



With help from residents, children, and schools, Keep Sugar Land Beautiful works to make the area a greener place to live

# Keep Sugar Land Beautiful

## How Sugar Land is Getting Green and Clean



Through the program Trees Across Sugar Land, volunteers have planted more than 35,000 small trees in the area



Clements High School students and staff help plant a tree for KSLB



KSLB gives students the chance to study the local environment

Written by Katherine Goldberg    Photos courtesy of Keep Sugar Land Beautiful



Take a drive around Sugar Land, and you will see trees standing tall, flowers blooming in the sun, and fresh green grass lining the streets. One of the ways that Sugar Land maintains such a clean and green city is through the Keep Sugar Land Beautiful program.

—KSLB brings together residents, neighborhoods, and local businesses to preserve Sugar Land's natural beauty and improve the environment. "We want to make it easy for our community to go green and stay green," says KSLB Executive Director Vicki Gist.

### *Rooted in Service*

The roots of KSLB are connected with the Keep America Beautiful and Keep Texas Beautiful programs. By being affiliated with these

organizations, KSLB is furthering the state and national goal of making partnerships between the citizens and the community to help keep land clean and beautiful. Keep America Beautiful first organized in 1953 and soon after began a campaign of litter prevention with the famous line, "Don't be a litter bug." The Keep Texas Beautiful program began in an effort to put Texas' best face forward when the 1967 World's Fair came to San Antonio. After the fair ended, the programs continued their work with campaigns like "Don't Mess with Texas," which is still a familiar slogan. Many cities and towns kept the beautification model to maintain their own land and water resources. Sugar Land is one of the cities currently benefiting from such a wonderful community program.

KSLB teaches Sugar Landers how to care for the environment with hands-on projects



Student volunteers help promote the importance of recycling and waste reduction



Volunteers are always welcome to join KSLB and its many activities throughout the year



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## Looking Locally

Nowadays, KSLB still has its eye on reducing litter, hosting events like the Don't Mess with Texas Trash Off in April, but has expanded the scope of its mission to include waste reduction, recycling promotion, and environmental education programming for the community. Community groups of all levels and interests can help keep their city clean and beautiful through the program. One of the most successful programs that KSLB has initiated is Trees Across Sugar Land, which has planted more than 35,000 saplings and small trees across the area. In the last year alone, more than 700 volunteers have gathered to plant 20,000 of those trees. This year, 800 volunteers are expected to help KSLP plant and mulch 10,000 native saplings in Sugar Land Memorial Park.

In addition to Trees across Sugar Land, KSLB provides many ways to get involved in protecting the local environment. Volunteers host an annual youth poster contest, environmental workshops, educational speakers, a volunteer Stream Team, which monitors local water resources, and so much more. Local businesses have provided donations for much of the program's work, including money for local schools to have planet Earth carts, stocked with books and activities that help children appreciate the environment. "We are so appreciative of businesses in our community," Gist says. "We are able to provide quality programs through their support."

## Express Your Own Beauty

KSLB always welcomes new volunteers, and opportunities to lend a hand can be found on its website. Gist is proud of the volunteers that share the goals of KSLB. "Volunteers of all ages are eager to participate in our events," she says. Since the program has such a visual and profound impact on the community, it is easy to see why Gist has received many calls and emails supporting the program and its volunteers. "People stop me to say thank you for the work we are doing," she says. The success of the program doesn't end at the roadside, though. "Education is the key to a successful program," Gist points out. KSLB teaches Sugar Land residents to make a difference in their own homes. Small changes in the way you garden and care for your yard, as well as making an effort to recycle and reduce waste, can help preserve the environment and reduce the impact your personal landscape has on the larger community.

KSLB can provide you with all the knowledge needed to improve your own slice of Sugar Land, as well as with the volunteer and educational opportunities that help make a broader impact on our community. Visit [kslb.org](http://kslb.org) to learn all the ways you can get involved in helping to keep Sugar Land beautiful. SLM

*KATHERINE GOLDBERG is a freelance writer and Sugar Land newcomer who loves learning and writing about her new hometown.*

## 5 Ways to Pitch In!



1. Compost garden and organic food scraps.
2. Plant native plants, which require fewer resources to keep healthy.
3. Recycle glass, aluminum, plastic, and paper. For a curbside bin, email [solidwaste@sugarlandtx.gov](mailto:solidwaste@sugarlandtx.gov).
4. Use homemade compost instead of chemical fertilizers.
5. Water plants only when needed.



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