shower site, position the trailer correctly and prepare it for operation.

1. Make sure the trailer and van are positioned so it’s easy for guests to come and go without having to squeeze around things, so there’s plenty of space to deploy the greeter table, so the shower stairs come down on level ground, and so you don’t block traffic or driveways.
2. Set the parking brake (with the foot pedal at the far left).
3. Chock the wheels.

4. Level the trailer. There are bubble levels on the outside of the trailer that you can use to judge how level the trailer is, side-to-side and back-to-front. The bubble rises toward any corners of the trailer that are above-level. If the bubble touches the **0** indicator, the trailer is level on that dimension.



5. You can use a variety of methods to level the trailer:

- a. **Using the manual corner jacks.** You can deploy the jacks to fine-tune any individual trailer corner. Put a block of wood under the foot to avoid denting the asphalt or concrete.



- b. **Using a ramp.** You can drive a wheel of the trailer onto a small plastic ramp (two are stored in the mechanical room). If you choose this method, do it before chocking the wheels.



- c. **Using the mechanical trailer tongue jack** (see [How to deploy the trailer jack](#) below). This raises the front half of the trailer.
6. Deploy the shower stairs. We prefer trained drivers to do this rather than greeters or guests because it is tricky and can injure your hands if you do it incorrectly. Remember to pull with your palm facing up:



- a. Pull open *one* step. This will reveal the two stair stabilizer legs. For each leg, one at a time, release the pin that holds the leg in place, pull the leg up, and then replace the pin to lock it into place. Do not extend the silver leg ends yet.
- b. Open all but the last step on the stairs. This puts the stabilizer legs into position. Now you can release the pins on those legs, one at a time, until they reach the ground. When they do, restore the pins into place to lock the legs at that length. If the driver has not yet leveled the trailer, wait to perform this step until s/he does so.



- c. Open the last step on the stairs.
7. Open the tongue box and turn on the invert/convert battery switch.
 8. In the electrical panel, turn the battery switch on. You should see the digital readout in the electrical panel come to life. If the invert/convert battery switch is on and the electrical panel battery switch is on, the **AC IN**, **AC OUT**, and **DC** readings will be low (~0–12W), the **INV STATUS** will be “INVERTING” and the **CHG STATUS** will be “NO CHARGE”.



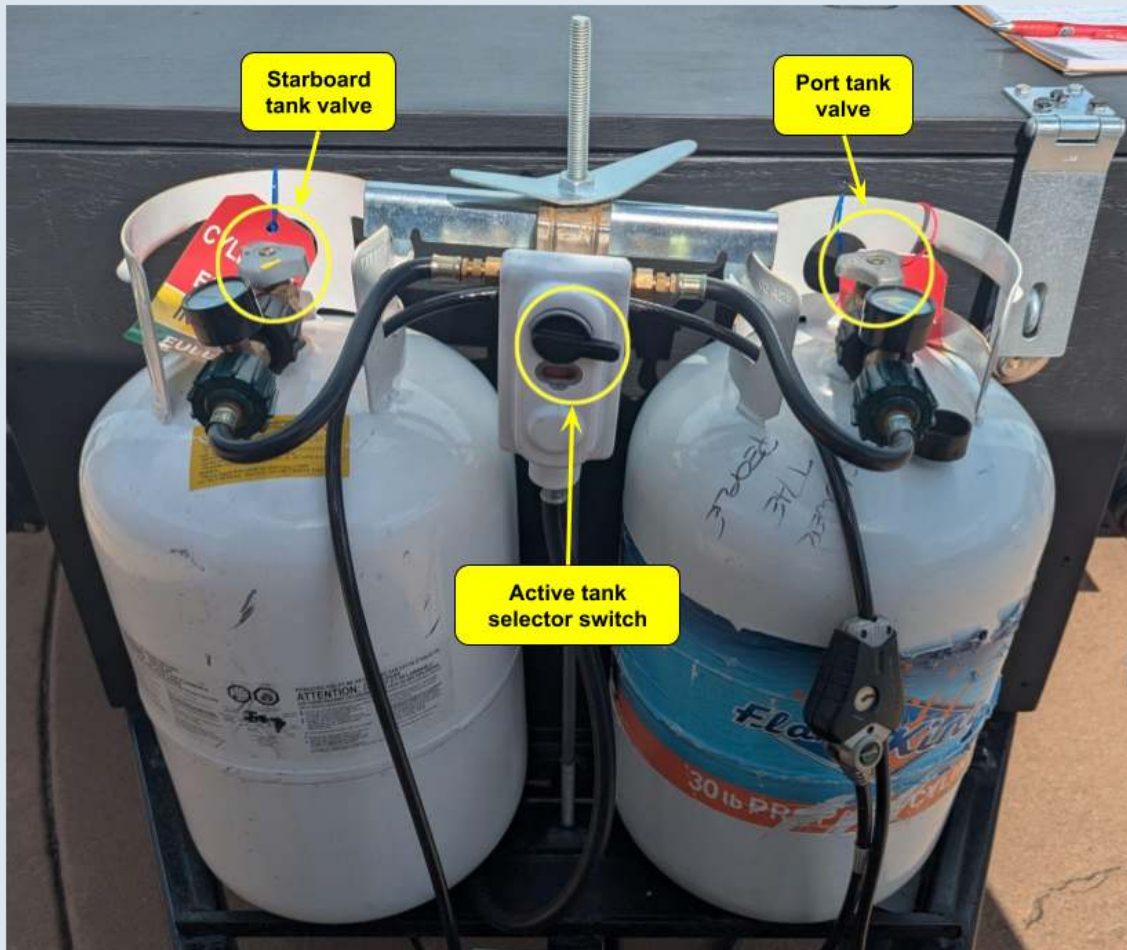
9. Turn on the water pump switch on the electric panel.



10. Turn on the shower room fans switch:



16. Open the valve for the propane tank that is currently in use. Check its gauge to determine how close to empty it is (monitor it during the shift if it is near empty). Only one tank's valve should be open at any time.



A changeover lever (“Active tank selector switch” in the illustration above) governs which tank the system draws propane from. You should always keep that lever pointing at the tank that you have opened the valve for and that you intend to draw propane from. The other tank’s valve should remain closed. An indicator, just below that lever, turns red when the propane level is low. When it turns red, close that tank valve, open the other tank valve, and switch the position of the lever so that it points to the other tank. Never position the lever vertically (so that it points down rather than to one tank or the other). If you do so, the system will draw from both tanks (if their valves are open) and this makes it more difficult for us to account for how much propane we have remaining in each tank.

17. Turn on the water heater master switch. The readout should eventually go from **000** to **120**. This readout will be on the remote on the front of the Navien heating unit in the mechanical room.



18. Verify that all three shower valve switches are on (these are just inside the mechanical room door, on the right).
19. Tell the site supervisor that the water heater is on; a volunteer will manually check the water in shower #1 to verify that it is heating up. From this point on, assume that guests may begin their showers, so be sure not to take steps that would interrupt the flow of hot water.
20. Open the mechanical room door and latch it open.
21. If you will use external, site-supplied AC power (this is what we do usually):
 - a. Connect the extension cord between the on-site power outlet and the connector adjacent to the utility panel on the trailer. A black adapter cable and orange pigtail plug in the mechanical room translate between the ordinary household AC plug of the electric cord and the plugs of the trailer.
 - b. Drop the spare tire and open the back panel of the trailer. Use the legs on the underside of the panel door to prop the door horizontally. Put the power strip onto this flat surface and plug it in to the outlet on the outside rear wall of the trailer.
 - c. Check the digital readout again. The **AC IN**, **AC OUT**, and **DC** readings will be higher (~300–700W), the **INV STATUS** will be “ACPASS” and the **CHG STATUS** will be either “BULK”, “ABS”, or “FLOAT”.



What if the numbers are way off of what they should be?

If the “INV STATUS” and “CHG STATUS” change as expected but the “AC IN” and “AC OUT” numbers are low and the “DC” reading is zero, something has gone awry.



Try this troubleshooting technique:

1. Disconnect the AC power cord.
2. Turn off both battery switches: the one in the electrical panel and the one in the tongue box.
3. After 10–15 seconds, switch both of those battery switches back on.
4. Press “LOAD” on the inverter remote readout screen to restart the inverter.
5. Reconnect the AC power cord.

22. If you will use city water (this is what we do usually) rather than relying solely on the tank:

- a. Connect one end of a greenish-yellow garden hose to the site water source (see [Site maps and site-specific details](#) for the location of the site water source). Do not use red or blue hoses which are used only for draining waste tanks. Note:
 - If you only use one hose, first attach the water filter to the site water source, then attach the hose to the other end of the filter.
 - If you use both hoses, either first attach the water filter to the site water source or attach the filter between the two hoses:



- b. Connect the other end of the hose to the water intake nozzle near the mechanical room door. Give it a little tug to make sure it is firmly attached.
- c. In the mechanical room, open the “fresh tank fill” valve and close the “city water” valve.
- d. Turn on the site water source spigot to start water flowing through the hose. Because you have the tank fill valve open and the city water valve closed, this will flush the air in the hose into the fresh water tank rather than into the pipes in the shower units.
- e. After that air is flushed, open the “city water” valve in the mechanical room. When the fresh water tank has 40 gallons in it, also close the “fresh tank fill” valve. (A common mistake is to forget to close that valve and overfill the fresh water tank.)
- f. Turn off the water pump switch.

Note: at the BMW SLO site in particular, but at any other sites at which water pressure is too low to give adequate pressure to the showers or to the water heater, you may want to keep the “city water” valve closed and feed showers from the tank by using the water pump. This prevents fluctuations in pressure that can interfere with the operation of the water heater. However, if you do this, you need to monitor the water tank to keep it full enough to supply the showers without running dry but not so full that you will end up with a big surplus at the end of the shift.

What if on-site water is not available?

If on-site water is not available or not functioning, or if you cannot hook the hose up to the trailer water intake, you can run the showers off of the water in the large tank in the mechanical room.

You can only give as many showers this way as the water in that tank is sufficient for (roughly 10 gallons per shower). If you can get clean water from some source (but just cannot connect it to the trailer water intake), you can try to fill the tank by running a hose into the *top* of the water tank (there is a hole with a lid at the top).

If you cannot get water from the site at all, you’ll have to improvise. Can you think of anywhere nearby where you might be able to fill the tank? Is there another spigot on the site property that you can temporarily drive to?

If you run out of options, give as many showers as you can with whatever water is left in the storage tank. Notify guests that water is short and may give out on them. Then cancel the rest of the shift (see “We have to cancel a shift” in the [Troubleshooting](#) section for details).

What if the site water is connected but we don't seem to get much flow from it?

Check the following:

1. There is a continuous hose connection between the site water spigot, the water filter, and the water intake of the trailer.
2. The “City Water” or “Fresh Tank Fill” valve inside the mechanical room is open.
3. The site water spigot is on. At some sites you need to do this with a sillcock key.
4. There are no kinks in the hose, or places where the hose runs under something heavy (e.g. the trailer wheels).
5. There are no obstructions within the hose itself.
6. The water filter is not clogged (try removing it from the circuit to see if that fixes the problem. If it is clogged, replace the water filter with a new one—see [How to replace the water filter](#) below).

23. Deploy mats and cones to alleviate tripping hazards from hoses and cords.



24. If you are irrigating with greywater at this site:

- a. Attach the red greywater irrigation hose (found in the shed at the UU) to the greywater tank output on the **port** side of the trailer and set the other end of the hose at the irrigation site.



There is also a blue 2"-diameter flexible hose with a PVC adapter elbow that we store in the storage shed at the UU SLO site. You might prefer that hose. The larger diameter means it is less likely to clog, and the longer length gives you more flexibility in where to place it. However, it can be annoying to respool.



- b. Open the greywater tank dump valve at the trailer-side (the green lever between the hose coupler and the trailer; when it is parallel to the pipe it is open). (There are also wastewater outlets at the rear port side of the trailer. If you use the greywater outlet there instead, its valve operates with a guillotine slider rather than a green lever.)
- c. Set out cones if needed to avoid tripping hazards or vehicles driving over the hose.
- d. Periodically verify that the greywater is irrigating where you intend it to, and is not spilling over onto the sidewalk or parking lot.

If there is plenty of greywater in the tank, but nothing comes out of the hose when the valve is open, this may mean something (like a hairball) is clogging the hose.

In such a case, close the greywater tank valve, wait a few minutes for it to drain (to the extent it can), then carefully (there may be greywater inside) disconnect the hose from the trailer, and inspect inside to see if you can find and remove the source of the clog in the coupler.

If the clog is not there but deep inside the hose, things get trickier. You might try to flush the hose by hooking it up to a water spigot on-site and using higher-pressure water to force the clog through.

If you cannot clear the clog and therefore cannot drain the tank, alert the regional Maintenance Manager. They may need to schedule a greywater tank dumping before the next shift and to take additional action to clear the clog from the hose or the tank.

Monitor the propane level

It's difficult to judge how many showers we can expect per propane tank. Rule of thumb is about 200, but it can be less in cold weather, more in hot weather. If someone mistakenly opens both propane tanks' valves at the same time, the fuller one may leak into the emptier one, which makes the accounting yet more difficult.

Use the pressure gauge on the tanks to determine when it's time to switch tanks (when the gauge arrow first dips into the red is a good time to switch).

When you switch tanks, make a note in the trailer log (on a clipboard inside the mechanical room door) and estimate how many showers you gave on the original tank. For example:

Date	Location	# of Showers	Propane Totals: S or P	Dumped: Gray/Black	Event / Fault / Description
7/2/26	UU-SLO	24	S208	Gray	
7/4/26	UCC	27 (13/14)	S221 / P14	Both	Switched propane tanks
7/5/26	Library	31	P45	neither	

Each tank has a tag on it. Initially the tag reads “**EMPTY**/**IN USE**/**FULL**”. When you begin to use a tank, rip off the part of the tag that reads “**FULL**” so that it reads “**EMPTY**/**IN USE**”. When the tank empties and you switch to a new tank, rip off the part of the tag on the empty tank that reads “**IN USE**” so that it reads “**EMPTY**”:



If you are at the SLO UU site, also replace any empty tank with a full one that you will find on-site. See [How to replace a propane bottle](#) below.

Shut down the trailer at the end of the shift

You can usually get a jump on the shut-down process by partially shutting things down while the final few showers of the shift are still ongoing. This works only if you have enough water in the fresh water tank (figure on 10 gallons per shower plus a little extra) and the trailer batteries are reasonably well-charged.

To do this you disconnect the trailer from the site water and site power and rely solely on the trailer's own water tank and batteries:

1. If you were using site water:
 - a. Make sure the water pump is on (in the electrical panel).



- b. Close the “city water” valve in the mechanical room and open the “fresh tank fill” valve.
 - c. Turn off the site water spigot.
 - d. Close the “fresh tank fill” valve.
 - e. Disconnect the hose on both ends, drain the hose, coil it, and stow it in the tongue box.
 - f. Disconnect the water filter and stow it in the mechanical closet.
 - g. Cap the trailer water intake connector and secure the small door there.
2. If you were using external AC power:
 - a. Turn the battery switch in the electrical panel on if it was off.



- b. If guests still have things charging at the charging station, let them know the power strip has lost power and they should retrieve their devices. Put the power strip away.

- c. Disconnect the external power cable and adapter. Coil these and stow them in the mechanical room.
3. Roll up any large mats that were covering the hose and power cable and stow them in the back of the van. Roll them up fuzzy-side out so they are less likely to curl up at the edges when they are next deployed.

When the last showerer exits the shower, complete the process of shutting down the trailer:

1. Complete the STP Trailer Maintenance/Service Log (you may have to wait for the greeter to count the total number of showers for the day).
 - a. Make note of any repairs made, equipment installed, or maintenance done.
 - b. Note if you switched to a new propane tank.
 - c. Note any malfunctions or maintenance needs.
2. Close the open propane valve on top of the tank and replace the portal cover.
3. Turn off the Water Heater Master Switch.



4. If there are more than 30 gallons of water remaining in the freshwater tank, drain the tank until it has fewer than 30 gallons in it. (See [How to dump excess water from the freshwater tank.](#))
5. Retract and secure the trailer-corner jacks, and strap their handles tightly so they don't dangle. Secure the jacks at the back side of the trailer horizontally, parallel to the ground, long-side in. Secure the jacks at the front side of the trailer vertically, long-side up:



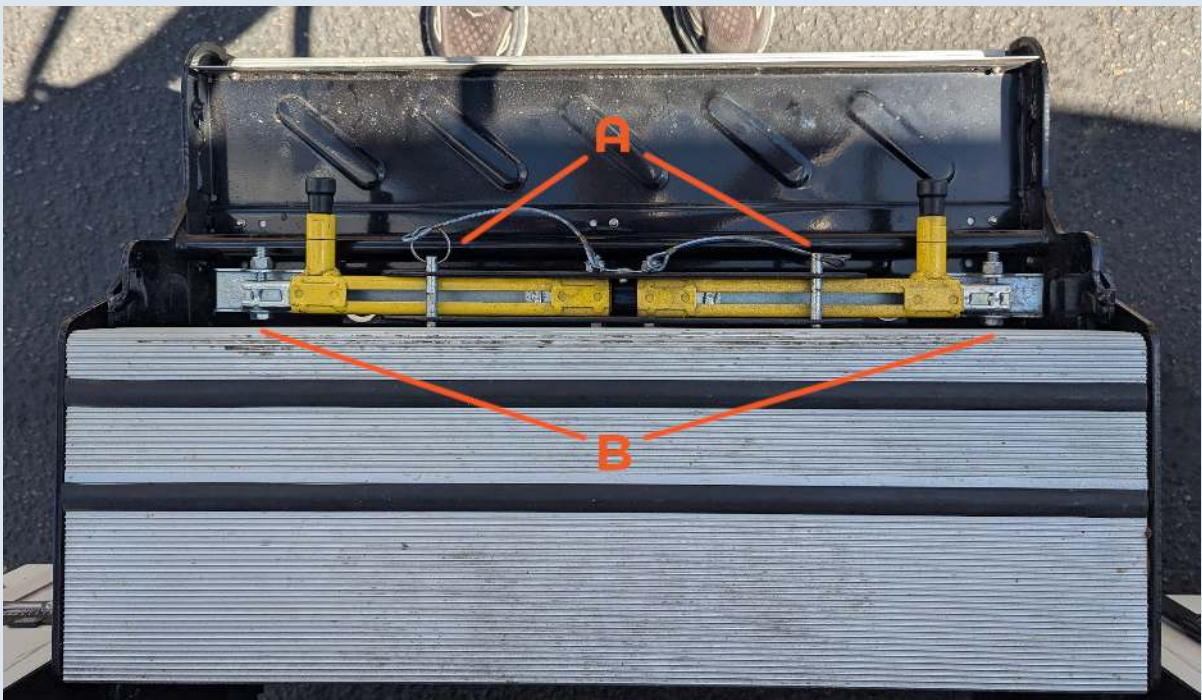
6. Turn off the water pump (but wait until the shower cleaners are through with their work, as they may need to use some water).



7. Turn the battery switches in the electrical panel and in the tongue box off. (Turn them 90° only; they can turn past 90° but if you turn them further this may result in an unpredictable state.)



8. Stow the shower step stabilizers and shower steps. Make sure both of the pins are fully inserted in the holes both in front of and behind the stabilizer legs ("A" in the illustration below), that the silver leg extensions are fully retracted, and that the feet are folded *under* the leg ends ("B" in the illustration below).



Be careful not to try to stow the stairs if the stabilizer feet are above the legs or are perpendicular to the legs as in the following illustration:



Retract the steps fully into the trailer. You may also need to attach the door straps to them if they are dangling.

Drive the trailer back to its storage spot and secure it

1. Make sure the stuff in the van is well-secured (nothing heavy is loose on top of the bins that could fly forward if you have to brake suddenly).
2. Walk around the site and make sure everything has been retrieved and stowed that is going with you (for example: the sandwich board signs, the benches, the clock, magnetic signs on the van).
3. If you deployed the trailer hitch tongue jack, retract it (see [How to retract the trailer jack](#) below).
4. Close the tongue box.
5. Retrieve and stow the wheel-chocks.
6. Close and lock the supplies closet door, and lock each of the shower doors.
7. Check that the van back doors are securely closed.
8. If you used a small ramp, drive forward off of it, then park, retrieve it, and stow it in the mechanical room.
9. Check that both side mirrors are deployed (sometimes people flatten them against the van to keep them out of the way during the shift).
10. (For some sites) stop along the way to dump greywater and/or blackwater tanks at an authorized site (see [How to dump the tanks at a sewer cleanout](#) below). Be sure to close the valves and secure the covers on the outlets when you are done.

11. Drive to the storage site at the United Methodist Church, 1515 Fredericks St, SLO.



12. Position the van and trailer to best allow access, both to the van-restocker who needs access to the sliding door of the van, and to the next driver who needs access to the mechanical room and electrical panel.
13. Back-up the van and trailer until only the front wheels of the van remain on the pavement. Turn the steering wheel all the way to the right (toward the hill, away from the children's center).
14. Set the parking brake (depress the foot pedal on the far left).
15. Log the odometer reading in the driver's log on the clipboard inside the driver's-side door. Complete the rest of the drivers' log entry.
16. Turn off the engine.
17. Put the folding sun screen in place across the inside of the windshield.
18. Place the three wheel chocks in front of the port-side (driver's side) rear wheel of the van and both front wheels of the trailer.
19. Deploy the trailer hitch jack (see [How to deploy the trailer jack](#) below).
20. Lock the tongue box.
21. Replace the cones to block the space in front of the van (so other cars won't block our exit).

22. Turn off the battery inside the electric panel on the trailer (turn it 90° only; it can turn past 90° but if you turn it further this may result in an unpredictable state):



23. Verify that all electrical switches are off: for example the three shower switches, the battery switches in the electrical panel and the tongue box, the water heater switch, the shower fans switch, and the water pump switch.
24. Remove the bags of used towels and used rags from the mechanical room, the back of the van, or the tongue box and put them in the boxes off to the side of the van (there are two boxes for towels, another for rags). Other volunteers will pick these up to be laundered during the week.
25. Lock the electrical panel door.
26. Lock the van, and put the van keys back in the lockbox in the mechanical room.
27. Lock the mechanical room door (only the bottom lock).

Recommended routes

The following are recommended routes between the trailer parking sites and the shower sites:

SLO Library

- **To:**
 - a. From our parking spot at 1515 Fredericks St, San Luis Obispo, exit the parking lot.
 - b. Turn right on Fredericks St.
 - c. Turn right on Grand Ave.
 - d. Turn right on Mill St.
 - e. Turn left on Santa Rosa St.
 - f. Take the next right on Palm St.
 - g. Turn left into the alleyway between the library and the parking structure.
 - h. Drive down to the bottom of the alley and turn left as though you were going to park. Go forward about as far as you can, then back up until the van can turn around back the way you came toward the Palm St. driveway. Park parallel to the sidewalk alongside the library building.
- **From:**
 - a. Exit the alleyway, turn right on Palm St.
 - b. Turn left on Santa Rosa St.
 - c. Take the next right on Mill St.
 - d. Turn left on Grand Ave.

- e. Turn left on Fredericks St.
- f. Enter the first driveway of the Methodist Church at 1515 Fredericks St.
- g. Drive through the parking lot, around the building, to in front of where our parking spot is, then carefully back into that parking spot.

