

Rebuilding Together
North Suburban Chicago

2010
HOUSE CAPTAIN'S
HANDBOOK



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1. WHY DO YOU NEED THIS HANDBOOK?

We are providing this handbook because we want to help insure your success as a House Captain. It should be one of your most helpful guides as you execute your duties, because we have captured in it the most helpful ideas and experience of many previous House Captains. It contains some critical non-negotiable rules, some documentation requirements, some guidelines to steer your thinking, and ideas you can tailor to your own plan.

This handbook, with the additional support we give you and your own good sense and hard work, will make you a successful House Captain.

2. WHAT IS REBUILDING TOGETHER® USA?

It began in Midland, Texas in 1973 in the old fashioned barn raising tradition of neighbor-helping-neighbor. Our name comes from the comments of a recipient who said "it felt like Christmas."

People of all faiths and walks of life, skilled and unskilled, come together to assist homeowners in need. Volunteer workers and funds come from businesses, churches, synagogues, schools, union and community service organizations, associations and individuals. There are no costs for the homeowner.

We are dedicated to keeping elderly, disabled, and low income homeowners living in dignity through volunteer home rehabilitation services. These repairs could include a very wide range of jobs, but our emphasis is on safety and security.

But we do more than home repair. Our effort (with you in the lead) is a community event in the very best sense of those words. Both the homeowner and the volunteers enjoy the satisfaction that is shared by people involved in true community service. It really does reveal and renew the community spirit. And it all comes together on what we call "Rebuilding Day."

Today there are 265 Rebuilding Together® affiliates in the nation, with 4 of those in the Chicago area. To distinguish us from all other affiliate organizations in the nation, we are Rebuilding Together® North Suburban Chicago.

Low-income elderly and disabled homeowners and families with children often have no place to turn when the roof begins to leak or the front steps crumble. Our goal is to help preserve those houses

and neighborhoods and assure a warm, safe and dry home for people in need. Homeownership stabilizes and strengthens communities.

The number of low-income homeowners increases each year. The current 24 million low-income homeowner families are expected to grow to an astonishing 28.5 million by the year 2010. More and more families are placed in the position of choosing between vital necessities such as food and medicine and a roof that does not leak. Disabled homeowners cannot afford the modifications that allow them to "age in place" and remain in their own homes. Rebuilding Together® works to ensure that as many of those families as possible do not have to make these difficult choices.

Today, there are over 260 Rebuilding Together® affiliates helping to spread the spirit in all 50 states. Nationally, we have a volunteer corps of 275,000 volunteers donating their time and skills repairing 8, 500 houses and non-profit facilities at a market value of \$90 million.

3. REBUILDING TOGETHER NORTH SUBURBAN CHICAGO

Rebuilding Together® H North Suburban Chicago is managed by a Board of Directors which meets regularly throughout the year, and invests hundreds of hours in your project. You may contact any Board Member for additional information, but as a House Captain your first line of supervision and support is your House Captain Coordinator.

All donations are fully tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Donations by check should be made payable to: Rebuilding Together® H North Suburban Chicago. We also encourage in-kind contributions of goods and services as well as gifts of Rebuilding Together assets such as stocks. Please refer potential donors and inquirers to our Executive Director or Treasurer.

4. HOUSE SELECTION & CONTROL

Your house was selected to identify the best possible candidates for our services based on need and our ability to help. Each applicant is visited by a team of Board Members who conduct a homeowner interview and house inspection. This evaluation at the time of application results in an initial list of possible jobs, but no commitments are made at this point. The Board defines the scope of your project by determining budget and work limitations for each

house. This scope will later be clarified and reduced based on your own assessment of the house and resources.

In order to participate in the program, your homeowner has agreed to certain legal obligations which you should be aware of. Your homeowner has agreed to waive liability and suit rights related to the project, to accept the work "as is," and to not sell their home within the next two years.

