

# What Counts as Volunteer Service?

Guidelines and suggestions for activities that qualify for volunteer hours are outlined on the last page of the standard timesheet. However, the local facilitator is the final authority on determining what is acceptable. A general rule of thumb is that the activity benefits the community (not just an individual). Contact your local county UWEX office BEFORE you embark on a project to make sure it is OK as volunteer service!

Travel time based on the time a MGV leaves home until returning home, minus personal errands, and preparation and research time can be included in volunteer service hours. (Travel time to CE programs cannot be counted.)

## Volunteer Activities

There are many different types of volunteer activities that can be done to satisfy the requirements for certification. Here are some examples (but you're certainly not limited to these) in three general categories:

### 1. Adult education volunteer activities

- Assist clientele that come into the Extension office for information.
- Respond to telephone calls from homeowners.
- Participate in design and operation of horticultural exhibits, displays or demonstrations.
- Staff your local Extension office horticulture hotline.
- Write an article for your Master Gardener newsletter.
- Give a talk at a Master Gardener program on a horticultural topic you know well.

### 2. Youth education volunteer activities

- Make presentations on horticultural topics to 4-H groups, youth organizations, youth clubs, etc.
- Participate and organize school activities such as Arbor Day, Earth Day and horticulture tours.

### 3. Service volunteer activities

- Participate in an Arbor Day planting/plant sale/booths.
- Assist with tours for the members and/or the public.
- Help plant a special display in a local park garden or other public area.
- Establish drop off sites for produce as part of a Plant-a Row-for-the-Hungry project and bring your extra zucchini.
- Assist the staff of a local garden, research station, church, or other site maintain annual and perennial beds.
- Reestablish a prairie on public lands.
- Help an environmental preservation group with its annual cleanup of public or private lands.

# Continuing Education

Continuing education (CE or professional development) is a way for MGVs to learn more after Level 1 training and keep up with the latest horticultural information.

**Policies on what counts as CE vary by area. Check with your program facilitator (usually the county UW-Extension agent) to be sure of what is acceptable in your county.**

CE may include programs such as WisLine programs, horticulture programs at your local meetings, twilight meetings, field days, horticultural seminars at local colleges, botanical gardens, or presentations by MGVs, MG conferences, [Level 2 training](#), [online advanced training](#), or approved TV programs. Some of these programs (all on Wisconsin Public Television), include:

- [P. Allen Smith's Gardens](#)
- [Garden Talk](#)

Larry Meillor's *Garden Talk* on Wisconsin Public Radio is another good program. If you can't listen to the broadcast from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Fridays or Saturday morning at 7:00 a.m., you can still hear the program from archived audio files. Go to [the Larry Meiller page on the WPR website](#) and click on the last link below the menu on the left side of the page to [Listen now to Larry's Archives](#). If you enter the word "garden" into the search box and click on the GO symbol the entire list (which includes many other programs) will sort to show only the *Garden Talk* programs.

**NEW ITEM FOR CE HOURS:** Extension is now allowing the reading of educational articles to count as Continuing Education (CE). Most of the horticulture articles can be read for CE credit (0.5 hours) if approved by the local program facilitator.

To get CE, you must note in the comments box a specific thing you learned. If there is no comments box, the article cannot be used for CE. These articles can be found on the WMGA web site.

[Level 2 MG Training](#) should be counted as continuing education for certified members.