Unitarian Universalist Church, SLO

- **To:**

- a. From our parking spot at 1515 Fredericks St, San Luis Obispo, exit the parking lot.
- b. Turn right on Fredericks St.
- c. Turn right on Grand Ave.
- d. Get on 101 South at the onramp.
- e. Exit at the Madonna Road exit.
- f. Turn right on Madonna Road.
- g. From the rightmost left-turn lane, turn left on Higuera St.
- h. Take the next right onto South St.; stay in the right lane.
- i. Turn right on Meadow St.
- j. Visually check the parking lot to make sure you can maneuver the van and trailer around any other vehicles that are already parked there. If so, enter the farthest of the two driveways leading to the parking lot and park the van near the building.
- k. If that path is blocked, try Plan B: continue down the block and take the next left (Funston Ave.) then the next left (Lawton Ave.). Turn left to enter the parking lot through the small alleyway at the back of the church.

- **From:**

- a. Exit from the southwest driveway of the parking lot and turn right on Meadow St.
- b. Take the next left onto South St.
- c. From the rightmost left turn lane, turn left onto Higuera St.
- d. Take the next right onto Madonna Road.
- e. Get on 101 North at the onramp.
- f. Exit at the Grand Ave. exit.
- g. Turn left on Grand Ave.
- h. Turn left on Fredericks St.
- i. Enter the first driveway of the Methodist Church at 1515 Fredericks St.
- j. Drive through the parking lot, around the building, to in front of where our parking spot is, then carefully back into that parking spot.

BMW of San Luis Obispo

- **To:**

- a. From our parking spot at 1515 Fredericks St, San Luis Obispo, exit the parking lot.
- b. Turn right on Fredericks St.
- c. Turn right on Grand Ave.
- d. Get on 101 South at the onramp.
- e. Exit at the Los Osos Valley Road exit.
- f. Turn right onto Los Osos Valley Road.
- g. Turn right onto Calle Joaquin (shortly after the overpass).
- h. Just before you enter the cul-de-sac at the end of Calle Joaquin, turn left into the parking lot.

- i. Drive straight past the BMW building, take a right, drive to the end of the building, continue to the end of the building and park parallel to its wall.
- **From:**
 - a. Exit the parking lot into the cul-de-sac at the end of Calle Joaquin.
 - b. Turn right to proceed to Los Osos Valley Road.
 - c. Turn left on Los Osos Valley Road and get in the right lane.
 - d. Get on 101 North at the onramp. This onramp has a tight curve, so take it gently.
 - e. Exit at the Grand Ave. exit.
 - f. Turn left on Grand Ave.
 - g. Turn left on Fredericks St.
 - h. Enter the first driveway of the Methodist Church at 1515 Fredericks St.
 - i. Drive through the parking lot, around the building, to in front of where our parking spot is, then carefully back into that parking spot.

United Church of Christ, SLO

- **To:**
 - a. From our parking spot at 1515 Fredericks St, San Luis Obispo, exit the parking lot.
 - b. Turn right on Fredericks St.
 - c. Turn right on Grand Ave.
 - d. Get on 101 South at the onramp.
 - e. Take exit 201 (Madonna Rd.)
 - f. Turn left on Madonna Rd.
 - g. Turn right on Los Osos Valley Rd.
 - h. Turn left into the United Church of Christ parking lot (11245 Los Osos Valley Rd.)
- **From:**
 - a. Exit the UCC parking lot and turn right on Los Osos Valley Road.
 - b. Turn left on Madonna Rd. Stay in the left lane on Madonna.
 - c. Get on 101 North at the onramp.
 - d. Exit at the Grand Ave. exit.
 - e. Turn left on Grand Ave.
 - f. Turn left on Fredericks St.
 - g. Enter the first driveway of the Methodist Church at 1515 Fredericks St.
 - h. Drive through the parking lot, around the building, to in front of where our parking spot is, then carefully back into that parking spot.

How-tos

The following sections describe in detail some of the tasks a driver may need to perform.

How to replace a propane bottle

At the SLO UU site, If a propane bottle is completely empty (its tag reads **EMPTY** or it emptied during the shift), you can replace it by following these steps:

1. Rip off the part of the tag on the empty tank that reads **IN USE** so that it reads **EMPTY**, if this has not been done already.

2. Unlock the cable lock from the two propane bottles (the key is on the same keychain as the van keys).
3. Close the valve(s) for the empty tank.
4. Unscrew the black regulator valve connector from the tank.



5. Loosen the bracket wing nut and lift the bracket so that it no longer holds the empty tank.



6. Carry or cart the empty bottle to the shed at UU SLO and return with the full bottle you find there.
7. Lift the full bottle into the place where the empty one was. Rotate it so the valve faces the van.
8. Attach the black regulator valve connector to the tank. Hand-tighten this connector—do not use a wrench or other tool.

9. Reattach the bracket so that it secures both tanks in place, and tighten the bracket wing nut.
10. Thread the cable lock through the handles of both tanks so that the tanks will be locked to the trailer, and reattach the padlock to the cable.

How to retract the trailer jack

If the mechanical trailer jack at the trailer hitch has been deployed, you must fully retract it before you move the van and trailer.

1. Remove the fabric cover from the trailer hitch jack.
2. Insert the key and turn it to activate the jack.



3. Press the lever above the key to operate the jack. Retract the jack *as far as it will go*.
4. Remove the key and recover the jack with the fabric cover.
5. Move the wooden block that the base of the jack was resting on. Stow it somewhere convenient and secure.

How to deploy the trailer jack

After you park the van and trailer at its storage site, deploy the trailer jack so as to take the weight of the trailer off of the van. You may also want to use the trailer jack occasionally at other sites if you need to raise the front of the trailer to level it. Deploy the trailer jack by following these instructions:

1. Place one or two large wooden blocks below the jack foot, on their sides so that the long sides of the block are parallel to the long sides of the trailer. If you use two blocks, place the smaller block atop the larger block, as they are in the following photo:



2. Remove the fabric cover from the trailer hitch jack.
3. Insert the key and turn it to activate the jack.



4. Press the lever above the key to operate the jack. Raise the switch on the jack to deploy it onto the wooden block. If you are parking at our storage site, keep raising the jack until the trailer hitch just begins to uncouple (this is subtle; you have to watch the hitch closely). Otherwise, raise it until the trailer is level.
5. Remove the key and recover the jack with the fabric cover.
6. Move the wooden block that the base of the jack was resting on. Stow it somewhere convenient and secure.

How to dump the tanks at a sewer cleanout

We dump our tanks in the sewer cleanouts at United Church of Christ (San Luis Obispo) and at BMW of San Luis Obispo. We sometimes may also dump one or both tanks at the sewer cleanout at Unitarian Universalists (San Luis Obispo). These are specific locations that access the sewer lines that go to a sewage treatment plant. *Never* dump *either* tank into a storm drain or gutter. See [Site maps and site-specific details](#) for the locations of these sewer cleanouts.

Important: Always drain blackwater first, then greywater. This flushes out the hose with less-noxious greywater after it has been full of blackwater.

1. Park where you can run the wastewater hose from the tank drains into the sewer cleanout. There are two sets of drains. One set is located at the front of the trailer on either side: the greywater on the port side and the blackwater on the starboard side. The other set is located at the aft port side of the trailer, side-by-side.
2. Check the level of the trailer. You may choose to use the lower drains, which are found at the aft port corner of the trailer, for more complete drainage.
3. Put on the thick rubber gloves that can be found in the back panel. Retrieve the wastewater draining hose (“stinky slinky”) from the back panel.



4. Open the sewer cleanout lid(s). Insert the red, right-angle-hooked end of the draining hose into the sewer cleanout.



5. Remove the cap from the blackwater tank drain on the trailer. Attach the other end of the draining hose securely to the blackwater tank drain.

Note that there should be a rubber gasket in the fastener on the end of the hose. If the dog ears on the hose fitting fasten suspiciously easily (without resistance), this may mean the gasket has

fallen out. If so, check the bottom of the back panel to see if the gasket is there, and reinsert it in the fitting. If the gasket is not properly in place, you can expect a messy and unpleasant spill!



6. Double check that the exit end of the draining hose is securely in the sewer cleanout, then open the valve that opens the tank drain. If you are using the drains at the front of the trailer (this is your only option on the old trailer), these valves open by turning a green lever so that it is parallel to the drain pipe. If you are using the drains at the back of the trailer, you open gate (“guillotine”) valves by pulling a slider at the drain.



7. When the tank finishes draining, close its valve (by turning the lever or by pushing the gate valve into place), remove the draining hose from it, and re-cap the drain.
8. Holding the end of the hose somewhat raised, walk it toward the sewer cleanout to drain the last wastewater from it.

9. Attach that end of the hose to the greywater tank drain, then repeat steps #6–8 for the greywater tank.
10. Stow the wastewater draining hose in the back panel.
11. Reattach the lid(s) on the site sewer cleanout port.
12. Return the gloves to the tongue box or the back panel. Secure the back panel door and continue on your way.

In case of traffic accident

If the van is involved in a traffic accident, follow these guidelines:

1. If you can safely move the van and trailer to a safer location, do so. Otherwise, turn off the engine and turn on the emergency flashers. Deploy the cones from the van if you can and if they'll be helpful.
2. If any vehicle is on fire, call 911. (There is a small fire extinguisher in the mechanical room on the trailer, but it may not be sufficient.)
3. If anyone is badly hurt, call 911.
4. If the accident involved injury to a person or if it was a multiple-vehicle accident that resulted in serious damage to any vehicle, and if you did not already call 911:
 - a. If the accident took place on the highway, call 800.835.5247 and report the accident to the Highway Patrol.
 - b. If the accident happened on a city street, call a non-emergency dispatch phone number and report the accident (see [Important contact numbers](#)).
5. When everything is as safe as it's going to be, fill out an incident report, and also call the Maintenance Manager to report the accident (see [Our operations team](#) for contact details). If you are on your way to a shift, also contact the site supervisor to let them know if you are delayed or will be unable to make it.
6. If you can do so safely, take some photos that might be helpful to us in understanding what happened and the nature of any damage or malfunction.
7. Fill out a traffic accident report (these are different from incident reports; you find them inside the drivers-side door). Note how, when, and where the accident occurred. If you can get this information, write down the names and contact information of any injured persons and witnesses. Attach any request, demand, order, notice, summons, or legal paper you receive as a result of the accident.
8. Do not talk with others at the scene about the cause of the accident. Assume no obligation, make no payment, and incur no expense without authorization from the Shower the People board of directors.

What to do if the van needs to be towed

We have arrangements with “College Towing” 805.544.3560. Call the Maintenance Manager for details on how to charge the cost of towing to STP. See [Our operations team](#) for contact information.

What to do if you need gas

The low fuel warning light appears on the dashboard fuel gauge and a chime sounds when fuel is low. At that point you have about fifteen more miles before you run out of gas.

The Maintenance Manager typically fills the gas tank when needed, so you shouldn’t have to worry about this. But if the tank gets unexpectedly low, call the Maintenance Manager for details on how to fill up and charge the cost to STP. See [Our operations team](#) for contact information.

What to do if you get insufficient voltage

If the voltage meter in the electric panel is showing a lower than expected voltage readout even though you believe you are hooked up to an AC power source, take these steps to troubleshoot:

1. Follow the extension cord back to the AC outlet, checking for possible loose connections along the way.
2. Bring some electrical device (such as a power strip with an indicator light) to the AC outlet and plug it in there to verify that the building’s electricity is on at the outlet. Some outlets have outlet-specific fuses that can trip and turn off the outlet power, so you may need to reset such a fuse.
3. If the outlet’s power is fine, plug in the electrical device at other places along the chain of extension cords to verify that the cords are carrying power correctly.
4. If none of these steps fixes the problem, contact the Maintenance Manager for advice (see [Our operations team](#) for contact information).

How to replace the water filter

If the water flow rate is low, the filter may be clogged. If so, it must be replaced. We also replace the filter as a matter of course every three months.

To replace the filter mid-shift:

1. Switch the showers from city water to tank water by closing the “City Water” valve in the mechanical room. (Make sure the tank is sufficiently full first and that the water pump is on).
2. Turn off the spigot at the site water source.
3. Turn on the “Fresh Tank Fill” valve in the mechanical room for a few seconds to depressurize the hose, then turn it off again.
4. Disconnect the filter from the hose and from the site source spigot (or from between the hoses if you use two hoses). Expect some water to drain from the filter and the hose when you do.

5. Discard the old filter. Write today's date in permanent marker on the new filter.
6. Attach the new filter to the hose and the spigot (or between the hoses if you use both hoses).
7. Turn on the "Fresh Tank Fill" valve in the mechanical room.
8. Turn on the spigot at the site water source.
9. When air flushes from the hose, turn off the "Fresh Tank Fill" valve and turn on the "City Water" valve.

What to do about a flat tire on the van or trailer

Call the Maintenance Manager for help changing or replacing a tire. See [Our operations team](#) for contact information.

What to do if the van battery is dead

Call the Maintenance Manager for help with a dead van battery. See [Our operations team](#) for contact information.

How to dump excess water from the fresh water tank

It is best to have fewer than 30 gallons in the freshwater tank when you drive the trailer. If the tank is very full, you may want to switch to using tank water (rather than hose water) early in the shift so as to drain the tank.

If the fresh water tank is too full (for instance, if it was accidentally over-filled at the beginning of the shift), this makes the trailer more difficult to manage on the road and puts more strain on the axles and on the van. In such a case, you should dump extra water (lowering the level in the tank to 30 gallons or fewer) before you drive. You can use the fresh water faucet and its hose to drain excess water from the tank.

HOW TO BE AN EXCELLENT SITE SUPERVISOR



Overview

The site supervisor oversees on-site operations, making sure everything is up to STP's standards. The site supervisor also fields anything not covered by the other volunteer roles, such as addressing questions and concerns of non-guest visitors or arranging on-site training for new volunteers. The site supervisor is the authority for questions of policy and procedure, and officiates any response to emergencies.

Site supervisor email list

There is an email list for site supervisors. We use this to send announcements that are of special import to site supervisors, and supervisors can also use the list to discuss things among themselves. For example, if you signed up for a shift but unexpectedly cannot attend, you can use this list to find someone to cover for you.

If you are not already signed up for this list, ask the lead site supervisor to send you an invitation.

Responsibilities

In short, the responsibilities of the site supervisor are:

General

- Officiate during emergencies (medical, safety, etc.). Direct people in what steps to take. Decide when to call 911 or other outside help.
- Establish a safe, welcoming site that conforms to the expectations of the site hosts.
- Remind guests of our site rules when necessary, and enforce those rules.
- (UU SLO site only) Replenish certain supplies as needed, such as propane, soap, towels, bath mats, hand sanitizer, and razors. These are found in our storage shed at the UU SLO site. (See the [Site maps and site-specific details](#) appendix.)
- Communicate inventory deficiencies to the Restocking team.
- Refer to the be-on-the-lookout (BOLO) list at the beginning of the shift and enforce consistent policies with the guests listed there (see [The BOLO list](#)).

To our guests

- Ensure that all volunteers promote a clean, safe, respectful, and welcoming environment for our guests.
- Maintain a calm, unthreatening social environment among guests.
- Alleviate safety and accessibility hazards.
- Use de-escalation techniques to help calm guests who become upset, so they can get the services they need without violating our policies.
- Make sure first-time guests know what resources we provide, our guest rules, and the process for using the shower.
- Summon guests so they are nearby and prepared to shower when their turns come up.
- Enforce the 15-minute limit on showering, so we can offer showers to as many guests as possible. Our policy is to let guests into the showers until our posted closing time, even if this means they won't get out of the shower until after closing time. After closing time don't initiate any new showers, but apologize to anyone we have to turn away. You can be a little flexible about this, but be careful about over-taxing volunteers.
- Solicit guest feedback about service quality (periodically ask if the shower temperature and water-pressure is good, for example).
- Assist guests as needed (help them up the stairs, offer them the shower stool, allow companion-assistants when necessary, etc.).

To our volunteers

- Keep volunteers safe. Unburden volunteers who suffer burnout, stress, frustration, dehydration, or need for a bathroom break. Step in if there is an altercation between volunteers or between a volunteer and a guest.
- Be a lightning rod for particularly demanding or conversational guests, to take the burden off of other volunteers so they can stay on-task.
- Ensure that volunteers know the responsibilities associated with their roles. Train new volunteers. Monitor the quality and thoroughness of their work.

- Be alert for signs of compassion fatigue, burnout, and “vicarious trauma,” and take steps to address them if they arise.
- Distribute STP t-shirts, hats, etc. to new volunteers.
- Orient new volunteers to safety and security procedures. Ensure volunteers follow the policies and principles developed after periodic safety assessments.
- Do any extraordinary shower-cleaning tasks in cases of guests who left bodily waste behind or who are believed to have infectious diseases. (See [“Special procedure to decontaminate an infectious room”](#) in the Shower Cleaner chapter.)

To our site hosts

- Be familiar with site-specific policies and procedures.
- Use site facilities only as authorized by site hosts. Only use greywater for irrigation where this is explicitly authorized.
- Lock up and otherwise secure sites and site resources when not in use.
- Report any issues with the site (e.g. damage, vandalism, malfunctions) to the General Manager or to the appropriate site liaison.

To neighbors and other members of the community

- Keep sites uncluttered.
- Conduct or organize a trash sweep so as to leave the site cleaner than you found it.
- Avoid noise pollution audible to neighbors.
- Keep driveways, streets, and sidewalks clear.
- Welcome people who express interest in volunteering, ask them to fill out volunteer sign-up forms, and convey that information to the volunteer orientation coordinator.
- Give curious visitors a tour of our operations.
- Field questions from the press.
- Coordinate with third-party service providers according to STP policies.
- Field questions and concerns from neighbors and other community members.

To the Shower the People program

- Ensure that STP policies and procedures are followed.
- Reinforce expectations for consistent operational performance.
- Fill out and file incident reports and BOLO reports when this is appropriate.
- Fill out the daily supervisors’ log.
- Participate in occasional meetings to discuss policy and procedures.
- Forward suggestions for improvement to the Operations Oversight Committee.

The following subsections describe some of these responsibilities in greater detail:

Some components of a well-set-up site

Here are some elements that make a site set-up ideal for meeting our mission:

- You checked the weather forecast before coming to the site. If rain or hot sun is expected, and the winds are not expected to rise above 20mph, the shade awning is deployed over the greeter station and the pop-up shade structures (if space allows) are set up where guests congregate

and where shower cleaners sit. If it is gusty, weights on the legs of the awning and pop-up hold them in place.

- You checked the supervisors' log and BOLO list (inside the driver's door of the van) to see if any flags were raised by supervisors from previous shifts.
- Hoses and electrical cables are arranged to minimize tripping hazards (avoid loops or other foot-grabbers, tuck them under the trailer or van whenever you can, cover them with floor mats, and mark them with cones).
- The sandwich board signs are where they can be seen by passers-by, not blocking any road, driveway, or sidewalk. The smaller "SHOWER SIGNUPS" sign points to the greeter station.



- The entryway to the greeter station is inviting. It is uncluttered, and does not have an intimidating display of traffic cones or other "warning" types of signs. (The following picture shows a **bad** example.) Chairs, bins, buckets, trash cans, etc. are arranged in a tidy way that does not obstruct guests entering and leaving the shower area.



- The benches are well-located (in shade or under the pop-up shade structure when it gets hot, not blocking walkways).
- The site vicinity is clear of litter. Garbage or empty boxes are disposed of correctly.
- The cleaner station is set up well and its supplies are well-stocked:
 - The CaviCide spray bottles are full
 - The rag bucket has a full supply of rags.
 - There are plenty of towel candles and paper mats.
 - There are boxes of disposable gloves and a bottle of hand sanitizer at the ready.
 - The clock is readable from the shower cleaner station.
- There are no obstructions that interfere with other uses of the property (for example, the stairway at the UU and the path to it from the parking lot are clear).

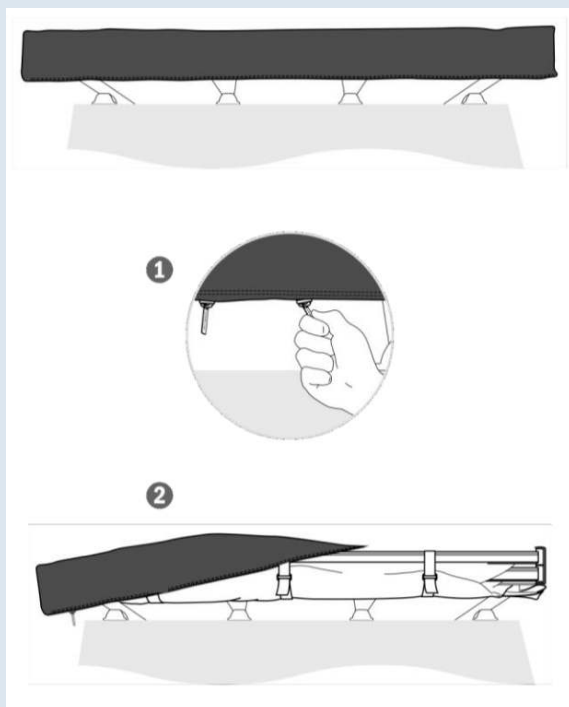
Deploying the awning

Warning: If wind is expected to rise above 20 miles per hour, do not deploy the awning.

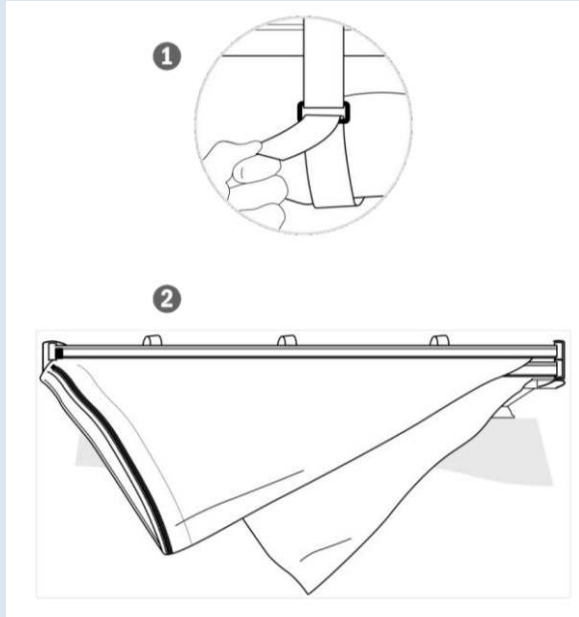
The awning provides cover at the greeter table. You do not have to deploy it, but it makes things more pleasant in rainy or hot, sunny weather.