5. LEGAL STUFF

a. Representing Rebuilding Together®

The Rebuilding Together® name and logo are registered trademarks. We have met certain standards required by our national organization to be an affiliate, and as such may use the name and logo. Rebuilding Together® North Suburban Chicago is a non-profit organization registered with the State of Illinois under §501c(3). As a House Captain you represent us and are an agent of our organization.

b. Liability Issues

Every person who works at your job site **must be at least 14 years** of age and **must sign the Release of Liability Form**. This includes family members who assist the homeowner. In addition, all workers under the age of 18 must have the Medical Treatment Authorization Form completed by a parent or guardian. Additional insurance requirements are: we cannot allow any unskilled workers to do roofing work or allow anyone to climb on a ladder past a second story. We are required to give our insurance carrier immediate notice of any injury or property damage.

c. Homeowner Agreement. We will provide you with a Homeowners Agreement which will include among other things, a scope of work for the project. This form **MUST** be signed by the Homeowner **BEFORE** the start of work and **AFTER** completion of the work.

d. Protection of Information

Please take care to protect the privacy of the homeowner. This may seem strange given that your homeowner is allowing people to crawl all over and in their home. Yet, you will have personal knowledge of them that should be protected. In addition, this handbook contains some information which should be handled discretely.

6. WHAT IS A HOUSE CAPTAIN?

A House Captain is the REBUILDING TOGETHER representative responsible for all aspects of rehabilitation of one house. Within the boundaries of the scope of work for your project, you have broad freedom to plan and execute your project. The agreed upon scope of work must be completed in a timely manner within the weekend project (or for a limited extended period depending on circumstances).

7. HOUSE CAPTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

Your responsibilities have already begun, and they continue **until the paperwork is done**. There are detailed checklists are provided to help you think through your project, but your role and general responsibilities are described here:

a. Be in Charge Professionally

Because the money, time, and hopes of many people are focused on your performance, we know you'll want to do the best possible job. That includes a breadth of responsibilities in addition to work performance on Rebuilding Day.

- ∫ Ensure the flow of information to key people.
- ∫ Enforce safety, legal, and security standards.
- ∫ Set the tone for the aspects of REBUILDING TOGETHER Day.
- ∫ Help develop the public perception of our affiliate.
- ∫ Control and report on project expenses.

b. Know Your Homeowner Personally

Having a good relationship with the homeowner is necessary to make them comfortable and your job easier. Throughout the project, you should be partnering with the homeowner.

- ∫ Establish a supportive relationship with the homeowner.
- ∫ Prepare them for the project.
- ∫ "Resettle" them after the project is completed.

c. Know Your House Thoroughly

Since you must plan and execute the project, no one associated with it should know your house better than you do. To do this you'll need input from several sources.

- ┌ Assess the property and house carefully inside and out.
- ┌ Consult with preselected skilled-trade professionals.
- ┌ Identify issues regarding neighboring properties and local ordinances.

d. Plan All Jobs in Detail

A successful project will include timely completion of a limited number of specific jobs. To avoid a lingering project with no clear ending point, you must plan the project with a larger perspective including pre-events leading up to Rebuilding Day.

- ┌ Stay within the predetermined limitations of the project.
- ┌ Identify needed and available skilled/unskilled workers.
- ┌ Select, obtain, and protect needed materials and equipment.
- ┌ Complete or oversee selected jobs in advance of Rebuilding Day.

e. Supervise Rebuilding Day Carefully

After thorough planning and completion of key advance work, your project should be completed with a one day blitz on Rebuilding Day. On that day, you'll have very little time for contemplating decisions, so special attention must be given to it in advance.

- ┌ Prepare the work-site and team for Rebuilding Day.
- ┌ Identify your key supervisory activities.
- ┌ Delegate selected tasks to assistants and team leaders.

f. Finish the Project Completely

Poor follow-up can spoil an otherwise well-executed project, and the last important items can only be taken care of by you.

- ┌ Clean up the job site.
- ┌ Provide a clear ending point of your workers' roles.
- ┌ Complete all administrative tasks.

8. SAFETY & SECURITY ISSUES

Home repair is inherently dangerous, so you must be preventive in this area, and you must not delegate this responsibility.

All of the items in this section should be addressed on event day and documented on the SAFETY CHECKLIST.

- A. Smoke Detectors-working batteries
- B. CO2 Detector (If required)

PERSONAL PROTECTION

WHEN SHOULD I WEAR PERSONAL PROTECTION?

Volunteers must wear safety glasses or goggles with fixed side shields at all times as minimum protection in all work areas where hazards of flying objects occur.

Noise levels exceeding 90 decibels require ear protection

Inform the volunteers to refrain from wearing torn clothing, jewelry, or rings, which can easily get caught and cause damage. Always wear shirts and long pants, preferably 100% cotton, or wool, which is less flammable than other materials.

Gloves should be worn at all times for protection of hands. Always wear gloves when handling equipment and materials. When handling chemicals, use rubber, plastic-coated, or insulated gloves.

