

Virginia Cooperative Extension

A partnership of Virginia Tech and Virginia State University



Chesterfield County Office

P.O. Box 146

Chesterfield, VA 23832

804/751-4401 Fax: 804/751-0515

<http://offices.ext.vt.edu/chesterfield>

Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program

Thank you for your interest in becoming a Chesterfield County Master Gardener volunteer!

A Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardener (VCE-MG) is an individual who acts on behalf of VCE as a volunteer educator within his or her community after receiving specialized training in environmental horticulture through cooperative programming with VCE. Master Gardeners are trained and volunteer in their local Virginia Cooperative Extension office. Examples of volunteer opportunities in Chesterfield County include:

- *VCE-MG Help Desk* (answering horticultural questions over the phone and in person at the Extension Office, helping diagnose plant damage on samples from the public; during regular business hours)
- *Plant Clinics* (answering lawn and garden questions from the public at a nursery or garden center; usually on the weekends)
- *Grass Roots* (lawn care program for county residents: MGs make site visits, take soil samples, measure lawn area and evaluate the site conditions; on your own time)
- *Conducting Public Seminars* (present a seminar to the public on various subjects; usually in evenings)
- *Field Visits* (make visits to persons homes who cannot bring in a plant sample to our office; on your own time)
- And much, much more!

Chesterfield County VCE-MG training is held once a year, in February and March and meets every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. for 8 weeks. The cost for training is 50 hours volunteer service to be completed by October 31st of that same year. There is a fee of \$150 for class materials, due at time of acceptance into the class.

FAQs

Am I Master Gardener Material?

Are you looking for a way to improve your community through volunteer service? Do you enjoy teaching and talking to the public? Do you have an interest in horticulture? If the answer to all of these questions is yes, Master Gardener volunteer opportunities may be right for you.

What is required to become a VCE-MG?

To become a VCE Master Gardener, individuals must attend at least 50 hours of classroom instruction and then contribute a minimum of 50 hours of volunteer service conducting VCE horticulture-based, education programs. These initial 100 hours must be completed in one year. At the end of the year, they have earned the title of VCE Master Gardener. VCE-MGs who desire to remain active after completing their initial training and volunteer commitments are required to contribute at least 20 hours of volunteer service each year. Additionally, in order keep knowledge up-to-date, VCE-MGs must participate in at least 8 hours of recertification training.

I want to take classes and increase my knowledge in horticulture for my profession (or want to get a job in horticulture), but I don't have the time to volunteer. What are my options?

If you are a professional looking for additional education but are not interested in volunteering with VCE, please consider the Virginia Certified Horticulturist program offered through VNLA (www.vnla.org) or the horticulture technology program at J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College (www.jsr.vccs.edu).

The first step in becoming a VCE-MG volunteer is to complete and return the attached MG program application by September 1. Please answer all questions fully (background check release must be completed for application to be considered). Applications are screened by the Master Gardener Coordinator and approximately 30 applicants will be contacted for an interview in September. Of those 30 applicants, 20 will be chosen for the upcoming year's training. We look forward to hearing from you!

www.ext.vt.edu

Extension is a joint program of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and state and local governments.

Virginia Cooperative Extension programs and employment are open to all, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. An equal opportunity/affirmative action employer.

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Chesterfield County Master Gardener Volunteer Program Application (rev 7/10)

Date: _____

I wish to become a Master Gardener and would like to be accepted into the Chesterfield County training program. I understand that if accepted into this program, I agree to donate 50 hours of public service by October 31st of the same year through the Chesterfield County Master Gardener program.

Signature (*required*): _____

PLEASE PRINT THE FOLLOWING CLEARLY

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Email Address: _____

VCE OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Application Received: _____

Accepted for Interview? Yes No

Interview Date _____

Accepted into MG program? Yes No MG Program Year _____

MG Coordinator Signature _____ Date _____

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Applicant Name _____

Master Gardener Volunteer training in Chesterfield County is held for 8 weeks in February and March and meets every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Are you available to attend training?