If you have difficulty reaching the awning cover, consider using one of the pop-up tents rather than the awning to shade the greeter station. Otherwise, follow these instructions to deploy the awning:

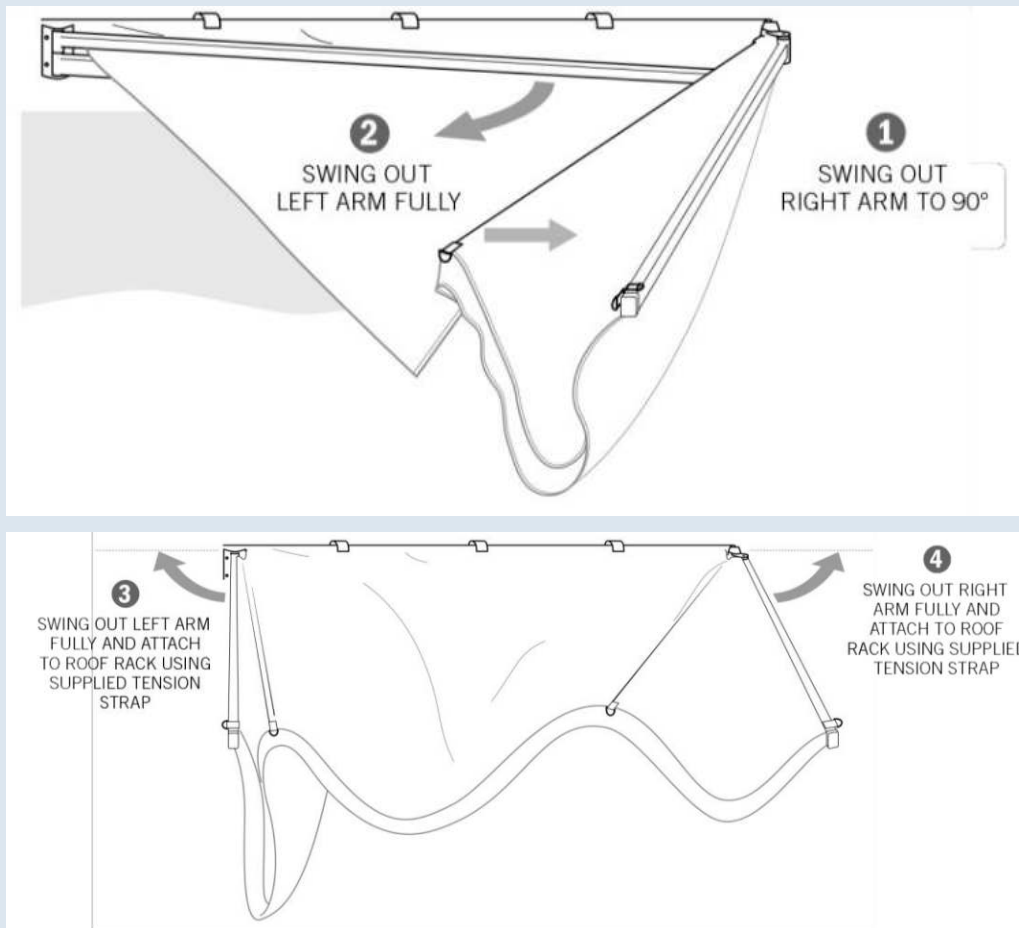
1. Unzip the awning cover and fold it over the top of the awning body.



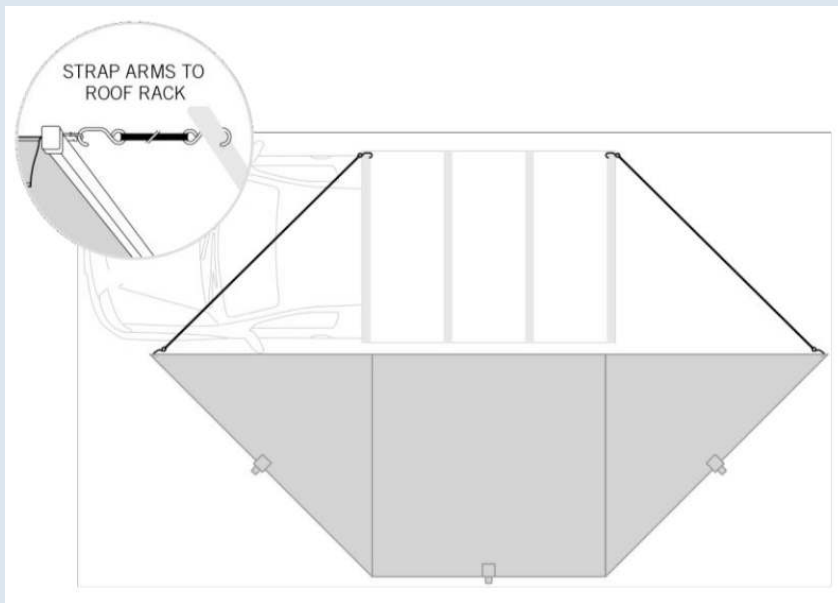
2. Release the straps that hold the awning together. Note that when you release the last strap, the awning will try to unroll toward you, so be ready to catch it.



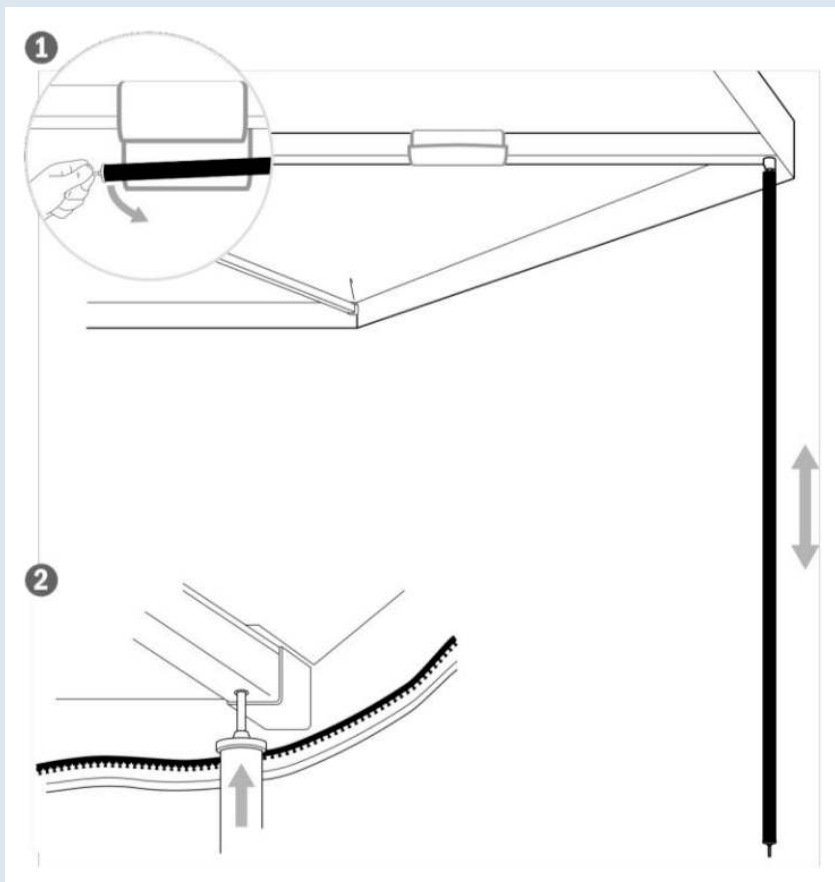
3. Pull out the front arm until it is fully deployed, extending the awning further forward in the same direction as the side edge of the roof rack. Attach the tension strap to the roof rack on the far front side of the van and add tension to the strap if necessary.



4. Repeat that step for the rear arm. Attach the strap hook to the far rear van wheel well.



5. Optionally, for more stability, undo the velcro straps that secure the support legs. The legs will pivot down to a vertical position. Adjust them to the desired height and lock them in place with the twist-lock mechanism. (In case of rain, if you keep those legs low, this will help water run off from the roof of the awning.)

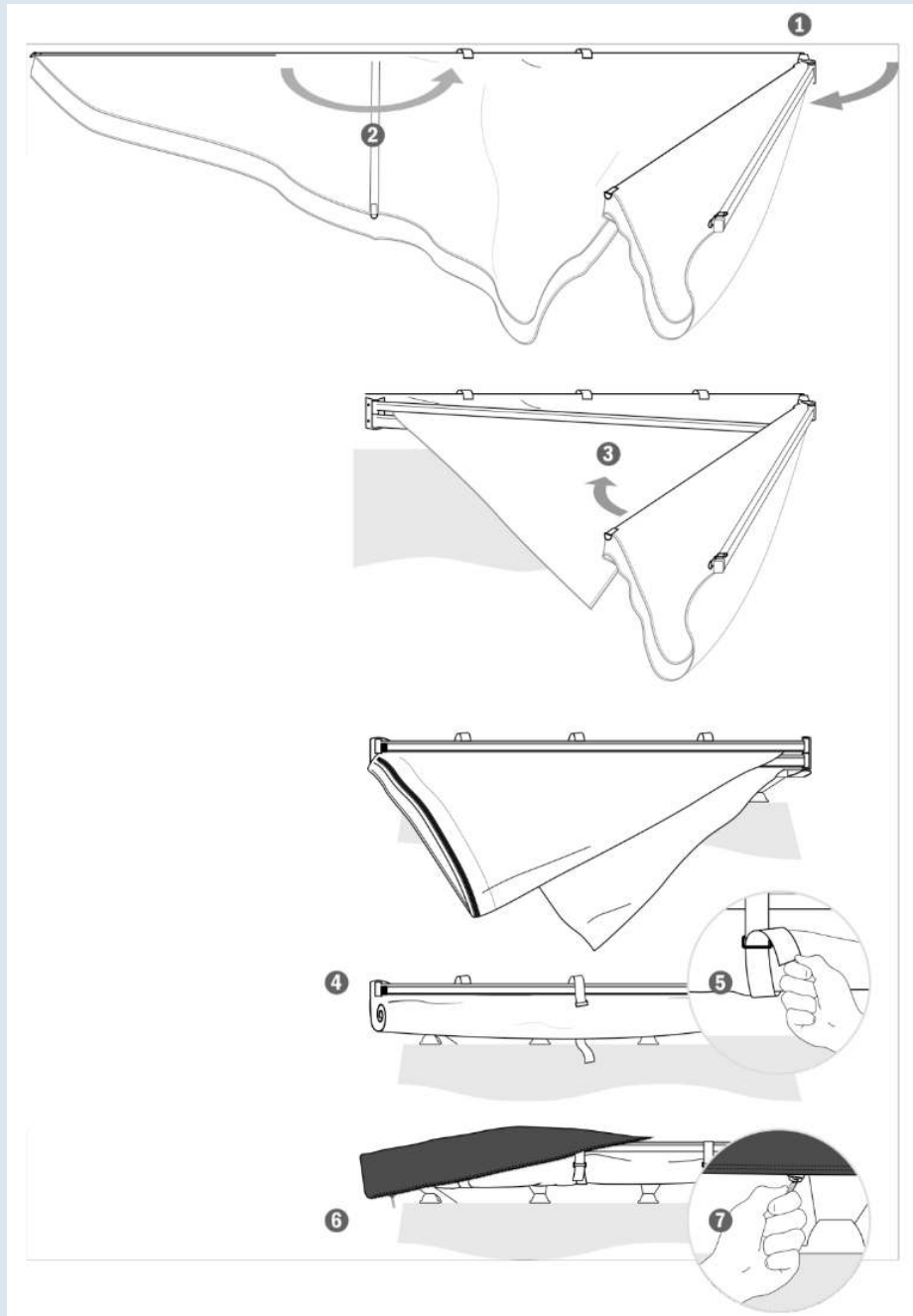


6. On gusty days, you can tie weights to the loops on the awning near where the legs connect, dangling those weights near ground level, to help stabilize the awning.

Retracting the awning

To retract the awning, follow these steps:

1. Retract the awning support legs (if you used them) and secure them to the awning.
2. Release the tension strap of the rear arm and fold in the rear wing of the awning. Repeat this for the front arm and front wing. The awning itself should drape down in a triangular shape. Roll up the tension straps and put them away in their bag.
3. Push the awning arms into their nesting place.
4. Roll the awning from the bottom up toward the roof rack.
5. Secure the awning with the straps.
6. Pull the PVC bag over the awning and zip it up. Take care not to zip the awning into the zipper by mistake. (The tighter you can roll the awning, the more easy this will be.)



Deploying the pop-up shade structures

Warning: If wind is expected to rise above 20 miles per hour, do not deploy the pop-up shade structures.

Pop-up shade structures provide shade or protection from the rain for guests waiting for their showers and for shower cleaners between cleanings. You do not have to deploy them, but they can make things more pleasant in rainy or hot, sunny weather. Feel free to ask for help from the other volunteers, as they set up more easily with two people. You will find them in the back of the van, typically in black bags.

At some sites, there is not enough room or there is already sufficient shelter. For example, we typically do not deploy them at the SLO Library site.

Refilling CaviCide spray bottles

You refill the spray bottles of CaviCide disinfectant from a bottle stored either in the mechanical room of the trailer (**old trailer**) or the supplies closet (**new trailer**; a spare bottle can be found just inside the back door of the van). There is a funnel you can use for this purpose.

Warning: CaviCide is alcohol-based, therefore flammable and volatile. Do not refill CaviCide bottles in the mechanical room doorway (near the water heater ignition) or near people smoking or other open flame.

If the refill bottle empties, the supervisor at the SLO UU site should either refill it or should swap it with a full bottle from the SLO UU shed.

Spray bottles should always be set to a “coarse” (not fine-mist) spray level when using CaviCide.

Tips for improving throughput

These tips will help you give the most showers with the least wait:

- When guests sign up, give them an estimate of when their turn for a shower will come up. Let them know that if they aren't around when their shower is being readied and we call them, or if they are not ready with the shower supplies they need, we may skip them and let the next person on the list shower in their place.
- Summon the next guest(s) to get ready while their shower is being cleaned (don't wait until it is fully ready); have guests ready “in the on-deck circle” with their supplies.
- Skip over a guest whose turn it is if that guest cannot be found, isn't ready, or has left the area. When you do so, prioritize people who are nearby and ready-to-go.
- Let guests know (newcomers especially) that they are limited to 15 minutes in the shower unit. (You can make exceptions for guests with mobility or other issues, or who are also showering their children.)
- Knock on doors at the 13-minute mark to let the guest know it's time for them to wrap things up (“Name: time to start wrapping it up.”).
- Knock again at 15 minutes to let them know their time is up and they need to come out. Ask for a response. If you can't get any response after repeated attempts, shout through the door that you're planning to open the door to check on their safety. If they still don't respond, open and take a peek.
- Continue to knock periodically thereafter and let the guest know that they're in overtime.
- You can cut the water to the shower if the guest is still in the shower when they should be out. The process for doing this differs between the old and new trailer (and in shower #1 of the old trailer, you cannot do this):

Old trailer water shutoff (valves): For showers #2 and #3, you can shut off the hot and/or cold water to those individual showers with valves in the mechanical room. (You might make a policy decision to put certain guests only in showers #2 and #3 for this reason.)	New trailer water shutoff (switches): Each shower has its own water shutoff switch just inside the mechanical room door to the right (switches are labeled by shower number). This cuts both hot and cold water.
	

- You can open the door from the outside with a key and prop it open. This is more of a last-resort, but it can help to hurry some guests along.
- Talk with guests who take over-long showers, especially if they do repeatedly. Let them know that they may be taking a shower away from someone else when they do that. See if there is some way we can accommodate their needs without them spending so much time in the shower unit. If a guest is unwilling to get with the program, you can put them in a “supplies only” (no showers) category—if you do so, make a note of this on the BOLO list (see [The BOLO list](#) below) so other supervisors will be aware of it.

- With guests who often have difficulty with the time limit, it may be helpful to knock at the 10 minute mark or even the 5 and 10 minute marks. Ask the guest ahead of time if this would help them stick to 15 minutes. If so, use a timer app on your phone to count down the minutes, and knock when the alarm goes off, calling through the door “Name, that’s 10 minutes; you have five more minutes.” You can be more assertive about shutting off the shower water when you have given plenty of advance warning like this.
- Give guests razors only after they shower, not before they go into the shower. Explain that this is because 15 minutes isn’t enough time to both shower and shave. Offer the use of the side mirror on the van to guests who want to shave their faces.

The BOLO list

The be-on-the-lookout (BOLO) list contains information about guests who need special attention. A common reason is because they have stayed in the shower well past our 15-minute limit. This list helps the various supervisors at our multiple sites to maintain a consistent policy with such guests.

The list is on a set of “STP BOLO” forms on a small clipboard kept in the door panel compartment of the passenger door of the van. Here are two examples of BOLO forms:

STP BOLO		STP BOLO	
Name & Description of Guest:		Name & Description of Guest:	
<i>Doreen (big hair, bracelets)</i>		<i>Edsel - vacant 500-yard stare, swastika tattoo, pet raven</i>	
Current Status:		Current Status:	
☐ Can shower and get supplies ☐ Must talk with supervisor before showering ☒ Must give supervisor 15-minute commitment before showering ☒ Can get supplies, but cannot shower ☐ Banned from all STP operations ☐ _____		☐ Can shower and get supplies ☐ Must talk with supervisor before showering ☐ Must give supervisor 15-minute commitment before showering ☐ Can get supplies, but cannot shower ☒ Banned from all STP operations ☐ _____	
Notes:		Notes:	
Date	Note	Date	Note
<i>4/17</i>	<i>Took 30-minute shower. Needs to commit to 15-minute shower policy before showering.</i>	<i>4/19</i>	<i>Made violent threats to volunteers and guests</i>
<i>4/20</i>	<i>Verbally committed to 15-minute shower but took a half hour again.</i>		

At the top, give the name and a brief description of the guest. The description helps other supervisors recognize the guest, since we often know them by first names or nicknames only.

Use the checkboxes to indicate the current status of the guest: whether they can shower and get supplies like any other guest, or whether they are restricted in some way, or whether they need special treatment of some sort. If the status changes, cross-out the previous status and check the new status.

Finally, describe the incident that put them on the BOLO list, or any follow-ups since that incident.

Site supervisors are responsible for maintaining this list and for maintaining consistent policies.

We typically use this list for guests who are troublesome in some way, but you can also use it for guests who have special needs (e.g. so-and-so needs the shower stool, so-and-so cannot adjust the shower nozzle without assistance, so-and-so is hard of hearing).

First-time guest introduction

Here is a script to introduce a first-time guest to the shower:

“Welcome! I’ll give you a brief tour since this is your first time at our showers.

[Old trailer only:] **The first thing to know is that the top step of the stairs is a little higher than the other ones, so be careful going up. Also, the step coming out of the shower is higher than it looks, and the floor can be slippery when wet, so it’s a good idea to grab those handles on either side of the shower [point] when you come out, to make sure you’ve got your feet under you.**

“There’s a towel and washcloth there [point]. To flush the toilet use the foot pedal at the base [point]. There’s a soap dispenser in the shower [point] and another one just like it above the sink. It’s the same soap in both, which also works as shampoo.

“Keep the shower curtain inside the shower so water doesn’t run onto the floor.

“To turn on the shower, rotate the handle. The further you rotate it, the hotter it gets. If it’s too hot, rotate the handle a little bit in the other direction. To turn on the sink faucet, just push down—its temperature isn’t adjustable, and it’ll turn off automatically.

“Here’s the lock on the door [point]. Be sure to lock it, otherwise the door will swing open if you lean against it. You have fifteen minutes total; enjoy your shower!”

If guests break the rules

If a guest breaks one of our rules, or makes a terrible nuisance of themselves, tell them gently but firmly that this is not acceptable. When you do, try to describe it in terms of the unacceptable behavior or the corresponding policy rather than in terms of the person (e.g. “we don’t allow amplified music at this site” rather than “you can’t play your radio here”). The advice in [De-escalation tips](#) may be helpful to you.

If a guest is unwilling to get with the program, you can ban them from the showers for the day. If you do so, make a note of this in the supervisors’ log.

If a guest really steps over the line (e.g. is violent/threatening, or deliberately damages STP or site property), you can issue a longer-term ban (e.g. one or more weeks or even permanent). If you do so, note this on the BOLO list (see [The BOLO list](#) above).

In either case, you do not have much practical power to remove the guest from the site yourself, and you should not try to physically remove or restrain them unless this is clearly and immediately necessary to prevent harm to a volunteer or guest (in which case a 911 call is in order; see [When to call 911](#)). A case like this might be a good time to call for a Mobile Crisis Unit, Community Action Team, or Mental Health Evaluation Team response—see the [important contact numbers](#) appendix.

If a guest who has been banned from our program entirely (not just denied shower services and placed on supplies-only status), and that guest persists in coming to the showers after having been told not to return:

1. You can call the local police, either by 911 if the guest is being actively threatening or menacing, or by the non-emergency dispatch number, and ask them to send someone out to encourage the trespasser to leave.
2. You may want to begin the process of filing a restraining order against the guest, which strengthens the possible law enforcement response to their trespassing. Contact the STP General Manager to begin this process.
3. Such a restraining order will likely apply only to the immediate area of our operations and a small surrounding margin. If the troublesome guest comes to a site where we are operating on private property (e.g. a church parking lot), you might want to reach out to the site owner via the appropriate STP Site Liaison and ask if they would also seek a restraining order banning the troublesome guest from their property entirely.

Incident reports

We use incident reports to make sure the details about any unusual and important incidents are recorded soon after they happen so that we don't lose track of details. This also helps to ensure that the operations oversight committee is aware of unusual incidents that happen on-site.

See the [Where to find things](#) appendix for the location of blank incident report forms.

These are some of the good reasons to file an incident report:

- Damage to site property (such as vandalism or accidental damage)
- Significant damage to the van or trailer
- You or another volunteer called 911
- Interaction with law enforcement in which volunteers were questioned or gave a statement
- Volunteers, guests, or members of the public were seriously injured
- Anyone was exposed to hazardous materials (e.g. blood or feces without protection from gloves or other protective gear)
- Serious threats of violence (or actual use of violence) toward anyone by anyone at the site
- Complaints from members of the public that rise to the level of accusations of unlawful wrongdoing or threats to take action against STP
- Complaints from members of the public who would like an official response from STP (add their contact information to the incident report)

- A guest accuses STP or one of our volunteers of harming them (an incident report is not necessary in the case of certain guests who have ongoing delusions of persecution; the site supervisor can make a judgment call about this)
- STP has been exposed to potential liability
- There was a spill of blackwater, greywater (except where authorized for irrigation), cleaning fluid, oil or gas, or other potentially hazardous materials
- A volunteer administered first aid to someone
- A needle-prick injury
- Loss or theft of significant STP equipment
- A guest reports theft of their property from our site

Send a photo of the incident report to the chair of the operations oversight committee (see [Our operations team](#) for contact information). Briefly cross-reference the incident in the supervisors' log. Attach the form to the supervisors' log clipboard behind the logs (the chair of the operations oversight committee will periodically collect these so they can be discussed at committee meetings).

New volunteers

The site supervisor is responsible for encouraging potential new volunteers and for organizing and training new volunteers who come on-site.

Spontaneous volunteers

If someone shows up at one of our sites unexpectedly and expresses interest in volunteering, give them a tour of our operations, describe the various volunteer positions, and introduce them to other volunteers. If they have time, encourage them to stick around and learn more about the position(s) they are interested in volunteering for.

Volunteer registration

New volunteers must fill out a Volunteer Application form and sign its release of liability and photo release sections. You can find blank forms inside the passenger door of the van.

After a new volunteer fills out their form, send a photo of it to the volunteer orientation coordinator (see [Our operations team](#) for contact information). Then file the form in the completed volunteer forms envelope (also inside the passenger door of the van) in alphabetical order by *first* name.