LADDER SAFETY

- A. **ONLY ONE** person is ever permitted on a ladder at any time!
- B. Always face a ladder when working from it!
- C. Overlap extension ladders by at least three rungs!
- D. Use **BOTH HANDS** while climbing up and down a ladder!
- E. Make sure the ladder rests on a solid and stable base!
- F. Never use a ladder with broken or missing rungs or damaged side rails!

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Before using any hazardous materials, follow these steps to learn about the specific substance:

- A. Locate the warning label.
- B. Read the label carefully, making sure you understand it.
- C. Never smoke or have any open flames around containers indicating a flammable substance
- D. Insure you have proper ventilation before you use a substance with an inhalation warning.

Mixing Chemicals. Never mix substances or chemicals, as hazardous chemical reactions can result.

LEAD AND ASBESTOS . Notify your House Captain Coordinator immediately if you suspect that lead exists and will be disturbed by your tasks.

Preparing and Cleaning the Site Phase

- A. Remove or cover all furniture in plastic.
- B. Wear appropriate personal protective equipment and clothing
- C. Don't eat, drink or smoke in work area.
- D. Always clean up work area at the end of each day.

HAND TOOLS

- A. Do not leave tools lying around where they could cause an obstruction or a hazard, such as causing a person to trip.
- B.. Select the appropriate hand tool for each specific task.
- C. Never use electrical cords for hoisting or lowering tolls or materials!
- D. Keep moving parts of a power tool pointed away from your body!
- E. Never leave a running power tool unattended!
- F. Make sure that the operational switch on any power tool or appliance is **off before** plugging the tool or appliance into an electrical outlet or extension cord

POWDER-ACTUATED TOOLS

What are the general guidelines for using power-actuated tools?

Make sure the proper safety guards and shields exist and are in proper working order before operating any power tool!!! Power-actuated tools can be extremely dangerous if mishandled, so approach these tools with the same caution and respect as you would firearms. Wear eye protection when using power-actuated fastening tools!

ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS

SAFETY RELATED ELECTRICAL WORK PRACTICES

General Methods for Safety-Protect yourself when working on or near live parts of electrical circuits by one of the following:

- A. De-energizing and grounding of the circuit with proper lock-out tag-out procedure.
- B. Only Competent Electricians shall work on or near live circuits or equipment. This is serious and dangerous work. **NO unskilled volunteers** shall be permitted to work in these areas!!!

Extension Cords

- A. Extension cords must be of the three-wire, heavy-duty type.
- B. Never use worn or frayed electrical cords or cables

FIRST AID

General Direction for First Aid-

While help is being summoned, do the following:

- A. Minimize injury-move victim only if necessary for safety reasons.
- B. Control severe bleeding- apply direct pressure with gauze or rags, do not remove bandages once soaked, add more, while maintaining direct pressure.
- C. Maintain an open airway and give Rescue Breathing or CPR if necessary

Bleeding

Place dressing and apply direct pressure directly over the wound, then elevate above the level of the heart, unless there is evidence of a fracture. Wrap bandage snugly over the dressing. If bleeding doesn't stop after direct pressure, elevation, and the pressure bandage, compress the pressure point.

To control a nosebleed, have the victim lean forward and pinch the nostrils together until bleeding stops.

Poisoning

1. Signals of Poisoning: Heavy labored breathing, sudden onset of pain or illness, burns or odors around the tips of the mouth, unusual behavior.
2. If conscious- If you think someone has been poisoned, call your poison control center or local emergency number and follow their directions.

Burns:

1. Stop the burning- put out flames or remove the victim from the source of the burn.
2. Cool the burn- run or pour cool water on burn, immerse if possible. Cool until pain is reduced.
3. Cover the burn- Use dry, sterile dressing and bandage.

Types of Burns:

1. First Degree: Sunburn type. Apply cool water or a cool cloth. **Do not** use ointments, lotions, or burn ointments.
2. Second Degree: Chemical Burn. Must be flushed with large amounts of water until EMS arrives. Do not immerse in water. It needs to be flushed, so it can run freely away.
3. Third Degree: Electrical Burn. Make sure power is turned off before touching the victim. Electric, burns from the inside out, you may not see anything at first. Medical treatment is needed immediately, Call EMS.

If there is any serious threat to safety, the situation should be dealt with swiftly and definitely to avoid an incident. But the little things are also important. How you handle small potential safety issues will establish the ABCs you'll want in operation.

9. WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY

Address an emergency immediately and personally. Provide the necessary aid, comfort, and decisions. Then when it has been addressed and is under the supervision of another responsible person, continue with your other duties and follow-up the incident later. Inform your Coordinator immediately of any significant injury or property damage.

- ∫ Do not admit liability. The time of occurrence is not appropriate to try to determine fault.
- ∫ Require witnesses of a serious incident to write down their observations.

10. HANDLING OTHER PROBLEMS

Since you are responsible for the project, you also have the authority to decide and act. In addition to your plan, you should have relationships with the homeowner and your workers which will assure their cooperation to overcome unplanned obstacles.

Should you ever pull individuals or your team off the job? It is rare, but you may remove any individual from the work team and thus the work site. In the most severe circumstances you may pull the entire team. Some problematic behavior could be threats, verbal assaults, sexual harassment, drug or alcohol use, or family members who refuse to pitch in. If appropriate, involve the homeowner in solving the problem. Regardless of the problem, be firm and clear about what must happen right away. You are in charge of the project.

11. SUPERVISING VOLUNTEERS

One of the most exciting aspects of your role is the supervision of volunteers. You'll find they bring an amazing variety of skill levels and life experience and personal expectations. And there are some challenges that come with supervising such a diverse group.

Where do they come from? Most of your volunteers will be recruited by our organization. Some will come as a group representing an organization, some individually. Most will be assigned to your house in advance of Rebuilding Day, but some may show up unexpectedly. You should also make your own contacts for potential volunteer workers.

You must be involved with your volunteers in advance of Rebuilding Day. You'll want to confirm their attendance and perhaps pre-orient them, by phone or mail. You may also want to do some pre-processing or training with a volunteer group.

Many people assume that volunteers require a style of supervision different from other relationships. While there are some unique factors, we know from experience that volunteers want and need the same *leadership* that paid workers desire. Give them materials, a properly planned job, and support from you. They should not be asked to do more than they have the resources to do. The following common practices are especially important on projects such as ours:

- ┌ Ask them to do what you need them to do. Don't be shy about asking for good work, on specific tasks, or even asking for more from your workers. You'll probably need help before Rebuilding Day and possibly afterward to wrap up a few things.
- ┌ Consider their needs and desires. Ask what they can and can't do. If possible put them on a task they want to learn to do. But remember, by mid-afternoon many volunteers may tire because they do not routinely participate in this sort of activity.
- ┌ Mix and match them for the best experience. Be sure to introduce and mix individuals with volunteer groups. Spread skilled workers around and pair them with rookies.

12. DELEGATING

Since you will be supervising (not doing) the work, you must wisely delegate responsibility. Consider appointing workers to the following positions. Many times these tasks can be assigned to just one or two individuals, instead of four. But be specific about who has what responsibility.

- ┌ House Liaison to continually assist the homeowner. Assists homeowner with personal needs. Introduces people to homeowner. Keeps homeowner informed.
- ┌ Radar (as in MASH fame) to handle administrative tasks. Takes pictures. Does head counts. Checks for completion of forms. Alphabetizes forms. Orders and dispenses lunch and snacks.
- ┌ Runner to cover on-the-spot supply needs. Drives a truck, if needed. Familiar with the area. Has shopped a

hardware store before. Confirms exactly what's needed/takes samples to the store. Gets receipt/s.

- ┌ Paint/tool coordinator to keep supplies out of black holes. Guards the paint (we're not kidding). Tracks down lost or borrowed tools. Supervises a tool table, if used.

Be sure to consider these functions in your planning and add them to your checklists. If you don't assign them to someone else, and follow-up on them, you will have to do them yourself.

13. YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE HOMEOWNER

Although other Rebuilding Together® representatives have contact with your homeowner, you are the primary contact. You could think of yourself as a co-owner of the project with your homeowner. However, you are the only project supervisor and it is important to establish such a relationship early.

- ┌ Your homeowner may make additional requests as they become more comfortable with you over the weeks. You may need to be firm about some of your decisions.
- ┌ On Rebuilding Day, you will have limited time for communicating with the homeowner. It is important they understand your plans and procedures in advance.

Here are some of things you'll want to address:

Provide the information and reassurance your homeowner needs. They should know you are on the job early and that there is a definite end to the project. Do not announce plans until OK'd by your coordinator.

