

HOW TO BE A KIT LOAN LOCATION



Kit loan locations are places where SC Adopt-a-Stream (SC AAS) certified volunteers can borrow water quality monitoring kits to use for SC AAS sampling. Kit loan locations are an integral part of the SC AAS ecosystem, as kits can be expensive for individual volunteers to purchase and maintain. The presence of a kit loan location makes the program more accessible and builds capacity for water quality data collection and education across the state.

Individuals or organizations can purchase their own SC AAS monitoring kits or potentially maintain a kit provided by the South Carolina Department of Environmental Services (SCDES) or sponsored by a partner. Hosting an SC AAS water quality monitoring kit makes you an essential part of community engagement and community science in South Carolina.

As a kit loan location, you will:

- Connect with your community around the shared vision that one day, SC will be known for its healthy watersheds because of a collaborative network of volunteers.
- Provide a valuable asset that increases volunteer engagement in water resource protection.
- Become directly involved in a statewide water quality monitoring program that empowers individuals to act as stewards of and advocates for their waterways.
- Support volunteer water quality monitoring near you!

GETTING FIT FOR THE KIT CHECKLIST

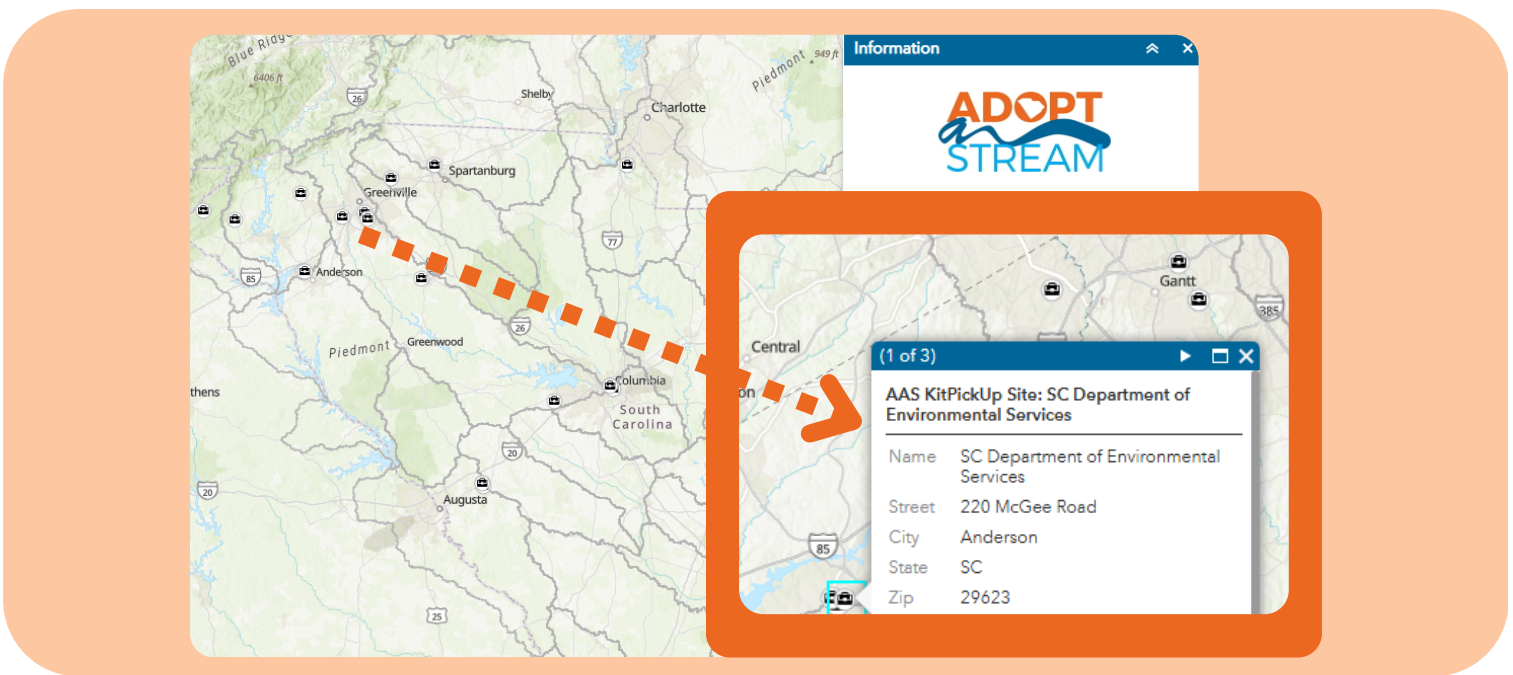
- ☐ Does your agency/organization/business have a publicly accessible drop-off and pick-up location?
- ☐ Is someone at your site able to maintain the kit, manage inventory, and coordinate loans with volunteers?
- ☐ Does your location have access to a climate-controlled space out of direct sunlight?
- ☐ Do you have the funds to purchase the kit and restock supplies annually? *(On average, a full chemical restock costs \$100/year. If you are maintaining a freshwater kit, bacteria plates cost around \$150 for 50 plates.)*
- ☐ For freshwater kit loan locations only: do you have a freezer on-site to store a small, lunch box size cooler of bacteria plates?