On-site training

Give new volunteers an introduction to how our sites operate and our radical hospitality ethos.

Let them know about this manual and how they can read the hardcopy on-site, find a PDF on-line, or query the "Shower Thoughts" AI assistant.

Show them the instructions on how to use the on-line ivolunteer shift registration system (see [How to volunteer for shifts](#)). Encourage them to take a snapshot of those instructions.

Encourage them to "shadow" one of our current volunteers in the position they would like to train for.

Ask them their T-shirt size, and give them a volunteer T-shirt.

Note: Volunteers who want to train as a *driver* should reach out to the Driver Trainer (see [Our operations team](#) for contact information), who will arrange additional training off-site.

As the new volunteer gains confidence from shadowing an existing volunteer, encourage them to try it themselves. Supervise them as they do so (or ask an experienced volunteer to do so) to point out ways they can improve their technique or to remind them of steps they may be forgetting.

At that point, if you're satisfied they are capable, they are qualified. Encourage them to sign up for shifts at that position by using *ivolunteer*. If they need more training, encourage them to come back and shadow a trained volunteer for another shift.

After you fully train a new volunteer, text or email the volunteer orientation coordinator (see [Our operations team](#) for contact information) with the following information:

- Their name
- Which role(s) they are trained for (sufficiently to do it themselves)
- Whether or not they know how to use our *ivolunteer* sign-up process

Also send a photo of their volunteer application if you haven't already sent it.

Ask the new volunteer if they need their hours to be officially logged and reported for some reason. If so, let the General Manager know (see [Our operations team](#) for contact information).

If you train an existing volunteer for a new position (one they were not previously trained for), tell the volunteer orientation coordinator so they can register the volunteer as being ready for that position.

Filling out the supervisors' log

The supervisors' log is on a clipboard inside the passenger door of the van. It is brief: just the date, location, your name, and a small comment box in which you can leave information of use to the next supervisor. Information to put in the comment box might include:

- The number of showers given during the shift
- Whether there were any lost-and-found items collected and whom you suppose they belong to
- If you filed an incident report
- If there were any concerning visitors

If there were problem *guests*, put details that might be helpful to the next supervisor on the BOLO list rather than the supervisors' log (see [The BOLO list](#) above).

Tips for dealing with the press

Typically, news reports about us are helpful publicity. We're an easy, evergreen, "feel-good" story for the press. Publicity about our operations can lead to more volunteers, donations, and greater awareness among potential guests. So we welcome press attention.

However, if a cameraperson or film crew wants to take pictures of guests coming and going, gently remind them that we'd prefer they respect the guests' privacy as they use the showers. When we

operate in a public place, we can't prohibit anyone from filming us and our operations, so all we can do is politely discourage that.

In interviews, avoid talking politics, and do not air your complaints or rumors about other agencies or programs to reporters. Conflict and controversy are the news media's bread-and-butter, and they might decide to lead with that rather than with the positive aspects of our program, which could be counter-productive.

Tips for dealing with citizen complaints

Every once in a while, a passer-by or neighbor will complain about our operations. Sometimes the complaints are not very reasonable, and seem to be motivated mostly by hostility to poor and homeless people. The complainer may suggest that we are attracting homeless people to their neighborhood or that we are enabling people to remain in poverty who otherwise presumably would be discouraged enough by their lack of access to hygiene that they would pull themselves up by their bootstraps.

There's not much you can do about such complaints. It may be best to simply let them vent for a while, acknowledge their frustration, and wait them out. It's not much use to argue with them.

Someone may have a more specific complaint, however. For example, maybe a neighbor complains about noise from guests who gather near their property as they're waiting for a shower, or who play music. That is something you may be able to address by asking guests to congregate elsewhere or to keep their volume level down.

In any case, offer to convey their complaints to the STP general manager and ask if they would like a response. If so, get their contact information. Fill out an incident report that describes the complaint and includes this contact information (see [Incident reports](#)).

If a complainer makes a specific threat against STP (e.g. "I'm going to take you to court" or "I'll block this driveway with my car next week"), also file an incident report.

If a complainer threatens violence against STP guests or volunteers, if this is a credible threat of imminent violence, call 911 and report it as an emergency. If it is more of a blustering threat of eventual violence ("don't be surprised if we torch your goddamned showers one of these days"), an incident report is probably sufficient.

What to do if we have to cancel a shift

Shift cancellations are rare. "The show must go on"—if we can give showers, we will, even if we have to do so less efficiently or less comfortably than usual. Before you cancel, brainstorm possible workarounds for whatever challenge you are facing and see if you can improvise a solution.

However, occasionally we may have to unexpectedly cancel a shift, for instance if a malfunction in the van prevents transporting the trailer, or if the site where we operate is closed by an emergency.

In such a case, the supervisor should:

1. Reach out to volunteers to let them know their shifts are canceled. If you do not have contact information for a volunteer, or you do not know the day's roster, notify the Lead Site Supervisor, who can reach out to the volunteers for you.

2. Stay on-site if possible to let guests know what happened and when they can expect us to be operating again.

Severe weather

Dangerous weather conditions are another possible reason to cancel a shower shift. Site supervisors should monitor the weather by using reputable on-line local weather information and forecasting applications.

In case of questionable weather, the site supervisor and driver for the day's shift should confer no less than a few hours before the shift starts in order to make a go/no-go decision. If the driver does not feel comfortable getting the van & trailer to and from the site safely in the expected weather conditions, that alone is reason to cancel the shift.

Other risks to consider (current or forecast) include wind speed, lightning, tornado warnings, severe heavy rain, or official advisories. Note that gusts over 20 miles per hour may make it difficult to deploy the awning or the pop-up structures. If many volunteers are unable or unwilling to come on-site, that is also a reason to either cancel the shift or to offer fewer services (e.g. supplies-only).

If you decide to cancel the shift, reach out to the day's volunteers no less than two hours before the shift starts to let them know they do not need to volunteer that day.

If you decide to do the shift anyway, even given the difficult weather, you may also want to reach out to those greeters or cleaners who may be driving in from outside the area to let them know that their presence is optional. On difficult weather days, guest attendance is usually lower than usual, so we can get by with fewer volunteers.

In any case, volunteers should make their own judgement call about whether they want to brave the roads in bad weather. Any volunteer who decides on their own not to risk coming to a shift in bad weather should call their site supervisor no less than three hours before the shift starts, so the site supervisor can make arrangements or adjust services.

In bad weather conditions, you may want to offer reduced services. For example, you might only open two of the three shower units and use the other one to keep supplies drier. Or you might even give up on offering showers and only give out clothing and other supplies (for example, if many cleaners opt out of their shifts).

Working with third-party providers

Occasionally, a third-party service provider or community volunteer wants to accompany our service with their own. We welcome, but are independent from, certain third-party providers. We have good working relationships with some third-party providers at our sites, including:

- **South County People's Kitchen** is an emergency food resource for homeless and food-challenged people in the Five Cities area. They serve hot lunches to anyone who needs one at noon, every day of the year. They host STP at our Grover Beach location. In addition, they helped STP get off-the-ground with an early \$10,000 donation.
- **Men of Agape** organize a free hot meal on Thursdays in Meadow Park across from the UU parking lot where we operate. Our guests are invited to a free lunch during our shower shift.

- The **SLO Food Bank** provides us with bags of non-perishable, no-cook food to give away on Thursdays at our UU location.
- Volunteer medical service providers from **Vituity Cares Foundation** come once a month to our Sunday SLO library site to help our guests with medical screenings and exams, wound care, treatment, and prescriptions. They are often joined by **SLO Bangers** and **Access Support Network**.
- Dustin Weiss from **WashMeGo** comes by some of our sites to offer haircuts.
- **Grassroots II** often brings food and clothing by the UU and SLO Library sites to give away to guests.
- Employees of BMW of San Luis Obispo serve a free meal as “**Blessed to Serve**” while we operate at their site. **SLO Noor Clinic** has sometimes operated its mobile medical services van at that site also.
- The **SLO County Probation Department** has set up a mobile van near our UU location to allow probationers to check in there rather than having to trek up the hill to the Probation Department offices.
- **Community Action Partnership, SLO** sometimes sends a social worker to our sites to meet with particular clients or to do general outreach and assistance work.

If a new third-party provider wants to set up shop at a *public* location nearby where we operate (for instance, in Meadow Park or on the sidewalk in front of the SLO Library), that’s entirely up to them and whatever laws and regulations govern those commons.

If they want to set up shop on-site at one of our *private* sites (South County People’s Kitchen, the UU parking lot, the UCC parking lot, the BMW dealership), they need to have approval both from our Third Party Services Coordinator and from the site host. Ask them for their contact information and forward their request to our Third Party Services Coordinator (see [Our operations team](#) for contact details).

If they have a very light footprint (for instance if all they are doing is handing out leaflets and talking to people one-on-one), it may not be a problem if they operate without our permission or the site’s permission. At that point they just become another guest or member of the community, and they can stay as long as they remain respectful and follow our rules for guests. However, if they want more of a presence, or if they want our help in publicizing their service to our guests, they need additional permission.

TROUBLESHOOTING

This section gives some advice on how to handle a variety of issues that may come up over the course of your shower shift.

Guest issues

A guest has an unusual issue that will take a lot of time or effort to deal with

Refer the guest to the site supervisor. Sometimes there are third-party specialists on-hand who may be able to help. Other times the site supervisor can answer the question or concern, or can at least compassionately hear it out.

A guest wants some water

We typically do not have bottled water to hand out to guests, though sometimes there is a limited supply at the greeter station. However, we can help guests refill their own cups or water bottles.

New trailer only: Turn on the “outside faucit [sic]” valve just inside the mechanical room door. This enables the faucet inside the small door to the left of the mechanical room. Turn the knob on the spigot inside the water faucet panel to start water flowing through the small length of hose there.

Old trailer only: The trailer’s water intake on the side of the trailer near the mechanical room door, where the main hose is connected, is forked. The fork where the main hose is *not* connected has a small length of hose connected to it. By opening the valve associated with that fork (turn it one-quarter turn or less), filtered water will flow (fairly rapidly) through that hose. You can fill a guest’s water bottles from there (you may also need to turn on the city-water or tank-water valve if they are off).



A guest wants to charge their phone or other electronic device

Guests can charge their electronic devices at the charging station at the rear of the trailer near the electrical panel. The site supervisor can show guests where they can plug in their phones or other devices.

Old trailer only: (Note: some site supervisors may prefer instead to set up the charging station atop the tongue box and to use the power outlet that is built into the box. Only USB-charging devices may be charged there. For instructions on how to do this, see [How to use the alternative charging station](#) in the Drivers chapter.)

Old trailer only: The topmost outlet in the electrical panel (labeled “inverter”) is the only one that has power when the trailer is running off the inverter rather than from the grid. (It also has power when the trailer is connected to the grid.) When you run on inverter power only, do not plug in devices like electric bicycles or blow dryers that need a lot of power. Indeed, to preserve power for the water pump and heater, it is best to shut down the recharging station entirely if you run off the inverter.

A guest needs medical help

Shower the People volunteers do not provide medical treatment or diagnose medical problems. We have a very modest first aid kit (see [Where to find things](#)). You may give guests bandaids from that kit for them to apply themselves. You may help guests to locate urgent care centers or drug stores. You may refer guests to a county public health nurse or to another third-party medical professional if one is stationed on-site. You may help guests find information in our local medical resource guide or on *VivaSLO*.

If a guest is having a mental health emergency that appears to be potentially dangerous to themselves or others, alert the site supervisor, who should call 911 or arrange for someone to call 911. If the emergency does not rise to the level of dangerousness, but is nonetheless severe enough to warrant

attention, alert the site supervisor, who may consider calling one of the non-emergency dispatch phone numbers.

If a guest is having a medical emergency, alert the site supervisor, who should call 911 or arrange for someone to call 911.

A guest wants to give us a donation

Make sure the guest knows that our showers, supplies, and other services are absolutely free of charge. Any donations are completely optional. Do not solicit donations from guests. Do not give preferential treatment to guests who donate to us.

If a guest (or any member of the public) gives a monetary donation, put it inside the black storage clipboard at the greeter station and ask the site supervisor to make a note of it. The General Manager will pick up the donation for deposit.

A guest is belligerent, insulting, threatening, or otherwise troublesome

Notify the site supervisor, who will take steps to protect volunteers and guests. Guests who violate STP guest rules may be denied service at the discretion of the site supervisor. Consider the advice in the [De-escalation process: “First Aid for Aggressive Behavior”](#) appendix.

If you need to issue a ban or temporary ban in which a guest is not invited back to the showers, make note of this on the BOLO list so that other site supervisors know to enforce this (see [The BOLO list](#)).

A guest does not understand English

If a guest does not understand English and you do not understand the language they are speaking, you might ask around to see if anyone can help as an interpreter. If the guest knows Spanish, you might be able to muddle through with the [Useful Spanish translations](#) appendix to this guide. There are some phone apps that do decent speech-to-text translations. You might try practicing with one of those for such an occasion. Otherwise, you'll just have to wing it.

Guests are arguing about who should be next in line

The Greeter is the ultimate arbiter of the order in which guests will get their showers. Guests may bicker about who ought to be next to sign up. If they do so in a civil way, this is just one of those things, and they may be able to decide this to their satisfaction amongst themselves. But, in any case, the Greeter's word is law.

If the argumentation rises to the level of threats or violence, notify the site supervisor. Guests who are threatening or violent are violating STP guest rules, and may be denied service at the discretion of the site supervisor.

If you need to issue a ban or temporary ban in which a guest is not invited back to the showers, make note of this on the BOLO list so that other site supervisors know to enforce this (see [The BOLO list](#)).

Consider the advice in the [De-escalation process: “First Aid for Aggressive Behavior”](#) appendix.

A guest asks if they can shower earlier than their turn for [reasons]

The Greeter is the ultimate arbiter of the order in which guests will get their showers. Very rarely, the greeter will allow a guest to move up the list and shower earlier than they otherwise would because of important reasons (e.g. the guest has to catch a bus to a medical appointment).

Because of the potential for abuse and because it would be difficult to have to adjudicate a lot of requests like this, it's a privilege that is usually reserved for regular guests whom we know well and whom we know to rarely ask for such favors.

A guest asks you to watch their stuff (keep it safe) while they shower

Volunteers can be too busy with their primary duties to keep track of other people's property. We cannot accept responsibility for keeping guests' property safe while they shower.

If the property is small and unobtrusive, the Greeter may offer to keep it behind the greeter table while the guest is in the shower (at the Greeter's discretion). But even so, the Greeter might have to leave that station for a variety of reasons, so it should be made clear that we cannot be responsible in such a case.

Guests may bring bags and other personal belongings with them into the shower units, within reason (e.g. no bicycles or non-service animals).

A guest walks away with a towel or washcloth

Remind the guest that we need these back as we have them laundered to use with future guests. Do not physically intervene to recover such items. If the guest refuses to return them, this violates STP guest rules, and the guest may be denied future service at the discretion of the site supervisor.

If you need to issue a ban or temporary ban in which a guest is not invited back to the showers, make note of this on the BOLO list so other site supervisors know to enforce this (see [The BOLO list](#)).

A guest vandalizes or mistreats STP equipment

Notify the site supervisor, who will take steps to protect volunteers and guests. Guests who violate STP guest rules may be denied service at the discretion of the site supervisor. The site supervisor will also fill out an incident report describing what happened.

If you need to issue a ban or temporary ban in which a guest is not invited back to the showers, make note of this on the BOLO list so other site supervisors know to enforce this (see [The BOLO list](#)).

Consider the advice in the [De-escalation process: “First Aid for Aggressive Behavior”](#) appendix.

A guest has a weapon with them

It is not uncommon for guests to possess weapons or things that could be used as weapons (typically things like knives or clubs). Often this is just a matter of self-defense preparedness and not something we need to concern ourselves with.

However, if a guest is *brandishing* a weapon or is referring to their possession of it in a threatening way, notify the site supervisor. The site supervisor should remind the guest that we don't allow open weapons or threats at our site, and ask that they leave if they are unable to comply with that rule.

If you need to issue a ban or temporary ban in which a guest is not invited back to the showers, make note of this on the BOLO list so other site supervisors know to enforce this (see [The BOLO list](#)).

A guest is using intoxicants on-site, or is smoking

Notify the site supervisor. It is against the STP guest rules to use intoxicants at our sites, and guests who do may be denied service at the discretion of the site supervisor. Smoking (tobacco or what-have-you) may be okay if it happens far enough away from the shower area that it does not bother volunteers or waiting guests. If people are smoking where you can smell it or where it annoys volunteers or waiting guests, politely ask them to move further away. Some sites may have stronger non-smoking policies; if so, let guests know that they cannot smoke on the site property. Downtown SLO is smoke-free by law, and people who smoke there (for instance near the Library site) risk a citation.

A guest uses obscene language

Notify the site supervisor if a guest uses inappropriate language. In general, we are tolerant of obscene language that does not rise to the level of being threatening, insulting, or degrading to others. Above a certain level, such language may violate STP guest rules, and guests who persist may be denied service at the discretion of the site supervisor.

If you need to issue a ban or temporary ban in which a guest is not invited back to the showers, make note of this on the BOLO list so other site supervisors know to enforce this (see [The BOLO list](#)).

Consider the advice in the [De-escalation process: "First Aid for Aggressive Behavior"](#) appendix.

A guest has a pet

It is usually fine for a guest to have a pet with them in the waiting area. Remind dog owners to keep their dogs on-leash while on-site. If a pet is aggressive to other animals or people, it must leave the shower site or be confined in a vehicle.

Pets cannot go into the shower unit with a guest (service dogs are an exception; see below). While a guest is in the shower, their dog should be tied up away from where guests are sitting and away from the path to or from the showers.

We usually have a water bowl for pets (see [Where to find things](#) for its location). You can fill this from the same source we use to fill guest water bottles (see "A guest would like some water" above).

Guests with pets and service animals may be interested in learning about the Woods Humane Society Pet Pantry (805.543.9316 x31) which can help them get veterinary care and animal food. We have a

resource card that lists other resources of interest to homeless pet-owners, and *VivaSLO* has a section devoted to pet care options.

A guest wants to bring their service dog with them into the shower

Guests may take a *service* dog into the shower unit with them. Ask the guest not to wash their service dog in the shower; the fur clogs our shower drains and our holding tank.

Do not ask for proof that the dog is certified or that the person has a disability, and don't inquire about the nature of the disability.

Someone asks if so-and-so has been here today

We don't tell others whether or not a guest has been to our site or is at our site (see [X Tell others where guests are or have been](#) in our [Some of what we *don't* do](#) section). However, this information is sometimes evident to astute observers (e.g. if someone with an uncommon first name is listed on our order-board or someone has signed our Release, which is visible to visitors at the Greeter table).

We also will not call others who are looking for a person to let them know that we have seen them.

Sometimes concerned family members will ask us to look for a missing person. In some cases, we can offer to let the person being sought know that they are being sought and to give that person information about who is looking for them (like a contact number). When we offer to do this, we should not indicate whether or not the person being sought is known to be a guest at STP. Instead, merely say "if we see so-and-so we will let them know you are looking for them and will give them your contact number."

A guest is too intoxicated to reliably remain upright in the showers

We allow guests who are somewhat intoxicated to use the showers, but if they're stumbling-drunk or having a hard time staying awake, we turn them away because we can't be confident they'll be safe inside. Just tell them gently "We can't give you a shower today. Come back the next day we shower." The line between a bit intoxicated and too intoxicated is a blurry one, so just use your best judgement.

A guest wants to help as a temporary volunteer

Guests may also become STP volunteers.

If a guest wants to regularly take shift-long volunteer slots, they should use the same process as any other new volunteers. Notify the site supervisor, who can follow the process described in [New volunteers](#).

If they want to temporarily lend a hand at a particular shift, see if you can find something that they can do without a lot of training and without needing to sign a volunteer release form. Examples might be folding towel candles, doing a trash sweep, or helping to set up the benches and pop-up shade structure.

It can be worth doing this even if you know it would be simpler and more efficient to do these things ourselves. When guests help us, they feel more protective toward STP, and more camaraderie with the volunteers. It also demonstrates that STP views our guests as neighbors and equals (not as "cases" to be "managed").

A guest is taking a shower with us for the first time

If a guest is showering with us for the first time, make sure they are aware of our schedule card and of the resource cards we have available and of *VivaSLO*, as well as the various other resources we have for them (including our charging station and water-refill option).

When the turn for their shower comes up, give them information they may need about how it operates and about our 15-minute policy (see [First-time guest introduction](#) for an example.)

A guest is in the shower way past the 15 minute mark

See [Tips for improving throughput](#) in the Site Supervisor chapter for some strategies for dealing with guests who stay in the showers too long.

The first time this happens, remind the guest of our 15 minute policy. Make a note on the BOLO list that the next time we encounter this guest, we should get a verbal commitment from them that they will stick to our 15 minute limit (see [The BOLO list](#)).

The next time the guest appears, get this commitment from them before allowing them to shower. Ask if there is anything we can do to make this easier for them (e.g. knock at the 10-minute mark). If they successfully take a 15-minute shower, all is good. If not, adjust the note on the BOLO list to indicate that the guest did not honor their commitment and should be restricted to supplies-only.

A guest wants to use their own shampoo, soap, conditioner, etc.

This is discouraged (we prefer that guests use our own known-to-be-biodegradable soap), but isn't worth getting bent out of shape over. Hair dye, on the other hand, is absolutely forbidden.

A guest wants to dye their hair.

This is not allowed. If a guest asks if they may do this, say no. More typically a guest will ask forgiveness rather than permission, if even that. If you know of a guest who has dyed their hair in our showers on a previous shift, remind them that it's not okay (it takes too long, and it stains the walls). Repeat offenders should be marked as "supplies only" guests on the BOLO list (see [The BOLO list](#)).

Volunteer issues

Someone wants to learn how to volunteer

Welcome them, and notify the site supervisor, who can follow the process described in [New volunteers](#) to bring them on-board.

A volunteer reports a needle stick, razor cut, or something like that

Report the incident to the site supervisor.

The injured person should immediately wash the injured area. The injured person should seek medical care as soon as possible, for example by visiting an urgent care center.

If the injury was from a syringe, and the syringe is still on-site, carefully collect it in a sharps container (see [Where to find things](#)). If the person who used the syringe is known, make note of that fact.

Write up and file an incident report (see [Incident reports](#)).

A volunteer gets CaviCide spray in their eye

Rinse your eyes cautiously in the shower with water. Remove your contact lenses (if any) if you can. If eye irritation persists, get medical advice/attention.

If all showers are in use, use the eyewash station to rinse your eye instead. The eyewash station is inside the door to the trailer's mechanical room. It is a bottle filled with sterile eye-washing fluid. Remove the cap, turn the outlet nozzle one-quarter turn to break the seal, then place that nozzle against your open eye and squeeze the bottle to flush your eye.

Third-party issues

A service provider, vendor, or proselytizer wants to set up shop nearby

See [Working with third-party providers](#).

The press shows up and wants to film, photograph, interview, etc.

Notify the site supervisor, who can follow our policies described in [Tips for dealing with the press](#).

Law enforcement shows up

The site supervisor should be the primary point of contact between the on-site Shower the People presence and law enforcement. Other volunteers, unless they were witnesses or victims of some particular incident, should refer law enforcement to the site supervisor.