- ┌ Their personal concerns. How much notice they need before a home visit. Their relationship/concerns about neighbors. Their fears regarding the project. Concern about personal publicity in newspapers.
- ┌ The atmosphere of Rebuilding Day. Things may seem a little chaotic and there will be a lot of people busy around or in their home. Assure them you're in complete control.
- ┌ Involve family members. Request that able-bodied family members participate. If family members are unwilling to

help, ask that they not be present.

- ∫ Inform/involve the neighbors. Defer to the homeowner's wishes. Get neighbors names, ask homeowner to inform them of project or go with the homeowner.
- ∫ How they can prepare. Remove and store away from the work area wall hangings and breakables that interfere with the work or traffic. Have them store valuables as a precaution and for their peace of mind. It may be helpful to have pets stay with a friend.

14. EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

One of your major responsibilities is to obtain and control needed materials. There are four ways of obtaining what you need.

First, you will be given a container full of the basic supplies needed at all worksites. This will be available for you to pick up before Rebuilding Day at a site to be announced.

Second, some items for your particular project may be obtained for you and possibly delivered to your work site.

Third, you must make most of your purchases yourself at designated HomeDepots. Use the enclosed Inventory to think through what you need. Although you can make these purchases at any time, do it early.

Fourth, you will be given a debit card for supplies and lunch on Rebuilding Day if needed.

It is critical that you plan your project far in advance to meet ordering and pick up deadlines. Please note that you are taking responsibility for thousands of dollars worth of equipment and material. You must secure all of these supplies.

15. LIMITATIONS OF YOUR PROJECT

Although we have fantastic resources of motivation we cannot let big hearts promise more than the back and the wallet can provide. Accept the fact that we cannot do all that needs to be done to your house. We simply cannot provide most homeowners with everything they (or we) would like. So ... we do the best we can do. You must

say “no” to some jobs in order to do other jobs well, on time, and on budget.

The number one limitation of your project is the Board's work and budget statement for your house. Within this Board-approved scope, you must further define your project by determining what you “will do,” “might do,” and “won't do.” This control mechanism helps avoid mission creep and makes implementation much smoother. As a final check of the clarity and control of your project, you must discuss your plans with your House Captain Coordinator. Then you can give your homeowner clear, reasonable expectations and you can deliver.

Worth Restating— the homeowner you serve may have great needs, but you have limited resources. The Board has provided the largest possible work and budget limitations of your project. You may reduce this scope, and you may add small jobs to your project, but your plan must be OK'd by your Coordinator.

16. HOSTING THE MEDIA

People from newspaper, television or radio may visit your house on Rebuilding Day. Since publicity is critical to our program, and good press means more support for next year, the responsibility for hosting media representatives is assigned to you.

What to do? Introduce yourself as the House Captain (you are the official Rebuilding Together representative on site) and introduce the homeowner. Talk about the “neighbor helping neighbor” aspect and the good that comes from this project. Highlight donors and donations. Explain what you are doing, how many volunteers are at the site, giving credit and background about them and the sponsoring organization. Be detailed about the volunteers involved at your house. Name your volunteers by name, mention interesting things about them, and the homeowner. Cooperate to set up photo shots if it can be done safely. Write down the names of the reporter, cameraman, etc., and a phone number for follow up by the Board of Directors.

How can you prepare for a media contact? Be familiar with the history and concept of Rebuilding Together®. Particularly, please know what is going on with our local affiliate on Rebuilding Day; how many houses, volunteers, and funders. Know some interesting things about your homeowner's story.

17. FOLLOWUP

Your targeted finish date is the last Saturday of April. Much of the work will be done between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM on that day, but you must plan to complete some items in advance in order to finish on Rebuilding Day. For most projects, you may assume that the more preparatory jobs you do, the more likely you are to finish the project on Rebuilding Day. And inversely, if you do no tasks in advance, you are very likely to have work to do afterward.

You and your team must finish what you start. If you can complete additional small repairs, please do. But do not start additional jobs unless they are from your "might do" list. Home repair is unpredictable and beginning jobs you have not planned may create new problems or reveal hidden ones. You must not "open a can of worms" for which the homeowner or your team is unprepared.

18. ONE LAST WORD

Your job is arguably the best and the toughest one in our organization. Many hours of preparation focus on your role, and many hours of evaluation and follow-up hinge on you. You are the one that pulls it all together and picks up whatever trails. You are the primary and last contact with the homeowner. We thank you sincerely for accepting such a demanding role. And, we are committed to making you a successful House Captain.