- Yes, able to attend full schedule
- Only partial (please explain when and why you are not available) _____
- No

If accepted into the Master Gardener program, you agree to provide at least 50 hours volunteer service to our office by October 31st of that same year. Do your work and personal schedules allow you to volunteer at least 50 hours between April 1 and October 31? Note that most volunteer opportunities occur in the spring and early summer months during regular business hours. Yes No

The cost for training is the 50 hours volunteer service. There is a fee of \$150 for class materials, due at time of acceptance into the class.

Please circle your highest level of education completed:

less than 12 years high school college (years completed) 1 2 3 4 more than four years Masters Degree PhD

Do you have regular access to a computer (i.e., check email, etc)? yes no

If so, please list your email address: _____

Why do you wish to become a VCE-MG?

Describe your personal experience or interest in gardening.

Describe any training or special interests that you have in particular fields of horticulture (vegetable gardening, landscaping, houseplants, lawns, trees, etc.). That is, do you have a gardening specialty?

Describe any volunteer experience you have working with the community (schools, churches, senior citizens, youth, parks, conservations, etc.). These experiences need not be horticultural. Please state the approximate dates and durations (ex: 4 hrs/wk for 3 years, one time event, etc) of these activities, listing the most recent first.

Applicant Name _____

We can only accept a finite number of Master Gardener trainees each year. What makes you stand out from the rest of the applicants; that is why should you be chosen for the Master Gardener program?

How did you learn about VCE-MG volunteers? _____

Circle any group(s) you are not interested in working with as a VCE-MG:

Youth Disabled Minority
Senior Citizens Low Income Other (specify): _____

What times are you not available to volunteer? (VCE-MGs have until October 31st to fulfill their 50-hour volunteer internship commitment). Circle all that apply:

Weekday business hours
Evenings
Weekends
Seasons: Spring Summer Fall Winter

Do you have skills in non-horticultural areas that you would volunteer to support the VCE-MGs? Circle any of the examples below that apply to you. Also, list other skills that you possess. Almost any skill is useful to the program.

Writing Photography
Public Relations Public Speaking
Management Maintaining Web pages
Radio/TV Experience Secretarial
Teaching Organization
Carpentry Other (please list): _____
Computer Use (list programs you have used): _____

Thank you for completing this application. We will be in touch.



CHESTERFIELD COUNTY
BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION RELEASE OF INFORMATION FOR
COUNTY EMPLOYEES, COUNTY VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACT WORKERS

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I hereby authorize Chesterfield County Human Resource Management to obtain records related to me, if any, from criminal justice agencies. I understand that the information released is for official use by Chesterfield County for the sole purpose of determining my eligibility to volunteer, be employed, be promoted, be transferred, or work in a contracted capacity and may be disclosed to other persons only as necessary to determine my eligibility.

I understand that failure to provide all or part of the information may result in my disqualification for volunteerism/employment/contract work. This release shall be effective on the date of its execution and expire upon completion of my background investigation.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Print Full Name: Last: _____ First: _____ Middle: _____

Other Names Used (Include Maiden): _____

Social Security Number: _____

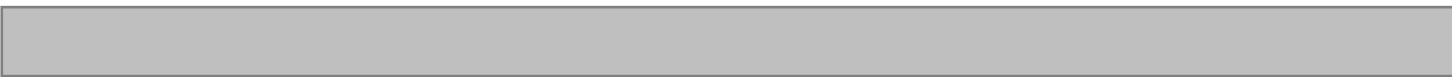
Date of Birth: _____ State of Birth: _____ Country of Birth: _____

Gender: Male Female Eye Color: _____ Hair Color: _____

Height: _____ Weight: _____ Race: _____

Current Address: Street: _____ Apt # _____
 City, State, Zip _____

Previous Address: Street: _____ Apt # _____
 (Past 5 Years) City, State, Zip _____



Volunteer ----- List Department: Chesterfield Cooperative Extension



Today's Date: _____

Phone Number: Home: _____ Work: _____

Signature (Full Name): _____