A concerned citizen raises a stink about something

Notify the site supervisor, who can follow our policy described in [Tips for dealing with citizen complaints](#).

Site issues

We cannot irrigate using greywater as expected

If for some reason you cannot irrigate with greywater at some site where you are usually able to do so, switch to the process described in [Monitor the greywater tank level](#).

You notice or witness vandalism to the site, or breaking-and-entering/trespassing

Notify the site supervisor, who will decide how to respond (e.g. by calling 911 if this is ongoing, or by notifying the General Manager otherwise). The site supervisor should also fill out an incident report.

Other process issues

There's a medical emergency

Notify the site supervisor, who will decide how to respond (e.g. by calling 911 or the mobile crisis team). STP volunteers are not expected to give medical diagnosis or treatment.

A fight breaks out

Notify the site supervisor, who will take steps to protect volunteers and guests. Guests who are violent are violating STP guest rules, and may be denied service at the discretion of the site supervisor.

Consider the advice in the [De-escalation process: "First Aid for Aggressive Behavior"](#) appendix.

Someone comes with a donation for STP

If a member of the public gives a monetary donation, thank them, then put the donation inside the black storage clipboard at the Greeter station and ask the site supervisor to make a note of it. The General Manager will pick up the donation for deposit.

People often come by to offer to donate supplies, but we only occasionally accept them. Here are some guidelines:

- We do not accept donations of used clothing.
- We typically do not accept donations of blankets, sleeping bags, and the like. (On cold days when we're confident they'll all get snapped up, we might make an exception; but we don't want to store such things between shifts.)
- We do not accept donations of soap or shampoo (we exclusively use biodegradable bulk liquid soap). We may accept *unused* travel-size conditioner, moisturizer, shaving cream, floss, flossing picks, sunscreen, and things like that if we have room for them among our greeter station supplies.
- We do not accept donations of towels, washcloths, or rags.
- We will usually accept donations of food and drink to give away, though only as much as we expect to give away during that day's shift (we do not store food in the van or trailer between shifts).

Encourage donors of supplies we don't accept to donate those supplies elsewhere. Prado Day Center and the Salvation Army, for example, will take some supplies that we will not. The "Little Free Pantries" referenced on one of our resource cards are good places to leave certain sorts of supplies as well as non-perishable food and drink.

A mechanical issue is not so severe as to prevent showers but needs attention

Contact the regional Maintenance Manager and let them know the details. See [Our operations team](#) for contact information.

There's blood/feces/etc. in the shower unit

See [Special procedure to decontaminate an infectious room](#). We have facemasks and eye goggles you can wear for extra protection. Our cleaning protocol and medical-grade disinfectant should protect you from contamination. Be especially careful and thorough in your cleaning when you notice such messes. Discard your gloves afterwards.

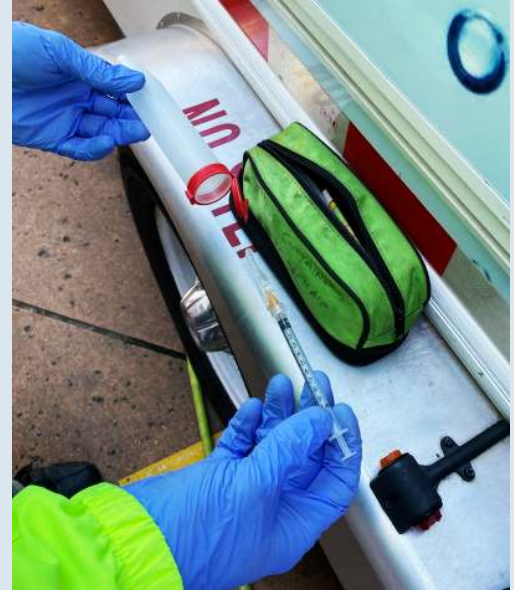
I find sharps (hypodermic needles) in the trash can or the shower unit

This is rare. Assuming that some people do inject medicine or drugs while in the shower units, they seem to either take their “works” with them when they go or to dispose of their own insulin needles correctly in their own sharps disposal kits.

Never tamp down the trash with your hand or your foot. You can use the bottom of another trash can to do that instead.

We have individual sharps-disposal sealed plastic bottles (see [Where to find things](#)). If you find a hypodermic needle, take the following steps:

1. Retrieve the hard-plastic sharps disposal container and open it.
2. Put on the sturdy rubber gloves, which are found in the tongue box, or the back panel (**new trailer**).
3. Pick up the hypodermic needle, put it in the sharps container, and seal the sharps container with the irreversible plastic tab.
4. As always after cleaning, use hand sanitizer on your gloves (or on your hands and replace your gloves).
5. After the shift, take the sealed sharps container to a pharmacy which will have a place designated to safely dispose of it. (If anyone has been pricked by the needle, do not dispose of it but save it so it can be tested by the medical team that treats the person who was pricked by the needle.)
6. Let the supplies restocking supervisor know that we need a new sharps container, or retrieve one from the UU shed.



There's a hazardous materials spill

If there is a potentially hazardous materials spill, this is priority #1 until it is dealt with. Stop admitting guests to the showers until the situation is under control.

Potentially hazardous materials include wastewater, bodily fluids, and oil, gasoline, or other mechanical fluids.

In the tongue box is a container of “Spill Hero,” an absorbent grit. Pour it directly on top of the spill. When it absorbs the spill, scoop it up using the metal shovel (also in the tongue box) and discard it in a trash bag in the site trash bin.

Fill out an incident report (see [Incident reports](#)). If you used the “Spill Hero” make note of that in the incident report so we know to order more.

Water is dripping underneath the trailer

There are several reasons why you might see water dripping underneath the trailer:

- Atmospheric moisture is condensing on the water heater and dripping from its outlet hose. This is normal and is not a malfunction or a problem. Typically these drips will appear under the trailer near the utility closet door.
- Someone has used the water-bottle-refill hose and some residual water is dripping from the hose. This is also usually not an issue; though if the leak continues it’s a good idea to check to make sure the faucet has been fully retightened to stop the flow of water. In this case, the drips should be isolated near the water-bottle-refill cabinet.
- Shower water has escaped the shower and is flowing onto the floor of a shower unit, then draining through a drain in the floor. This happens if the bottom of the shower curtain falls outside of the shower while a guest is showering. This isn’t a big deal, but the next shower cleaner for that shower should correct the placement of the curtain. In this case, the water that escapes the drain may spread out on top of the holding tanks and could drip from many different locations.
- A toilet is overflowing onto the floor of a shower unit, then draining through a drain in the floor. This can happen if toilet paper or something else lodges in the valve at the bottom of the toilet bowl, propping it open enough to keep the refill-flow on, but blocking it so this water cannot escape. This can appear much like the previous case: the water that escapes the drain may spread out on top of the holding tanks and could drip from many different locations. If the toilet overflow contains feces, consult [Special procedure to decontaminate an infectious room](#) in the Cleaners chapter and “There’s a hazardous materials spill” in this chapter.
- There is a leak in one of our hoses or in the connection between our hoses and the trailer or the water filter. In this case, you will probably see the leak or notice leak water flowing down the side of the hose. Alert the driver who can try to ameliorate the problem. If the leak is minor, just put up with it as best you can.
- There is a leak somewhere within the trailer itself, either in the hoses, the shower drains, or the holding tanks. If the leak is severe, you may need to shut down operations for the day. If it is minor, and you can confirm that the leak is not wastewater or some non-water fluid, try to get through the day. In any case, contact the Maintenance Manager (see [Our operations team](#) for contact details) and explain what is going on. If the leak is wastewater, see “There’s a hazardous materials spill” in this chapter for instructions on how to proceed.

You smell propane

In case of a major propane leak (suddenly there’s a strong smell of propane in the air), take these steps:

1. Do not touch any electric switch or fuse.

2. Do not use your cell phone near the trailer.
3. Evacuate the area around the trailer unit.
4. Turn off the valves of both propane tanks at the front of the trailer.
5. Until you can find and fix the source of the leak, halt all shower operations. If turning off the propane tanks resolves the leak, consider restarting showers but without hot water (if the day is warm enough to make this a reasonable option).
6. Fill out an incident report (see [Incident reports](#)).

In the case of a more minor leak (you only rarely catch a whiff of propane smell, and only when you're right by the tanks), report this to the Maintenance Manager (see [Our operations team](#) for contact details) but continue operations as usual.

Old trailer only: If you set up the charging station at the tongue box, cut the power to the charging station by unplugging the yellow plug in the electrical panel cabinet near the back of the trailer. Let guests know that this charging station is no longer operational.

Supplies & equipment issues

There's incorrect or incomplete information on our resource cards

We maintain the information on our color-coded resource cards. Let our resource card maintainer know to fix it in the next iteration (see [Our operations team](#) for contact details). Note that our cards currently only contain information of use to people in the city of SLO and the Five Cities area (so not, for example, resources in the north county).

Other resource cards and flyers we hand out are maintained by outside groups and you would have to contact them to have the information updated.

The *VivaSLO* web app has a built-in feedback feature for reporting issues.

A toilet is out of order

If a shower unit toilet is inoperable:

- Use masking tape to seal the toilet lid so that it is obvious the toilet is not to be used.
- Write on the outside of the door (with a *dry erase marker*) that the toilet is out of order.
- Tell guests before they enter that shower that the toilet is out of order but if they need to use the toilet they can wait and use a different shower unit when one becomes available.



We're running out of something. Where can we find more?

See the [Where to find things](#) appendix to learn where you can replenish supplies of just about everything.

A soap dispenser fails to work correctly

The soap dispensers sometimes fail or seem to fail. If a guest complains that a soap dispenser is not working, test it yourself when you have a chance.

If it works when you try it, it may have just been a transient failure that cleared up on its own.

A possible reason for soap dispenser failure is that something (like a washcloth) is stuffed into the dispenser, or that a clot in the soap itself has gummed it up. If this is the case, take the dispenser down, empty it out, and try to clean it:

1. Open the top of the soap dispenser. You will see a screw that fastens it to the wall. Unscrew this so you can remove the soap dispenser from the wall.
2. Fit a large soap bottle with a screw-on pump (these can be found in the mechanical room) and place it in the shower, temporarily, so that guests can still have soap in the shower while you complete the rest of this procedure.
3. While you clean the faulty dispenser (outside of the shower unit), continue to let people shower.
4. Empty the soap dispenser into a trash can or sink. Flush it out with water if you can. Look inside for anything that doesn't belong there that might be clogging it up.
5. Use an awl or dental-cleaning tool or whatever you can find in the toolbox to scrape residue off of the soap dispenser that might be clogging it.
6. Add an inch or so of soap to the dispenser and see if you can get it to work. If so, refill it and return it to the shower unit when you can and screw it back into the wall. If not, put the faulty dispenser in the mechanical room and leave a note on the mechanical room log.

Guests complain that the showers aren't hot, or are going cold on them

If the shower water fails to get warm, check (or ask the driver or supervisor to check) if the propane tank's valves are open, if the propane tank is full enough, and if the water heater switch is on and powered (either by the inverter or by site power).

Old trailer only: You can use the water heater remote readout display to verify that it is set to 120 degrees. That display should read “120”. If it does not, you can use the **HOT▲** and **COLD▼** buttons to adjust it. If the “120” is flashing, this may mean you are out of propane, or you may just need to cycle (turn off and then on again) the water heater switch.

If the flow rate through the water heater is not sufficient (at least 0.8 gallons per minute or so), the water heater will not turn on and the water will not heat up.



How to determine the temperature setting and flow rate (old trailer):

You can use the **INFO** button on the water heater remote readout display to learn more about the temperature and flow rate of the water as it flows through the heater:

Press **INFO** once to see the water temperature as it flows into the heating element ("**IN◀**").



Press **INFO** again to see the water temperature as it flows out to the showers from the heating element ("**OUT◀**").



Press **INFO** again to see the rate at which water is flowing through the heating element ("**FLOW◀**").

Note: If this is less than 0.8 g/m or so, the heating element will not come on. This may cause the showers to not heat up. A single shower should pull between 0.8–1.0 g/m and so should be sufficient to cause the heating element to activate. If a shower is fully on and this reading shows less than 0.8 g/m this may mean you need to replace the water filter or that there is some other reason the water pressure is too low to sustain a strong flow rate (you may want to turn the water pump on if it is off).



Press **INFO** again to see the temperature setting of the heating element.

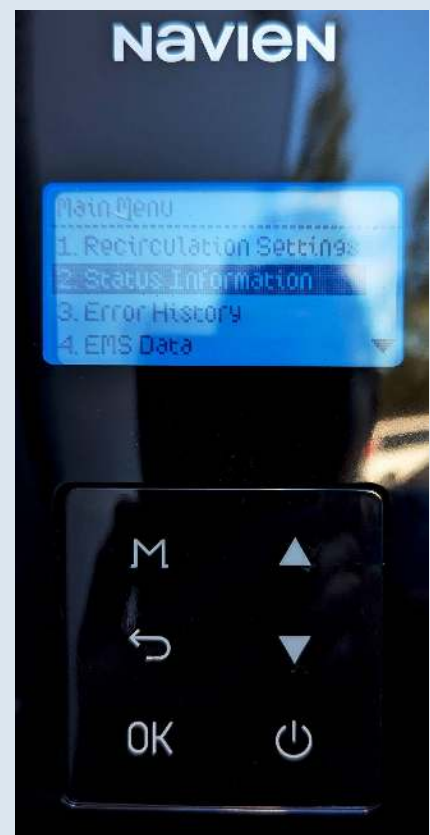


Old trailer only: If the water pressure from the hose (“city water”) is low, you may find that sometimes it is not sufficient to trigger the heater to come on but also not so low that it triggers the water pump to come on to boost the pressure. In such a case, guests may complain that the water goes cold for 30 seconds or so intermittently. In such a case, the best approach is to turn off the “city water” valve, turn on the “[fresh] tank fill” valve, and run the showers entirely off of the tank rather than the city water. This requires that you monitor the tank level throughout the day so that you do not overfill it or let it run dry (turn the “[fresh] tank fill” valve off if you’ve got more water in the tank than you need).

How to determine the temperature setting and flow rate (*new trailer*):

Inside the mechanical room is a large white box with a black panel on the front labeled “Navien.”

Press the **M** button on the panel to bring up the menu. Use the ▼ button to select **2. Status Information** then press **OK**.



Use the ▼ button to scroll to 3. Flow Rate. You will see the current gallons per minute displayed immediately below that.	
Use the ▼ button to scroll to 5. Out Water Temp to see the temperature at which the water is leaving the heater.	

The trailer batteries are drained

If the trailer batteries no longer provide sufficient power, turn on the van engine to recharge them. Be sure to use ducting to redirect the exhaust away from the greeter station before you do this. For more complete instructions, see [What to do if the on-site electricity is not available](#) in the Driver section.

DC power (everything but the heater) flickers, chatters, or goes off

First, verify that the battery switch is (old trailer) or switches are (new trailer) on.

If only a few items have gone dead, you may have blown a fuse. See [Where to find things](#) for the location of the fusebox and the extra fuses.

The lights in the shower units are sensitive to moisture and sometimes temporarily fail or flicker for that reason. If one or more seem to have gone out permanently, they may need to be replaced. Leave a note on the mechanical room log about it (indicate which shower is having the problem).



APPENDICES

Important contact numbers

Name	Number(s)	Details
40 Prado Homeless Services Center	805.503.5360 805.544.4004 805.459.1073 (safe parking)	A shelter, a safe parking area, and additional services such as meals, showers, laundry, case management, medical care, animal kennels.
5Cities Homeless Coalition (south county)	805.574.1638	Mobilizing resources, fostering hope, and advocating for the homeless and those facing homelessness.
5Cities Warming Center	805.202.3615 (hotline) 805.295.1501	A recorded message that gives the current status of that warming center.
Adult Protective Services	805.781.1790 844.729.8011 (after hours)	Emergency intervention to dependent adults and seniors in cases of abuse and neglect.
Animal Services	805.781.4400	Report animal abuse or neglect, or lost & found pets.
Behavioral Health Department (a.k.a. County Mental Health)	800.838.1381 800-783-0607 (crisis hotline)	Provides services to improve and maintain the health and safety of people affected by mental illness and/or substance abuse. Call to schedule an appointment.
Child Welfare Services	805.781.5437	Provides for the safety and stability of children and youth who are at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo (CAPSLO)	805.706.8663	A nonprofit agency committed to eliminating poverty by empowering people to achieve economic self-sufficiency through a comprehensive array of community-based programs.
Community Health Centers	866-614-4636	Network of nonprofit community health centers offering comprehensive health services. Provides primary medical, dental, and urgent care.
Drug & Alcohol Services Clinic	805.781.4275 (SLO, adults) 805.781.4754 (SLO, youth <18) 805.473.7080 (Grover Beach)	Walk-in clinic. Call Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm. After hours, call the Behavioral Health Department number instead.

Name	Number(s)	Details
ECHO (El Camino Homeless Organization, Atascadero)	805.462.3663	Transitional homeless shelter and case management services in Atascadero.
Mobile Crisis Team (includes Crisis Stabilization Unit referrals & transportation)	800.783-0607	Emergency psychiatric evaluation services to determine whether immediate inpatient psychiatric treatment is required; crisis intervention services and mental health consultations; access to mental health treatment services through linkage and/or referral to community services. County-wide, 24/7.
Mobile Crisis Unit (city of SLO only)	805.550.7270 805.781.7312 (non-emergency dispatch)	Operates Monday through Friday, 8am to 5:30pm only. A SLO Fire Department EMT and a Behavioral Health caseworker. Provides crisis support behavioral/mental health services in non-emergency situations.
Non-emergency dispatch numbers Lt. Aaron Schafer	805.473.5100 (Arroyo Grande) 805.473.4511 (Grover Beach) 805.781.7312 (San Luis Obispo) 805.594.8056 (San Luis Obispo) aschafer@slocity.org	If you want to reach the police or fire department, but not to report an ongoing emergency. Lt. Schafer is the liaison between the SLOPD and Shower the People
SLO Hotline	800.783.0607 or Text HOME to 741741	24/7 suicide prevention and mental health crisis line that provides immediate emotional support for you or someone else.
Transitions Mental Health Association (TMHA)	805.540.6500	Promotes recovery and wellness for people with mental illness through work, housing, community, and family support services
United Way 211	211 Text: 898-211	Confidential referral service that people can use to get information about a variety of health and human service programs.
Woods Pet Pantry	805.543.9316 ext. 26	Pet food and pet supplies assistance for people of limited means.

When to call 911

Call **911** for emergencies such as:

- a life-threatening or other medical emergency

- an immediately dangerous mental health crisis (e.g. suicidal, walking into traffic)
- an incident of violence
- a serious crime in progress, or one in which
 - the offender is still at the scene of the crime,
 - injured people are at the scene of the crime,
 - or witnesses are still at the scene of the crime
- a fire in progress
- a bomb threat or other threat of imminent violence
- an unleashed animal (e.g. dog or wild animal) that is attacking people or pets

On other occasions when you want to reach police, fire, paramedics, or other such services that operate through those departments (such as the CAT team or the Mobile Crisis Unit), call the non-emergency dispatch numbers instead. See the table above for those numbers, or the “911 Instructions” laminate posted on the outside of the greeter clipboard and on the inside of the mechanical room door.

If you forget or cannot locate the non-emergency dispatch numbers, call 911 and that dispatcher will refer you to another number if they determine it is not an emergency.

Who should call?

The site supervisor determines whether to call 911 and who should call. In some cases it may be best for the site supervisor to call 911. In others, the site supervisor may delegate that task to another volunteer. If you delegate to another volunteer, do this very explicitly. Do not just yell “somebody call 911,” but point to a specific volunteer who seems capable and level-headed, make sure you have their attention, and then say “[THEIR-NAME], call 911, and report a [VARIETY] emergency.”

What to say when you call 911

Calmly tell the dispatcher that you are reporting an emergency.

Give the dispatcher the site address:

BMW of San Luis Obispo	1251 Calle Joaquin, San Luis Obispo
San Luis Obispo Public Library	995 Palm St., San Luis Obispo
South County People’s Kitchen	946 Rockaway Ave., Grover Beach
St. Barnabas’ Episcopal Church	301 Trinity Ave., Arroyo Grande
Unitarian Universalist Church	2201 Lawton Ave., San Luis Obispo
United Church of Christ	11245 Los Osos Valley Rd., San Luis Obispo
United Methodist Church	1515 Fredericks St., San Luis Obispo

Describe the emergency and the apparent condition of the people involved: the more detail, the better. Give the responders enough information that they know what to expect when they arrive.

If you are the supervisor, say so, and give the dispatcher your name so responders can ask for you when they arrive. If you are not the supervisor, tell the dispatcher “our supervisor today is [their name].”

Stay on the line until the dispatcher says you may hang up. Be available by phone and in person for possible follow-up questions. If you are reporting a misdemeanor crime, you may be asked if you want to press charges (police will not typically arrest someone or file charges for misdemeanors they do not themselves witness, unless a witness or victim presses charges—the police may confusingly call this a “citizen’s arrest” even if you in no way “arrest” anyone).

Notify others who are present that 911 has been called so they do not make duplicate calls.

Discourage looky-loos. Clear space for the 911 responders when they arrive.

The site supervisor should file an incident report with the chair of the Operations Oversight Committee whenever a STP volunteer places a 911 call.

Site contacts

If you need to contact a representative from one of our site partners—for example, if the parking lot is blocked by a fallen tree, you notice vandalism to the site, or the water/electricity is not working—contact one of our Site Liaisons, or our General Manager, who will reach out to the site partner about the issue. (See [Contact information](#) for their details).

Shower the People rules for guests

STP requires that guests and volunteers adhere to the following standards of conduct. Violations are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and violators may be denied service or banned from the shower program at the discretion of the site supervisor.

1. Respect others and their property.
2. Do not smoke near the showers or in other areas where smoking is not permitted.
3. Do not abuse, threaten, or engage in violence towards anyone.
4. Do not use drugs or alcohol on-site.
5. Do not panhandle on-site or ask others for money. Do not sell anything on-site.
6. Do not brandish or handle weapons.
7. Do not gather at the site unless you are a volunteer, except when you are waiting for your shower.
8. Be modestly clothed when you are outside the shower.
9. Supervise your children at all times. Parents or guardians of children must remain in the vicinity of the shower at all times while minor children use the shower. Children under six years of age may not shower alone.
10. Pick up after yourself. Do not litter or leave belongings behind.

A magnetically-affixable, laminated card lists these rules. It is among the items stored in the admin bin for the greeter station. Display this card near the greeter station table where guests can read it.

De-escalation process: “First Aid for Aggressive Behavior”

Some guests have difficulty with impulse control, anger, delusions of persecution, and things of that nature. Others have a short fuse because of the stresses and insecurities of homelessness and poverty, from lack of sleep, or from chronic health problems or side effects of drug abuse. It is not uncommon for guests to be a little “off” and to have trouble with social niceties.

But every once in a while someone goes beyond being off-putting and starts to seem menacing. We can take steps to make it less likely that someone who is having a bad day will become a threat.

Stay alert for signs of trouble (people on edge, raised voices), be aware of your surroundings and where your teammates are. Share concerns or “uh-oh” feelings with other volunteers. Ask guests “is everything OK over there?” if you notice tension rising, so they’re aware you’re being watchful.

