

## Volunteers clean up White River in Hamilton Co

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Cat Andersen/Eyewitness News

Noblesville - More than a dozen tons of trash, hundreds of tires, and several tons of recyclable materials were pulled out of the White River Sunday.



Volunteers split up along the river in Hamilton County, pulling trash and debris from the waterway, including tires, bicycles, lawn mowers and snow blowers. Some of the trash was pulled out by the volunteers, other items required heavy machinery.

"We have the advantage of this being our 15th year, so we've learned a lot of lessons from the past on what to do and how to do it," said Tim Stottlemeyer.

One of those things was to double their efforts and work in conjunction with crews from the "Keep Noblesville Beautiful" neighborhood blitz.

"We're mulching, helping the elderly and disabled, rebuilding someone's ramp, painting," said Cindy Haas.

The volunteers took on home improvement projects, including clearing and landscaping yards.



"If we catch the debris before it makes it to the White River, obviously that's helpful and beautifying the neighborhood gets everybody inspired," Haas

said.

"It definitely helps. Some of the pollutants you see come in has with it oils and greases," said aquatic biologist Jill Hoffman.



But even after the visible debris is removed, there is still plenty left behind.

"From car washing, fertilizer and pet waste and pesticides," Stottlemeyer said.

It all washes into the White River, feeding and growing the toxic algae that lives in the drinking water source.

"Depending on the concentration of those toxins, you can see a variety of health effects, from skin irritation to liver problems," Hoffman said.



Covering over 20 miles of ground in one day, the volunteers are making the drinking supply healthier. Experts say a few small things can make a big difference, like using phosphorous-free fertilizer.