

Information for Volunteers

Humane Borders' volunteers primarily assist in delivering water to the stations that we maintain in the Sonoran desert. Humane Borders requires at least one passenger for each trip. Volunteers may serve as passengers or be trained over time to drive Humane Borders vehicles, leading groups of 2-5 people to check and maintain barrels on our established routes.

General Volunteer Information

Most "water runs" will begin at 6:00 am. The one exception is the Monday Sasabe run which begins at 8:30 am. Please be sure that if you are signed up for a water run you include your cell phone number on the sign in sheet and get your driver's cell phone number. Please arrive on time. Drivers, other volunteers, as well as other guests (reporters, students, etc.) who participate in water runs should not be kept waiting. Special appointments with guests in particular require planning and must be kept. Changes cannot be accommodated without prior notice. If you have an emergency and cannot meet a commitment you made to be either a passenger or driver, please call your driver asap; they may need to make other arrangements.

Make sure you know if a passport is required on your water run (Sasabe and BANWR runs), and ensure that you have it with you. If you are on a trip that crosses the border into Mexico, please note that any fruit or vegetables you may have cannot be brought back into the U.S. port of entry. It doesn't matter if the fruit or vegetable came from the U.S. side. It will be confiscated, as will any plants.

Passenger Training:

Before going on a water run for the first time, passengers should review the volunteer protocol that they will have received when signing up for the run and, if they have not done so already, sign it and give it to their driver. Passengers will pick up what they need to know to help on a water run from other experienced volunteers. Volunteers may be asked to help with the following types of activities:

- operate the pump that is used to siphon water from the trucks to the barrels
- properly use and store the hose
- open, close, and lock the barrels
- test the water in each barrel
- replace barrels, spigots, and bungs
- open and lock gates on the land that we visit
- secure equipment in the back of the truck
- replace flags when necessary
- operate SPOT
- record trip information on our log sheets

As a Humane Borders volunteer, make sure you are aware of our protocols for dealing with vandalized stations, encountering Border Patrol, and encountering migrants, particularly those in distress. Each truck is equipped with food packs (located behind the rear passenger seat), and a binder that contains basic medical information, and useful phrases in Spanish if you are not a Spanish-speaker. Please take

the time when you go on your first water run to read through the binder and familiarize yourself with what to do in certain situations.

In addition to helping service the barrels, your ability to observe the desert around you can be very important. All volunteers should carefully watch the surrounding areas around stations, and along roads while driving, to detect if there is anyone in need of assistance. If you see something, ask the driver to slow down or stop and assess things carefully.

While volunteers are out in the desert, we also try to pick up discarded items (i.e. trash) around the stations or along routes. Pay particular attention to black water bottles, clothing and shoes, and other items that migrants typically carry on their journeys. Noting where such items are helps us get a sense if people are moving through an area. When feasible, items should be collected and properly disposed of back at the truck yard.

Driver Training:

If you are interested in becoming a driver, let the Operations Manager know and give or send him a copy of your drivers' license. You must have a valid drivers' license. Training entails accompanying the Operations Manager or a designated driver trainer on a route to learn directions and station locations, and then driving that route at least two times with the trainer. You will also learn how to properly operate and drive the trucks. Once your trainer feels you are able to do the route without assistance, and can operate the trucks safely, you'll be ready to drive.

All drivers must be mindful of how they operate the trucks. The trucks are not new, and have been driven in difficult conditions for variable amounts of time. Generally on rough roads, care should be taken to drive slowly and deliberately. We don't want to be too hard on the trucks, because we need them to last!

Drivers should ensure trucks are re-fueled at the end of each trip before returning to the truck yard. Drivers are also responsible for filling out trip reports at the beginning and end of each trip. This paperwork should be left on the clipboard in the truck, or left in the mailbox located inside the truck yard.

Please do not back trucks into the truck yard. Damage to the property has happened in the past as a result.

MOST OF ALL, THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR INTEREST IN HELPING MIGRANTS. PLEASE CONTACT US DIRECTLY AT INFO@HUMANEBORDERS.ORG IF YOU HAVE FURTHER QUESTIONS.