Take threats or warnings seriously, particularly if the person believes they are being persecuted. Many of our guests do not have the presence of mind to react constructively or proportionally to perceived threats.

If you are frightened, step away from the situation and notify the supervisor. Do not put yourself at risk.

If you had to deny someone a shower, ban them from the site, or call in outside help, the supervisor should fill out an incident report and/or BOLO note with the details.

De-escalation tips

If someone becomes aggressive, act to ensure your own safety, remain calm, and try to de-escalate the situation. Here are some de-escalation tips:

- Speak to the person slowly and confidently with a gentle, caring tone of voice.
- Do not respond in a hostile, disciplinary, or challenging manner. Try to maintain calm, firm poise.
- Do not argue or threaten.
- Do not touch people without their consent. If you do need to touch someone, try to establish eye contact with them first so they can better gauge your benign intent.
- Avoid raising your voice or talking fast. Maintain a measured, reassuring tone of voice.
- People may overreact to negative words. Use positive words like “Stay calm” or “you are safe here” instead of negative words like “don’t fight,” or “stop yelling.”
- You can point out when someone is crossing a boundary and needs to stop (e.g. “we do not allow violence, threats, or verbal abuse”), but when you do so, focus your language on the behavior and our expectations rather than on the person you are addressing.
- Avoid nervous behavior such as shuffling your feet, fidgeting, or making abrupt movements.
- Do not restrict the person’s movement. If he or she wants to pace, allow it.
- Consider taking a break from the conversation to allow the person a chance to calm down.
- Do not physically intervene.
- If a hostile interaction is happening between guests, encourage them to get some distance from each other. For example you might ask one of them “could you come talk to me over here privately for a moment?”
- If the person is focused on you personally (angry at you, accusing you of being unfair, blaming you for something) consider asking another volunteer to step in and take over the interaction from you.

Alert the site supervisor to the situation. The supervisor may deny someone a shower and temporarily ban them from the site if they make things unsafe for others.

Calling for outside help

The safety of our volunteers is always of primary importance when the supervisor decides whether to call for outside help.

Note that involving law enforcement can exacerbate things. The supervisor may call the local mental health crisis team instead if the situation calls for it. The supervisor decides if outside help needs to be called and who should make the call. If you are the one who calls, describe the person's symptoms and behaviors rather than trying to make a diagnosis. (However if you know for a fact that, for example, the person is intoxicated and what specific drug they're using, say so.)

- Mention whether the person is armed or unarmed, if you know.
- Be aware that the crisis team might or might not be accompanied by law enforcement.
- If you suspect the person's aggression is related to a mental health issue, tell the dispatcher you need their help to obtain mental health responders.

Recovering and reviewing

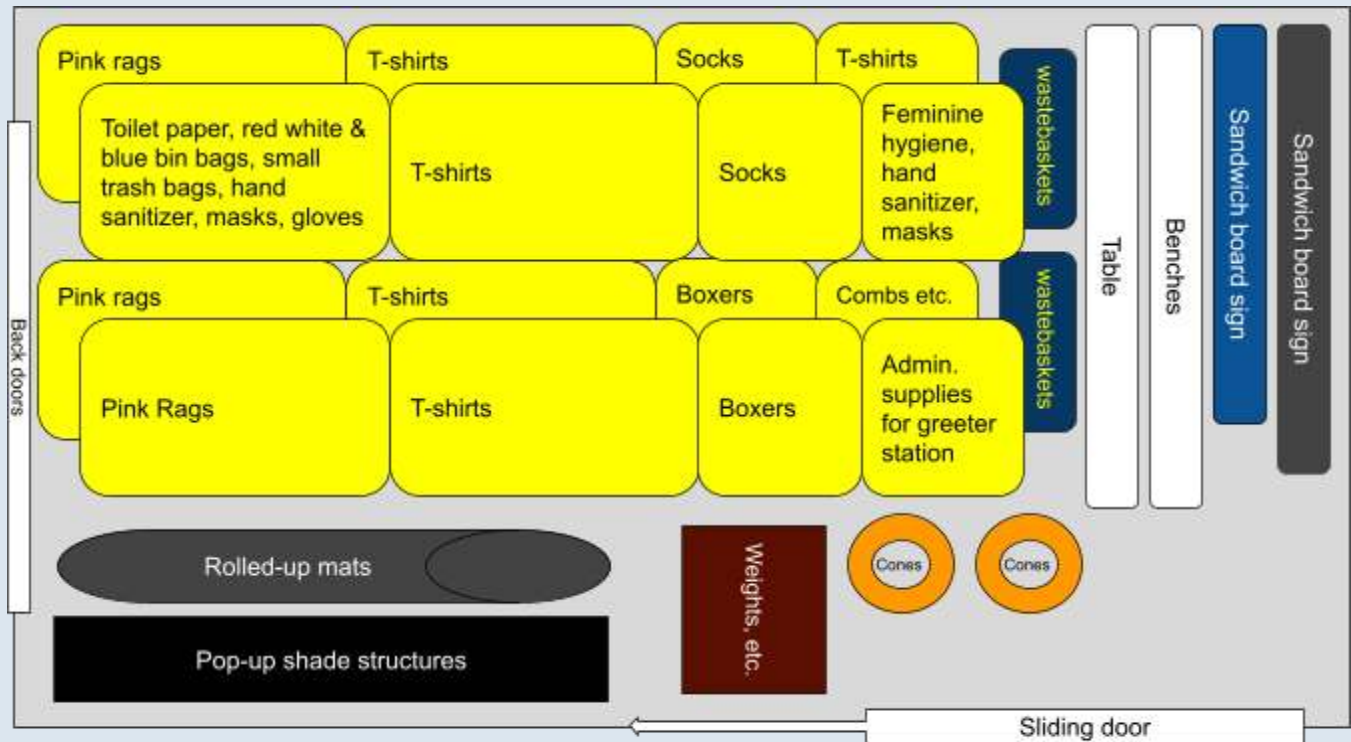
It is normal to feel stressed from dealing with a situation like this. Remember to attend to your own mental health when you have some breathing room, and to be patient with yourself (and take care of yourself) as your mind and body wind down from the stressful situation.

It can help to talk things out with other volunteers. At first, do not feel like you have to problem-solve or critically evaluate how the incident or our responses to it played out. Just share your current feelings, fears, or whatever else is currently at the forefront of your mind.

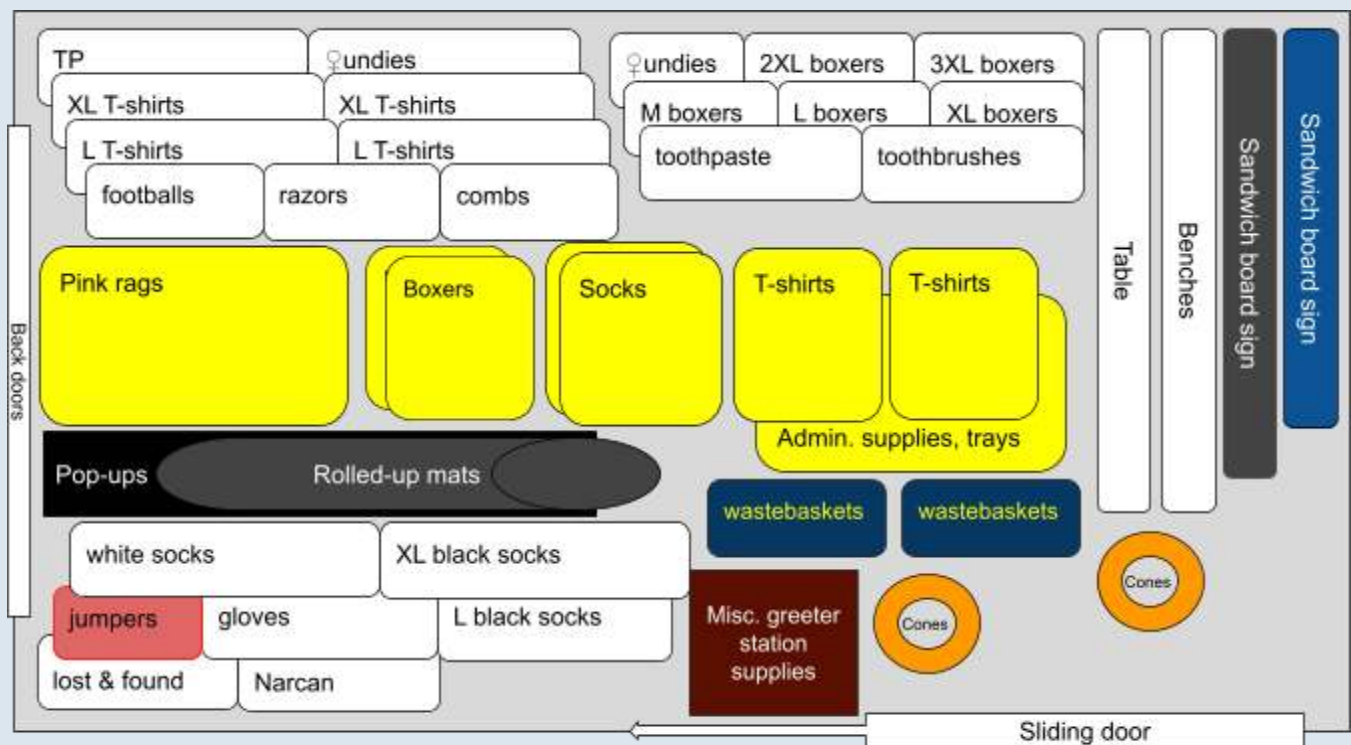
Later on, when things have cooled down, it's a good idea to review with other volunteers how things went: were there early signs of trouble that some of us picked up on? How did our responses go: what worked well and what didn't? Is there anything we can change in our processes that might prevent or ameliorate such an incident in the future?

In a major incident, the site supervisor will fill out an incident report which will be escalated to the operations oversight committee who will discuss how we can respond. You can also reach out to that committee to ask them to address other issues or recurring issues that do not rise to the level of reported incidents.

Van-packing layouts and storage locations



Van Packing Layout (old van)



Van Packing Layout (new van)

Repack the van consistently at the end of the shift. This makes things easier for the next shift and also ensures that things don't move around in the van during transport in a way that might damage them (or the driver!).

Arrange the small bins that contain socks, boxers, and T-shirts so the round openings of bins in the back row face forward, and those in the front row face backward. This prevents the items inside from falling out during transport, and makes it easier for the next shift to set things up.

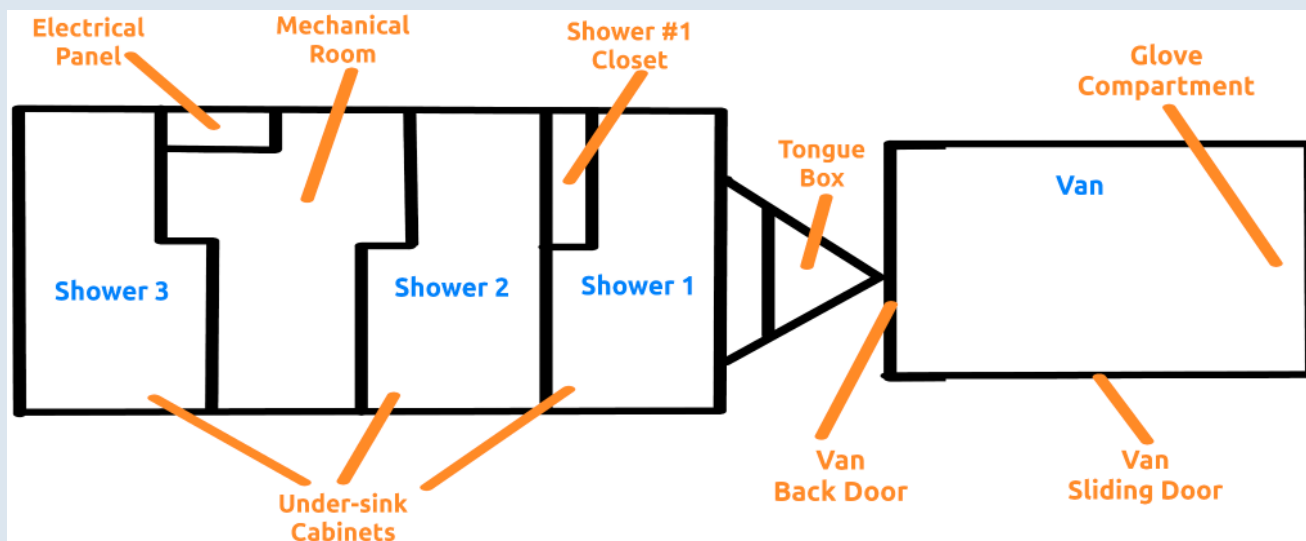
Where to find things

The following table shows you where to find the various things we use during our shower shifts. If you look in these places and none of what you're looking for can be found, notify the Purchasing/Inventory manager, who will restock our supply.

Note: if you take supplies from the closet in shower #1, please make note of what you took on the dry-erase board inside the closet door so we know what needs to be restocked there.



Old trailer layout



New trailer layout

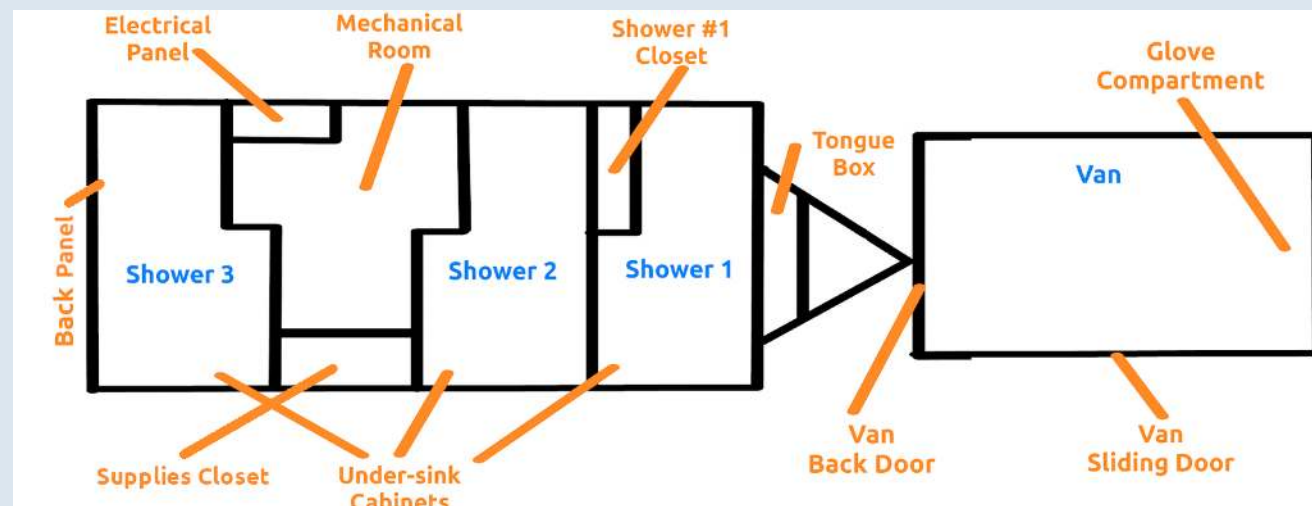


Table of supplies locations

item	location
Announcement board (dry erase)	See "Dry-erase board, flexible"
Bags (big blue)	These are the bags that hold the used towels and washcloths. Often there are a few spare bags at the bottom of one of the trash cans. If not, there is a roll of them in the top-left storage bin (old van) or shelving unit (new van) inside the van back door. There are more rolls of blue bags in the UU shed.
Bags (big red biohazard)	These are the bags that hold the used pink rags. Often there are a few spare bags at the bottom of one of the trash cans. If not, there is a roll of them in the top-left storage bin (old van) or shelving unit (new van) inside the van back door. If those run out, there are more in a plastic container on the top shelf inside the closet in shower #1. There are more rolls of red bags in the UU shed.

item	location
Bags (big white trash bags)	These are for garbage. Often there are a few spare bags at the bottom of one of the trash cans. If not, there is a roll of them in the top-left storage bin (old van) or shelving unit (new van) inside the van back door. If those run out, there are more in a plastic container on the top shelf inside the closet in shower #1. There are more rolls of big white trash bags in the UU shed.
Bags (small plastic grocery)	These are used as wastebasket liners, and sometimes guests use them to package up their toiletries or other personal items. In the old van you can find these in a bag in the top-left storage bin inside the van back door, folded into triangles for ease of storage. In the new van these are found in a plastic container in one of the shelving units. Sometimes there are also a few in one of the greeter station trays and/or in the pockets of the apron around the cleaner station bucket. There are more of these bags in the UU shed.
Band-aids	<i>See "First-aid kit"</i>
Benches	The folding benches are stored stacked upright behind the seats of the van.
Bins, trash	<i>See "Trash cans"</i>
Body wash	<i>See "Soap (liquid)"</i>
Bottle jack	The Black Jack hydraulic bottle jack is in a black box in the mechanical room of the old trailer.
Bowl (water bowl for pets)	You will usually find one in the mechanical room.
Boxer shorts	Boxer shorts are in a bin for the greeter station located inside the sliding door of the van. If those run out, there are more in a plastic container on the bottom shelf inside the closet in shower #1. There are more boxer shorts of various sizes in the UU shed.
Brooms	There is a push-broom in the mechanical room.
Brush (cleaning)	There are two scouring brushes in the blue crate in the mechanical room.
Bucket	There is a small red bucket in the mechanical room.

item	location
Cards	<i>See “Resource cards” or “Schedule cards”</i>
CaviCide	<i>See “Disinfectant for shower cleaning”</i>
Chairs	The folding chairs are stored in shower unit #2 or #3, on their sides, with a towel below them to protect the floor from scratching.
Chalk	There are some colored chalks in the blue crate in the mechanical room. There is more chalk in the UU shed.
Charger (power strip)	The power strips are stored below the door in the electrical panel.
Claw (trash picker-upper)	<i>See “Trash picker-upper”</i>
Clock	The clock for the shower cleaner station is stored in the trash cans inside the sliding door of the van (old trailer) or in the supplies closet (new trailer). <i>See also “Timers, digital”</i>
Combs	Combs are in one of the greeter station trays. If those run out, there are more in a plastic container on the bottom shelf inside the closet in shower #1. In the new van there are also some in a plastic container in the shelving units. There are more combs in the UU shed.
Cones	Traffic cones are stored just inside the sliding door of the van.
Curtains, shower	There is a replacement shower curtain on the shelf in the mechanical room (old trailer).
Digital timers	<i>See “Timers, digital”</i>

item	location
Disinfectant for shower cleaning	The bulk CaviCide refill for use in the spray bottles is found in the mechanical room or in shower #1 between shifts (old trailer) or the supplies closet or the shelving unit inside the back door of the van (new trailer). There is a funnel for transferring the disinfectant from the bulk bottles to the spray bottles in a plastic bag in the plastic bin in the mechanical room (old trailer) or the supplies closet (new trailer). Note: CaviCide is alcohol-based, so volatile and flammable. Do not fill bottles in the mechanical room near the water heater or near smokers or other sources of open flame. There is more CaviCide in the storage shed at the UU SLO location. <i>See also “Spray bottles, for disinfectant”</i>
Disinfectant wipes (greeter station)	A plastic cylinder containing a roll of disinfectant wipes is usually in the Admin bin, located inside the sliding door of the van. If there are none there, there is another in the top-left storage bin (old van) or shelving unit (new van) inside the van back door. <i>See also “Wet-wipes”</i>
Dry-erase board, flexible	The flexible dry-erase board is kept rolled-up in a cardboard tube inside the side door of the van.
Dry-erase markers	<i>See “Markers”</i>
Duct tape	There is often some duct tape in the crate in the mechanical room.
Ducting (flexible metal)	The flexible metal ducting that you use to redirect the van exhaust is in the mechanical room.
Elastic cables to hold shower doors open	There is usually an extra elastic cable with hooks in the mechanical room, perhaps in the red bag or the crate.
Extension cords	The electrical extension cords are stored in the mechanical room.
Eye-protection	Eye-protection goggles (useful when using CaviCide) are found in a plastic container stored in shower #1 between shifts.
Eyewash station	There is an eyewash bottle mounted to the inside of the mechanical room door. There is also one mounted to the inside of the shed door at the UU.

item	location
Facemasks	There are face masks in one of the greeter station toiletries trays. There are more in the top-left storage bin inside the rear door of the van. There are also some in the translucent plastic box stored with the cleaning station supplies between shifts in shower #1. There is a supply of face masks for replenishing these in the UU shed.
Filter, water	See <i>“Water filter”</i>
Fire extinguisher	There is a fire extinguisher on the wall of the mechanical room.
First-aid kit	There is a very modest first aid kit for guests in the glove compartment in the dashboard between the seats of the van. Note that volunteers do not perform medical procedures of any sort on guests. You may hand guests bandaids for them to apply themselves. A slightly more well-stocked first aid kit for volunteers is found in the electrical panel. There are more band aids in the UU shed.
Flexible dry-erase board	See <i>“Dry-erase board, flexible”</i>
Floor mats (for showers)	The paper floor mats for the showers are in a plastic tub with a lid. This is typically stored in shower #2 or #3 between shifts. You can find more in cardboard boxes in the shed at the SLO UU site. You may also find some loose in the closet of shower #1.
Forms (driver mileage)	The driver mileage log form is on a clipboard inside the driver’s side door. There are additional blank forms there too.
Forms (guest registration sheets)	You can find blank guest sign-in sheets in the black binder in the Admin bin inside the sliding door of the van. There are additional copies in the Admin Supplies box in the closet of shower #1. Put completed guest sign-in sheets in the blue “finished forms” envelope inside the van passenger-side door.

item	location
Forms (guest Release)	You can find blank guest Release forms in the black binder in the Admin bin inside the sliding door of the van. There are additional copies in the Admin Supplies box in the closet of shower #1. Put completed guest Release forms in the blue “finished forms” envelope inside the van passenger-side door.
Forms (STP incident reports)	Blank incident report forms are in a red folder inside the passenger-side door of the van. Send a snapshot of any completed incident report forms to the chair of the Operations Oversight committee, and leave them in the supervisor’s log clipboard for the chair to pick up.
Forms (supervisors’ daily report)	The supervisors’ daily report is on a clipboard inside the van driver’s door. Extra forms are in an envelope inside the driver’s door of the van.
Forms (traffic accident reports)	Blank traffic incident reports from our insurance company are in an envelope in the drivers-side door of the van.
Forms (trailer maintenance / propane log)	The latest such form is on a clipboard inside the maintenance room door. If you need a fresh one, find it in an envelope which is also on the inside of the maintenance room door.
Forms (Volunteer Applications)	Blank volunteer application forms are in a red folder inside the passenger-side door of the van. When a volunteer fills one out, take a snapshot of it and send it to the volunteer orientation coordinator. Then file the form in alphabetical order by first name in the light-blue folder inside the passenger-side door of the van.
Funnel	A funnel, for transferring the disinfectant from the bulk bottles to the spray bottles, is in a plastic bag in the plastic bin in the mechanical room (old trailer) or in the supplies closet (new trailer). (Do not use this funnel for other purposes.) <i>See also “Disinfectant for shower cleaning” and “Spray bottles, for disinfectant”</i>

item	location
Fusebox	If we blow a DC fuse (power goes off to some part of the trailer), you can replace the fuse at the fuse box inside the electrical panel of the trailer: 
Fuses	You can find fuses to replace those in the fusebox in a small black plastic box attached magnetically to the electrical panel above the fusebox. 
Glasses, eye-protective	See <i>"Eye protection"</i>
Gloves	There are usually boxes of latex gloves in the blue bucket at the shower cleaner area (old trailer) or the supplies closet (new trailer). There are more boxes of gloves in the top-left storage bin (old van) or shelving unit (new van) inside the van back door. There are more in a plastic container on the top shelf inside the closet in shower #1. And there are more boxes of gloves in the UU shed.
Goggles, eye-protective	See <i>"Eye protection"</i>
Grocery bags	See <i>"Bags (small plastic grocery)"</i>
Hand sanitizer (individual)	Individual hand sanitizer bottles are found in one of the greeter station trays. There are often more boxes of them under the passenger seat of the van. If there are no more bottles there, a back-up supply can be found in the closet of shower #1. And there are more in the UU shed.

item	location
Hand sanitizer (pump)	The larger pump-style hand sanitizer bottles are usually in the Admin bin of the greeter station and in the blue bucket of the shower cleaner station. Additional bottles can be found in the top-left storage bin (old van) or shelving unit (new van) inside the van back door. If there are none there, try the closet of shower #1.
Hand-soap	See “Soap”
Hats (volunteer)	STP volunteer baseball caps are in the UU shed.
Hose, greywater irrigation	The red greywater irrigation hose and the blue greywater irrigation hose (and the PVC elbow connector it requires) are in the shed at the UU SLO site. (You use one or the other, not both.)
Hose, waste dumping	The large, flexible waste tank dumping hose (“stinky slinky”) is in the tongue box (old trailer) or back panel (new trailer).
Hose, water	The greenish-yellow water hose is kept in the tongue box. If you need to extend it, there is a second hose there as well (new trailer), or (old trailer) another hose hanging in the mechanical room.
Insurance, proof of	Proof of (auto) insurance cards are in an envelope in the driver-side door of the van.
Jumper cables	These are in a grey plastic box (old van) or red-and-black bag (new van) in the van.
Key tags	There are color-coded key identification tags in the red bag in the mechanical room.
Keys	There is a lockbox in the mechanical room full of keys of various sorts. <i>See also: “Sillcock key”</i>
Markers (dry-erase)	You can find dry erase markers in a small plastic box in the Admin bin which is kept inside the sliding door of the van. There are also a few in the holsters that surround the blue bucket for the shower cleaner station. There are extras in the Admin Supplies box in the closet of shower #1. There are more such markers in the UU shed.
Markers (permanent)	There is a permanent marker in the mechanical room. There are extras in the Admin Supplies box in the closet of shower #1.

item	location
Masks	<i>See “Facemasks”</i>
Mats	The rubber floor mats that we use to cover cords and hoses to prevent tripping hazards are rolled-up inside the van rear door. The doormats that we place at the foot of the shower stairs are stored on top of the lid of a bin inside the van rear door. <i>See also “Floormats (for showers)”</i>
Panties	These can be found in one of the greeter station trays. Additional inventory for restocking is in one of the smaller bins in the van. There are more panties in the UU shed.
Pens, ball-point	You can usually find pens in a small plastic box in the Admin bin which is kept inside the sliding door of the van. There are extras in the Admin Supplies box in the closet of shower #1. There are more pens in the UU shed.
Plunger	There is a plunger in the mechanical room (old trailer) or supplies closet (new trailer).
Power strip	<i>See “Charger”</i>
Propane	The UU SLO site supervisor or driver swaps in full propane tanks periodically. There is a spare tank in the storage shed at UU SLO. That is also where we store empty tanks waiting to be refilled.
Rags (pink rags)	Pink rags for shower cleaners are in the blue bucket which is stored just inside the sliding door of the van (old van) or in one of the shower units (new van). You will find more pink rags, to replenish that supply, in a storage bin inside the van rear door. If those <i>also</i> run out, you can usually find a few more in the locked cabinet under the bathroom sink in shower unit #3.
Ramps	The two small plastic ramps (for driving the trailer onto in order to level it) are in the mechanical room.

item	location
Razors	There are razors in the tub that contains the paper shower mats. They are kept at the cleaner station rather than the greeter station. An additional box of razors is in the top-left storage bin (old van) or shelving unit (new van) inside the van back door. There are more razors in the UU shed.
Resource cards	Resource cards for guests are in a plastic bag in the “Admin” bin inside the sliding door of the van. If we run low on any of the color-coded resource cards that STP produces, let the resource card maintainer know (see Our operations team for contact info) to have more printed for us.  If you or someone else want additional resource cards to hand out elsewhere, you can also print them yourself. They exist as Google Docs at the following links: • Where can I find something to eat? • Where can I get some clothes to wear? • Where can I get help with drug use? • Where can I spend the night? • Where can I refill my water bottle? (SLO city only)
Sandwich boards	Two large sandwich boards are stored upright behind the seats of the van.
Schedule cards (STP)	Shower The People schedule cards for guests are in a plastic bag in the “Admin” bin inside the sliding door of the van. There is an additional supply in the glove compartment of the van dashboard between the seats or in a small box on the dashboard. There are more cards in the UU shed.
Scouring pads	There are stainless steel scouring pads in the crate in the mechanical room.
Sealant tape	There is a roll of thread sealant tape in the tool box in the mechanical room.
Shampoo	See “Soap”

item	location
Sharps disposal	There is an individual sharps (hypodermic needle) disposal container in the first aid bag in the electrical panel of the trailer. There are more sharps containers in the UU shed.
Shirts (for guests)	Shirts for guests are in the smaller bins for the greeter station which are located inside the sliding door of the van. Additional shirts are in the larger bins in the van behind the greeter station bins. There are yet more shirts in the UU shed.
Shirts (for volunteers)	STP volunteer T-shirts are in a plastic container on the top shelf inside the closet in shower #1. Leave a note on the supervisor log if you give away such a shirt, indicating its size, so that we know to restock. There are more volunteer shirts in the UU shed.
Shovel	A flat shovel, for scooping up “Spill Hero” absorbent grit for disposal, is in the tongue box.
Shower curtains	<i>See “Curtains”</i>
Showerheads (spare)	There is usually a spare showerhead in the mechanical room, perhaps in the red bag or the red tool box or on the top shelf.
Signs	<i>See “Sandwich boards”</i>
Sillcock key	There is a sillcock key on the large UU-related keychain hanging in the mechanical room near the lock box. There is another in the glove compartment below the dashboard between the seats of the van.
Soap (liquid)	There is a bulk-bottle of liquid soap in the mechanical room (old trailer) or supplies closet (new trailer). In the new van there is another bottle in the shelving unit inside the van back door. There are more bottles in the UU shed.
Socks	Socks for guests are in small bins inside the sliding door of the van. There are more socks in the UU shed.
Spill Hero	A bottle of Spill Hero (an absorbent grit for spills) is in the tongue box.
Sponges (Mr. Clean)	There some Mr. Clean “MagicEraser” sponges in the mechanical room (old trailer) or supplies closet (new trailer). There are more in the UU shed.



item	location
Spray bottles, for disinfectant	The spray bottles of CaviCide are in an apron/holster that is wrapped around the blue bucket in the shower cleaner area that is stored just inside the sliding door of the van (old van) or in one of the shower units (new trailer). There are back-up bottles under the sink of shower unit #1.
Squeegees	There are some squeegees in the blue crate in the mechanical room.
Stepladder	There is a stepladder in the mechanical room.
Stinky Slinky	<i>See “Hose, waste dumping”</i>
Stool (for the shower)	If a guest needs a stool so they can sit while in the shower, find it in the mechanical room. You can adjust the height of the stool legs. You may want to do this before you put it into the shower.
Surgical masks	<i>See “Facemasks”</i>
Sweatshirts (volunteer)	STP volunteer sweatshirts are in the UU shed.
Swiffer mop	There’s a swiffer mop in the mechanical room.
T-Shirts	<i>See “Shirts”</i>
Table	The folding table is stored upright behind the seats of the van.
Tampons & pads	Tampons and pads are in a greeter station plastic tray. There are more in a plastic container on the bottom shelf inside the closet in shower #1 (old trailer) or in a small plastic container on the shelves of the new van. There are more in the UU shed.
Tape (masking tape)	There is a roll of masking tape in the mechanical room, typically in the crate.
Thread sealant tape	<i>See “Sealant tape”</i>
Timers, digital	Digital timers on lanyards are in a plastic box that is stored in shower unit #1 between shifts.
Tire pump	There’s a tire pump in a black bag in the mechanical room.
Toilet bowl cleaner	“Pure Power” toilet bowl cleaning fluid is in a bottle in the mechanical room (old trailer) or supplies closet (new trailer).

item	location
Toilet brush	This is at the shower cleaner station. It is usually stowed in shower #1 (old trailer) or the supplies closet (new trailer).
Toilet paper	There are rolls of toilet paper in the top-left storage bin (old van) or shelving unit (new van) inside the van back door. There are a few more in a plastic container on the top shelf inside the closet in shower #1. There are more in the UU shed.
Tools (like a screwdriver)	There is a toolbox in the mechanical room. Some tools also find their way into a crate in the mechanical room (old trailer).
Toothpaste & toothbrushes	Toothpaste and toothbrushes are in a greeter station plastic tray. There are more in a plastic container on the bottom shelf in the closet of shower #1 (old trailer) or in a plastic container on the shelves of the new van. There are more in the UU shed.
Towels & washcloths	Clean towels and washcloths are found in large yellow bins. Some are stored in shower unit #2 or #3 between shifts. More towels and washcloths are in large translucent plastic bags or storage bins in the UU shed.
Traffic cones	See “Cones”
Trash cans	The trash cans we use for trash, rags, and used towels/washcloths are stored behind the sliding door of the van, just in front of the supplies bins.
Trash picker-upper	This is hanging (or leaning against the wall near shower #2) in the mechanical room.
Trash-can liners	See “Bags (small plastic grocery)” or “Bags (big white trash bags)”
TST tank deodorizer	There is a bottle of “TST Max” blackwater tank deodorizer treatment fluid in the mechanical room. The Maintenance Manager uses this once a week.
Underwear	See “Boxer shorts” or “Panties”
USB charger	See “Charger (power strip)”

item	location
Vacuum	 A cordless, battery-powered vacuum hangs in the mechanical room (old trailer) or supplies closet (new trailer). The battery charger for the vacuum is below the door to the electrical panel closet (old trailer) or in the supplies closet (new trailer). To recharge the battery, remove it from the vacuum, insert it into the charger, and plug the charger into an AC power outlet: 
Volunteer shirts	See <i>“Shirts (volunteer T-shirts)”</i> and <i>“Sweatshirts (volunteer)”</i>
Washcloths	See <i>“Towels & washcloths”</i>
Wastebaskets	See <i>“Trash cans”</i>
Water bowl (for pets)	See <i>“Bowl (water bowl for pets)”</i>
Water filter	The currently-in-use water filter is stored on the floor of the mechanical room near the door. If you need to replace it with a new one, there should be one on the shelf in the mechanical room. You might also check the crate or the red bag in the mechanical room.
Wedges to level stairs	Wooden wedges are in a wooden box inside the tongue box.
Weights to anchor things in the wind	Weights are in the van near the sliding side door.
Whiteboard, flexible	See <i>“Dry-erase board, flexible”</i>
Whiteboard markers	See <i>“Markers”</i>

...or maybe it's in the red tool chest in the mechanical room



...or maybe it's in the red bag in the mechanical room (old trailer)



...or maybe it's in the crate in the mechanical room (old trailer)



Site maps and site-specific details

This section gives site-specific instructions for each site where Shower the People operates.

SLO Library

Water and electricity are accessed from inside the building, which must be unlocked with a key that we have access to. There is no sewer cleanout. You may *not* irrigate with greywater.

To park, drive all the way down the alleyway to the parking lot in the middle of the block, turn left into the lot, back up carefully into the alleyway behind the parking structure, then come back up the entranceway to our parking area. Be careful not to hit the hydrant (see **SLO Library: parking tip** below). Park far enough from the sidewalk that the stairs can fully deploy into the alleyway (if you try to deploy them onto the sidewalk there will not be enough vertical space for them to deploy fully). Pull far enough forward so that the stairs of unit #3 clear the oak tree.

Volunteers (but not guests) may use the bathroom and the water bottle refilling station inside the building. Volunteers should not park in the lot in the middle of the block, as that is private parking for the tenants of nearby apartments.

SLO Library: building access

Retrieve the building door key from the lockbox on the wall by the door (ask the site supervisor for the combination to the lockbox), unlock the door, wedge the door open with a traffic cone, replace the key in the lockbox and relock the box (you may need to enter the combination a second time to relock the box).



SLO Library: water hookup

Run the hose into the building, down the corridor, and into the bathroom. There is a water hookup below the bathroom sink. Use the sillcock key to open the valve and start the water. You will need both hoses to cover the length between the bathroom and the trailer. Put the water filter between the two hoses (so any leaks will leak outside, and because otherwise it is easy to forget the water filter when you leave).



SLO Library: electric hookup

Run the extension cord into the building. There is a power outlet on the right wall of the corridor. If the building is in use (e.g. if a group is meeting in the community room) put a mat down over the power cord and hose to reduce tripping hazards. You will likely need to chain two extension cords to cover the distance.

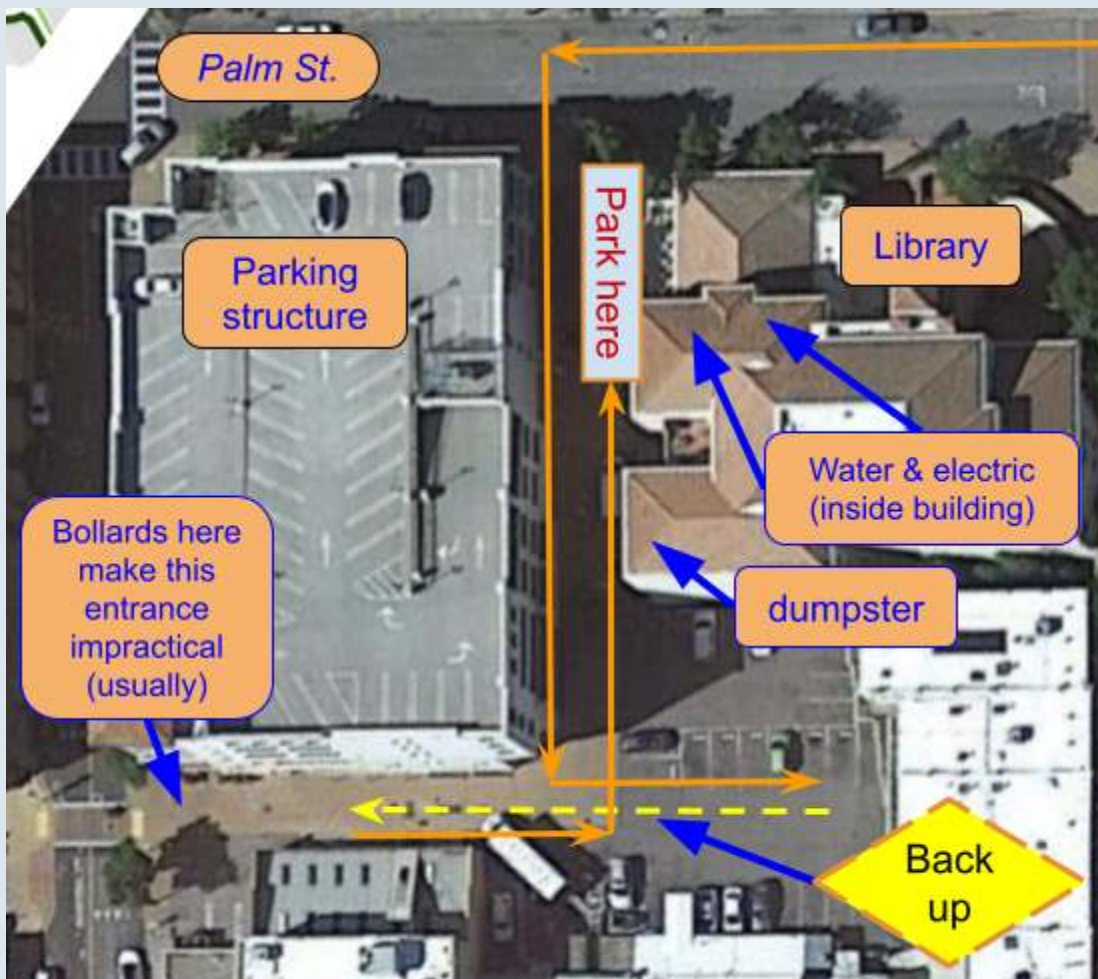


SLO Library: parking tip

On the ground, near where your front-left wheel should be, is a spray-painted green box the size of a wheel chock. It helps to indicate the correct distance from the hydrants. You can place a chock at that distance and drive forward until you feel your front wheel contact it. That positions the van such that you won't collide with the hydrant just in front of the van. Note that while this green box is the correct distance from the hydrants, it is too close to the curb that runs alongside the library: you should place the chock a couple of feet further from the curb to make an accurate target for the left-front wheel.



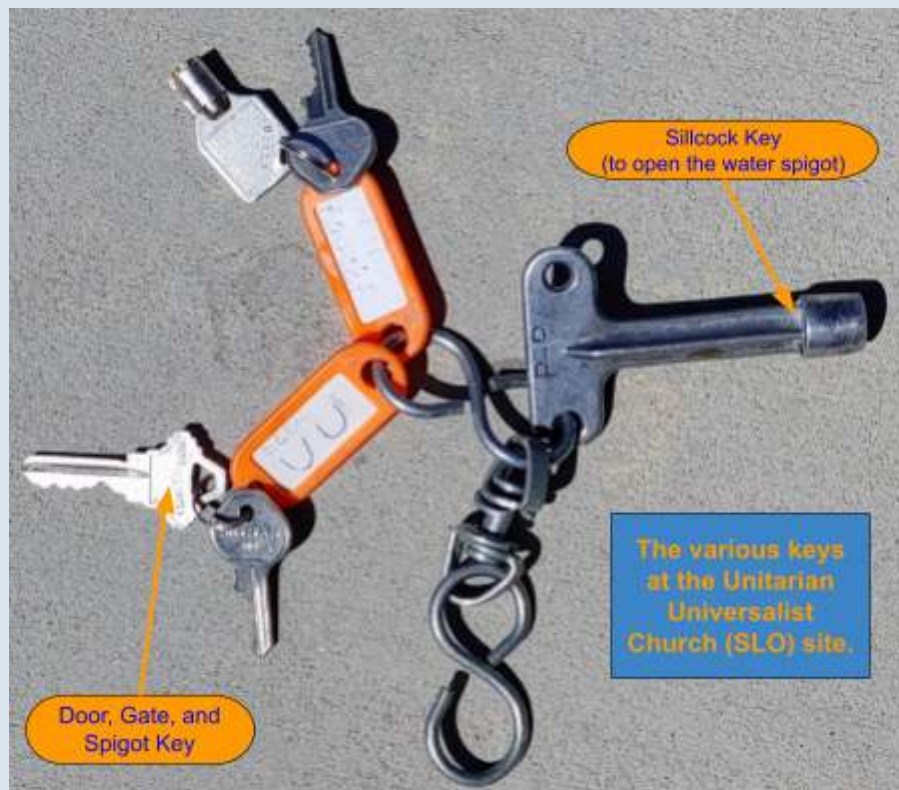
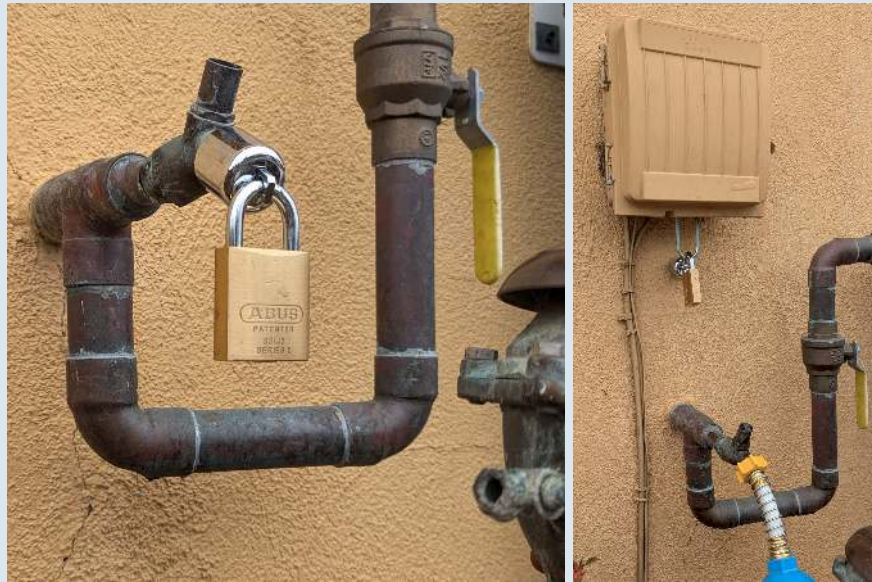
SLO Library: site map



Unitarian Universalist Church, San Luis Obispo (UU)

The electric outlet is against the wall inside the gate. The key to the gate lock, which also opens the building lock and the lock of the fence around the shed, is in the lockbox in the mechanical room. There is a sewer cleanout, but we do not typically use it here. You may irrigate the landscaping with greywater.

The water spigot may be locked. Use the same key to unlock it. Be sure to replace the lock at the end of the shift. You can store it during the shift by hanging it on a U-bolt just above the spigot so as to better remind you to lock it when you are disconnecting the filter.





On Thursdays there is (sometimes) a box of no-cook, no-refrigeration food bags donated by the SLO Food Bank either on a desk inside the church or brought directly to our site by church volunteers. You can distribute these from the greeter station.

On Thursdays the Men of Agape church invite our guests to a hot lunch in the park across the street. They may come to us to announce the menu for the day. We can post that on the flexible dry-erase board at the greeter station. It is good practice to let guests who were in the shower at the time of the Agape announcement know about the meal when they come out.

There are garbage and recycling disposal containers on the other side of a fence where our shed is. The fence door is locked. Use the same key that opens the church gate to open this lock.

Usually, drive into the parking lot from the Meadow St. driveway furthest from South St. However, sometimes parked cars prevent you from making the turn into where you will be parking. In that case, drive around the block and enter through the Lawton Ave. driveway instead.

Volunteers (but not guests) may use the bathroom inside the church. Be careful to relock the door to the church.

UU: Thursday restocking

The site supervisor at UU is responsible for restocking certain supplies from the shed. On Tuesday, restock anything you run out of or that we may not have enough of to last through Wednesday's shift.

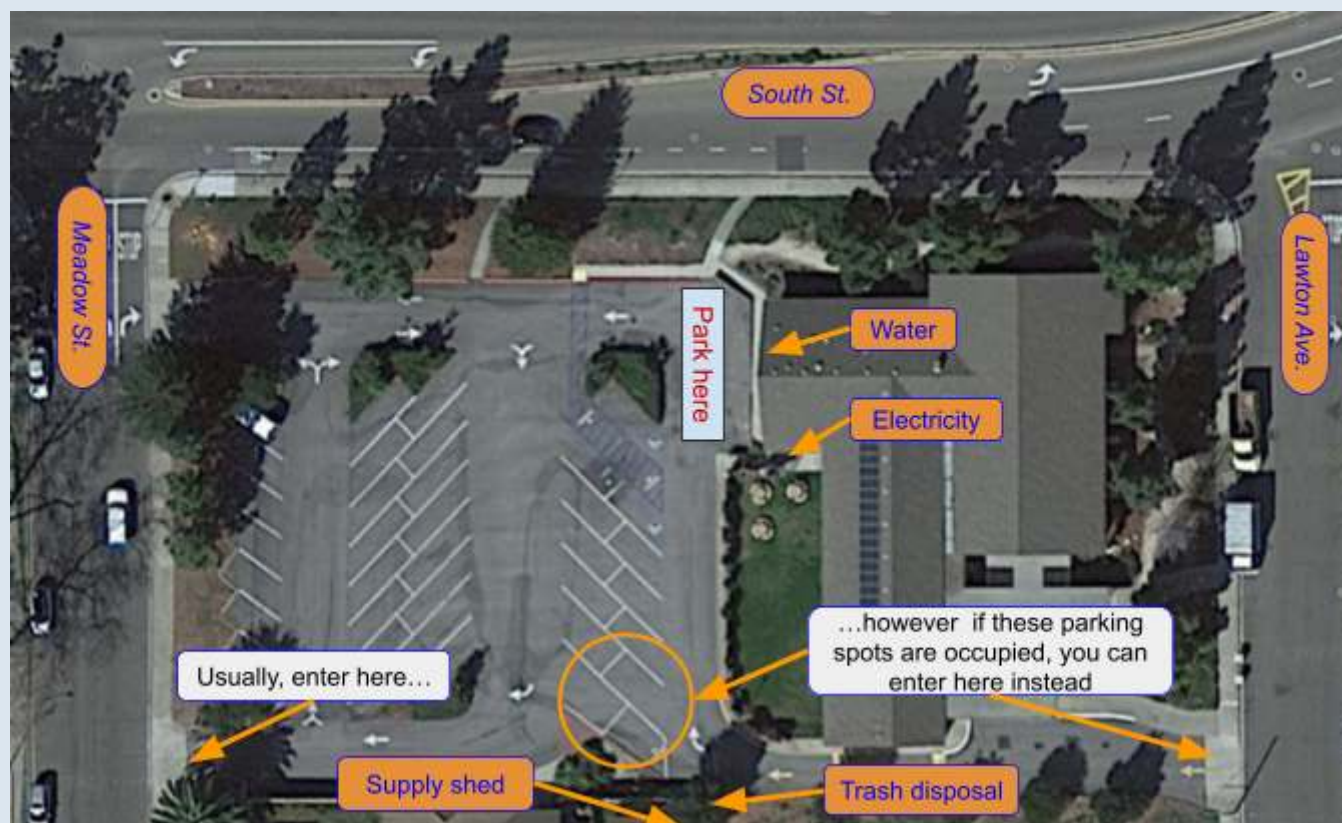
On Thursday, restock enough for Thursday's late shift (if applicable) and for Saturday's and Sunday's shifts (except for clothes and toiletries, which only need to be restocked enough to last through the Thursday late shift, as these are usually restocked on Friday). Here is a restocking guide for Thursday:

Location	Minimum stock at the end of Thursday's early shift
Shelves or bin inside the back door of the van:	• 60 razors • 15 blue towel bags • 6 red rag bags • 12 large white trash bags • 36 tricorn-folded small trash can liners • 9 rolls of toilet paper • 1 fullish box of each size of gloves • 2 fullish hand sanitizer pump bottles (1 each for the greeter and cleaner stations) • 1 back-up cylinder of disinfectant wipes (in addition to what is at the greeter station)
Greeter station — for example in the admin bin, trays, or small bins:	• 1" of shower schedule cards • 20 SLO city pocket guides • topped-up trays of tampons & pads, and of face masks • a topped-up hand sanitizer tray and 2 additional full boxes of hand sanitizers • 10 blank guest liability release forms • 10 blank guest registration sheets • 4 ball-point pens • 3 dry-erase markers • * enough socks, boxer shorts, panties, and t-shirts to last through Thursday • * enough combs, toothpaste, and toothbrushes to last through Thursday * Clothes and toiletries are typically restocked on Fridays. So at the Thursday shift we only need enough to last through Thursday. However, if the Friday restocking will be delayed, we need more. If we run low on resource cards, let David Gross know (moorlock@gmail.com / 415-341-4048) and he'll have more printed up for us.
Mechanical room in the back of the trailer:	• 1 blank trailer maintenance / propane log form if the current one is filling up • 1 sharpie permanent marker • 1 roll of duct tape • 2 ball-point pens
Electrical panel cabinet:	• 1 sharps disposal container • a decent supply of band-aids in the first aid kit
Cleaner supplies, stored in the showers between shifts:	• 1 topped-up small bin of washcloths • 4 topped-up large bins of towels • 2" of bath mats
Cleaner station storage closet:	• 1 full bottle of Dial liquid soap • 1 full refill bottle of CaviCide • 6 "magic eraser" sponges (including whatever is in the cleaner station bucket) • 3 dry-erase "Expo" markers • 3 full spray bottles of CaviCide • 2 or 3 pump bottles of hand sanitizer • 1 bottle of detergent spray • Emergency "hazmat" shower cleaning kit

Location	Minimum stock at the end of Thursday's early shift
Inside passenger door of the van:	• 10 blank volunteer sign-up sheets • 5 blank incident report sheets • 1 blank supervisors' log sheet if we're near the end of the current sheet • 2 ball-point pens • 10 blank BOLO sheets
Inside driver's door of the van:	• 1 blank driver's mileage log form if we're near the end of the current sheet • 2 ball-point pens
Van glove compartment:	• a decent supply of band-aids in the first aid kit
Closet of shower #1:	Check the dry-erase board inside the closet door to see what needs to be replenished.

These supplies can be found in the shed behind the fence near the trash cans. The key to this shed is in the lockbox in the mechanical room.

UU: site map



People's Kitchen, Grover Beach

You must not start showers until 10:00 am. It is important to enforce a “no loitering” rule here. Guests can wait inside the building if People's Kitchen is operating but cannot congregate in the parking lot.

There is an electric outlet inside the church closet. Access to the building and the closet door requires a key that is kept in the lockbox in the trailer.

Turn on the water spigot with a round, red knob that is stored on top of the water heater in the unlocked closet to the right of the spigot. (We have another knob in the mechanical room of the trailer, just inside the door under the lock box.)

You cannot irrigate with greywater. To dump blackwater and greywater at the end of the shift, first back up the trailer onto the yellow risers, about twenty feet back from the showering location. Then follow the instructions in [How to dump the tanks at a sewer cleanout](#).



People's Kitchen: site map



BMW of San Luis Obispo

To park, enter through the first driveway off Calle Joaquin, just before the bulb of the cul-de-sac. Drive along the left side of the building, around the back, and park alongside the building, leaving enough room for the stairs to deploy and for the cleaners and the greeter to arrange their stations.

You may need to walk back toward the parking site first to make sure the way is clear of cars. If it is not clear, notify someone from BMW who will move any cars that are in the way.

Put the large sandwich board that announces our presence out in front of the service bay where people congregate for the “Blessed to Serve” meal. Put the smaller sign pointing to the showers just inside the back door of the service bay, pointing to that door.

BMW: water and electricity

There’s a water spigot in the carwash. The electrical outlet is in the server room behind an unlocked door.

BMW: Blessed to Serve

Our operations coincide with the free “Blessed to Serve” meal which the BMW dealership and its employees provide. Our guests will likely be among the diners, and may wait for their showers in the dining area. During serving times, they may not be available to shower until they have gotten through the serving line and finished their food, so there may be a span of time in which it is difficult to find showerers. Whoever is responsible for calling guests for their shower may want to bring a list of names with them to the dining area in case some people are not ready yet.

BMW: wind and weather

This location is prone to strong winds. We also operate this site into the evening. Volunteers should dress for the cold. The awning and pop-ups may not be usable when the wind picks up, so in rainy weather, volunteers will be exposed to rain (though we may be able to huddle in the car wash port, assuming it goes unused on rainy days).

BMW: dumping wastewater

To dump wastewater tanks at the sewer cleanout, drive forward and exit the lot into the cul-de-sac, then re-enter at the other driveway and drive up to the southwest side of the building until the front of the trailer reaches the sewer cleanout location. When you finish dumping, loop around the building and exit into the cul-de-sac.

BMW: site map



United Church of Christ, San Luis Obispo (UCC)

Try to park so that the Shower the People logo on the side of the trailer is visible from the parking lot entrance. Park far enough from the cement parking blocks that those do not present a tripping hazard for volunteers or guests, while leaving enough room for third-party service providers to park in the upper parking lot.

Put our large sandwich board near the parking lot entrance so that it is visible to people traveling either direction on Los Osos Valley Road (but not so that it blocks the sidewalk or the bike lane).

Volunteers (but not guests) may use the restroom inside the church building. The door is locked, but there is a key in the lockbox in the mechanical room.

UCC: water and electricity

The electric outlet is behind a fence and may be hidden by equipment or boxes:



We can hook up our water hose to a hose attached to a Y-valve connected to the irrigation system in the flower bed near where we park the trailer. To do this, attach our water filter to the end of the green hose. Attach one end of our hose to the other end of the water filter and the other end to the water intake on the van. Open both of the valves at the end of the green hose where it meets the water filter:



Remove the green lid to the irrigation system and open both of the valves inside to start water flowing to the Y (one of these valves you open by rotating it 90° so that it is parallel to the flow of water; the other one you turn clockwise to open). Also open the valve at the Y itself.



At the end of the shift, make sure all five valves are in the closed position.

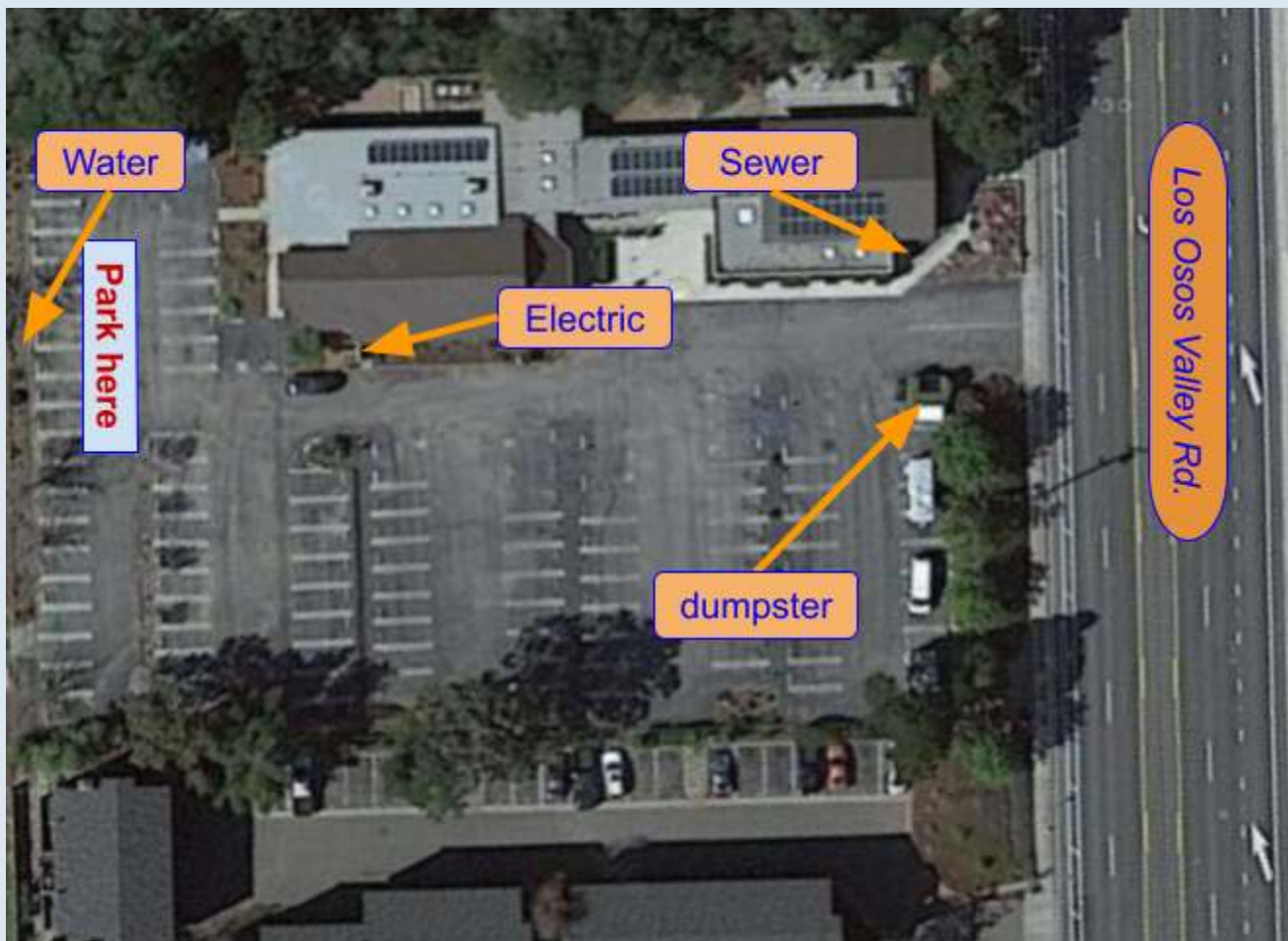
UCC: wastewater and trash disposal

There is a sewer cleanout on the side of the church building facing Los Osos Valley Road. We are authorized to use this to dump both the blackwater and greywater tanks. You may *not* irrigate with greywater at this site.

New trailer only: You are probably best off dumping from the wastewater tank outlets at the rear port-side of the trailer (these are lower, and side-by-side, so they will drain more thoroughly and are less awkward to work with). You might consider raising the trailer with the hydraulic stand near the trailer hitch to tilt the wastewater tanks backwards toward the drain to promote more thorough draining.

Trash and recycling disposal is near the parking lot entrance.

UCC: site map



Some external resources

- [VivaSLO \(vivaslo.org\)](https://vivaslo.org)—Resources for Avoiding, Surviving, and Escaping Homelessness in SLO County (web app).
- [5Cities Homeless Coalition \(5chc.org\)](https://5chc.org)—resources, support, and hope for the homeless in South San Luis Obispo County.
- [National Healthcare for the Homeless Council \(nhchc.org\)](https://nhchc.org)—improves homeless health care through training and technical assistance, researching and sharing best practices, advocating for real solutions to end homelessness, and uplifting voices of people experiencing homelessness.
- The [Homeless Services Oversight Council \(HSOC\)](#) of San Luis Obispo County aims to ensure that everyone has access to appropriate and affordable housing and to services they need to sustain it.
- [SLO Countywide Plan to Address Homelessness](#)—approved by the County Board of Supervisors in 2022.
- [SLO County Homeless Count and Survey Comprehensive Report](#)—the 2024 “point-in-time” census of the county’s homeless population.
- [SLO County Quarterly Homelessness Dashboard](#)—summarizes local data from the homeless management information system
- City of SLO [Homelessness Response Strategic Plan](#) (2024–26)
- Shower the People’s [Handbook of Health and Medical Care Resources in San Luis Obispo and the Five Cities Area](#)

Useful Spanish translations

Note: most typically in the Spanish-speaking world, the verb *ducharse* describes taking a shower (*una ducha*). This is the verb/noun used in the translations below. However, in Mexico, *ducharse/ducha* is more rare, with *bañarse* (to bathe) and *una regadera* (a shower) being more common.

Welcome!

- *¡Bienvenido!*
(bee-yen-veh-NEE-doe)

Would you like to shower today?

- *¿Quiere ducharse hoy?*
(kee-ERR-ay due-CHAR-say oy?)

Please answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’ because I don’t understand Spanish well.

- *Por favor, responda con ‘sí’ o ‘no’ porque no entiendo bien el español.*
(pour fah-BOR, ray-SPON-dah cone SEE oh NO pour-kay no en-tee-EN-doe bee-YEN el es-pan-YOL)

What is your first name? (What is your name?)

- *¿Cuál es su nombre? (¿Cómo se llama?)*
(Kwal es sue NOME-bray? [KO-mo say YAH-mah?])

This service is free of charge.

- *Este servicio es gratis.*
(ES-tay sare-VEE-see-oh es GRAH-tees)

Please sign the liability release.

- *Por favor, firme la exención de responsabilidad.*
(pour fah-BOR, FEAR-may lah ex-en-see-OWN day res-PON-sah-bee-lee-DOD)

We are here...

- *Estamos aquí...*
(es-TAH-mose ah-KEY)

We offer showers...

- *Ofrecemos duchas...*
(oh-fray-SAY-mose DOO-chas)

...from 10:00 to 1:00...

- *...de las diez a la una...*
(...day loss dee-EZ ah la una...)

...from 12:30 to 3:30...

- *...de las doce y media a las tres y media...*
(...day loss DOH-say ee MED-ee-uh ah loss trays ee MED-ee-uh...)

...from 5:00 to 7:00...

- *...de las cinco a las siete...*
(...day loss SEEN-ko ah loss see-ET-ay...)

...every week.

- *...cada semana.*
(...CAH-da say-MAH-nah)

...every Sunday.

- *...cada domingo.*
(...CAH-dah doe-MEAN-go...)

...every Tuesday.

- *...cada martes.*
(...CAH-dah MAR-tess)

...every Wednesday.

- *...cada miércoles.*
(...CAH-dah mee-AIR-ko-less)

...every Thursday.

- *...cada jueves.*
(...CAH-dah WEH-vess)

...every Saturday.

- *...cada sábado.*
(...CAH-dah SAH-bah-doh)

...every Tuesday and Thursday.

- *...cada martes y jueves.*
(...CAH-dah MAR-tess ee WEH-vess)

Please stand over there for now.

- *Por favor, párese allí por el momento.*
(por fah-BOR, PAR-eh-say ah-EE pour el moe-MEN-toe)

Would you like a facemask?

- *¿Quiere una mascarilla?*
(kee-ERR-ay OO-na mass-kah-REE-ah?)

Please wear a facemask.

- *Por favor use una mascarilla.*
(por fah-BOR, OO-say OO-nah mass-kah-REE-ah.)

Please clean your hands with some sanitizer.

- *Por favor, límpiese las manos con alcohol en gel.*
(pour fah-BOR, LEEM-pee-ah-say loss MAH-nohs cone all-koh-ohl en hell)

Would you like some socks?

- *¿Quiere unos calcetines?*
(kee-ERR-ay OOH-nose call-say-TEE-ness?)

Would you like some boxer shorts?

- *¿Quiere unos calzoncillos?*
(kee-ERR-ay OOH-nose call-zone-SEE-yose?)

Which color would you like? Black or white?

- *¿Cuál color prefiere? Negros o blancos?*
(kwall co-LORE pray-fee-AIR-ay? NAY-gross oh BLON-kose?)

Which size would you like? Small, Medium, Large, Extra-Large?

- *¿Qué talla prefiere? Pequeño, mediano, grande, extragrande?*
(kay TIE-ya pray-fee-AIR-ay?
peh-KAY-nyo, meh-dee-AH-no, GRAWN-day, ACHE-straw-GRAWN-day?)

Would you like a toothbrush?

- *¿Quiere un cepillo de dientes?*
(kee-ERR-ay oon say-PEE-yo day dee-EN-tays?)

Would you like some toothpaste?

- *¿Quiere pasta de dientes?*
(kee-ERR-ay PAH-stuh day dee-EN-tays?)

Would you like a tampon?

- *¿Quiere un tampón?*
(kee-ERR-ay oon tom-PONE?)

Would you like a feminine pad?

- *¿Quiere una toalla femenina?*
(kee-ERR-ay OOH-na toe-EYE-ya fay-may-KNEE-nah)

Would you like a comb?

- *¿Quiere un peine?*
(kee-ERR-ay oon PAY-nay?)

Do not shave inside.

- *No se afeite por dentro.*
(no say ah-fey-EE-tay pour DAIN-troe)

Would you like a towel?

- *¿Quiere una toalla?*
(kee-ERR-ay OOH-na toe-EYE-ah?)

Would you like a washcloth?

- *¿Quiere una toallita?*
(kee-ERR-ay OOH-na toe-eye-EET-ah?)

There is a towel and washcloth for you in the shower unit.

- *Hay una toalla y una toallita para usted en la ducha.*
(eye OOH-na toe-EYE-ah ee OOH-na toe-eye-EET-ah PAH-rah ooh-STEAD en lah DOO-cha)

There is soap and shampoo in the shower unit.

- *Hay jabón líquido y champú en la ducha.*
(eye hah-BONE LEE-kee-doe ee cham-POO en lah DOO-cha)

We will call for you when it is time for your shower.

- *Le llamaremos cuando llegue el momento de su ducha.*
(lay ya-ma-RAY-mose KWAN-doe yay-gway el moh-MEN-toe day sue DOO-cha)

Please complete your shower in fifteen minutes.

- *Por favor, complete su ducha en quince minutos.*
(pour fah-BOR, comb-PLAY-tay sue DOO-cha en KEEN-say mee-NEW-toes)

Please lock the door.

- *Por favor, cierre la puerta con seguro. [or] Por favor, ponga seguro la puerta.*
(pour fah-BOR, see-AIR-ay la PWER-tah cone say-GOO-row)
or: (pour fah-BOR, PONE-gah say-GOO-row la PWER-tah)

You can put your towel in the blue bin.

- *Puede tirar la toalla en el contenedor azul.*
(PWEH-deh tee-RAR la toe-EYE-ah en el cone-teh-nay-DOOR ah-ZULE)

Careful on the stairs.

- *Cuidado con las escaleras.*
(kwee-DAH-doe cone el ess-kah-LAIR-ahs)

Use the foot pedal to flush the toilet

- *Use el pedal para descargar el inodoro.*
(OO-say el pay-DAL PAH-rah days-car-gar el EEN-oh-DOH-row)

There will be a wait...

- *Habr  una espera...*
(ah-BRA OOH-na es-PAIR-ah...)

...of approximately 5 minutes.

- *...de aproximadamente cinco minutos.*
(...day ah-PROKES-ee-mod-ah-MEN-tay SEEN-koe mee-NEW-toes)

...of approximately ten minutes

- *...de aproximadamente diez minutos.*
(...day ah-PROKES-ee-mod-ah-MEN-tay dee-ez mee-NEW-toes)

...of approximately fifteen minutes

- *...de aproximadamente quince minutos.*
(...day ah-PROKES-ee-mod-ah-MEN-tay KEEN-say mee-NEW-toes)

...of approximately a half hour

- *...de aproximadamente media hora.*
(...day ah-PROKES-ee-mod-ah-MEN-tay MED-ee-ah OR-ah)

...of approximately an hour

- *...de aproximadamente una hora.*
(...day ah-PROKES-ee-mod-ah-MEN-tay OOH-na OR-ah)

...of more than an hour

- *...de más de una hora.*
(...day moss day OOH-na OR-ah)