If you answered yes to these questions, your organization is ready to host a kit!

KIT MAINTENANCE

Between loans, someone should be available to make sure kits are clean, check monitoring equipment, and add gloves, wipes, and a copy of the data collection form. SC AAS kits must be stored in a climate-controlled space, as chemicals can be damaged by heat and light. It is recommended that new chemicals be ordered at least 2 months prior to the expiration date, and when chemicals are approaching empty or expired, a new bottle be added to the kit in addition to the current one.

For more information about purchasing chemical refills or kit equipment, visit www.scadoptastream.org. Under the **Certified Volunteers page**, there are supply lists for each monitoring protocol with potential vendors for each item. Contact the program coordinators at scaas@des.sc.gov if you have any questions or issues regarding supply ordering.



HOW VOLUNTEERS FIND YOU

When you become a kit loan location, your address and/or contact information will be added to the [SC AAS Atlas](#) and announced to the program network. Using the SC AAS Atlas, volunteers can view existing monitoring sites, look up watershed information, and find kit loan locations.

SC AAS volunteers attend workshops and maintain their certifications annually through required testing. All SC AAS protocols as well as kit maintenance are taught in the workshops, so your potential volunteers know what to expect and how to take care of the kit.

KIT LOAN LOGISTICS

Kit loan locations can set their own hours and loan process. A location with fewer users may simply choose to request a few days’ notice before checking out the kit to ensure availability. A location with more users may prefer to set a regular schedule, which has the benefit of providing each volunteer with a structure they can plan their sampling around. An example of this process is demonstrated below.

EXAMPLE KIT LOAN PROCESS AND SCHEDULE

- Designate a single day of the week for volunteers to drop off and pick up kits.
- Choose a time range in the morning for drop-off and in the afternoon for pick-up.
- Leave at least an hour between drop-off and pick-up times to clean and inspect the kit.
- Identify a location for volunteers to pick up and drop off the kits if you will not be on site during the designated times.

1st Wednesday		2nd Wednesday		3rd Wednesday		4th Wednesday	
AM Drop-off	PM Pick-up	AM Drop-off	PM Pick-up	AM Drop-off	PM Pick-up	AM Drop-off	PM Pick-up
Suzy	Bob	Bob	Jan	Jan	Chris	Chris	Suzy

Using this example system, the kit has its own calendar and regular users. A recurring email or virtual calendar appointment for volunteers can help them remember to stay on schedule.

Encourage volunteers to work together to help build community. If a volunteer needs to shift their schedule on an occasional basis, provide them with the leeway to work with other volunteers to share the kit, as long as it is returned by a specified time. You make your rules!

KIT LOAN AGREEMENTS

We recommend volunteers fill out a kit loan agreement to ensure the expectations of borrowing a kit are clear and to reinforce the importance of kit care in collecting quality data.

At minimum, a kit loan agreement should include the borrower’s contact information and an acknowledgement that the kit should be kept in a cool, dark location when not in use and that any issues with the kit should be reported immediately to the point of contact.

NEXT STEPS

The SC AAS kit loan location network is an essential part of the SC AAS program. Program coordinators are here to assist you with any questions you may have about being a loan location, ordering chemical refills, and program updates. You will also receive a quarterly Kit Loan Location email with announcements and new program resources.

If at any point you or your organization need to step down from being a kit loan location, we completely understand. Please let us know by contacting us at scaas@des.sc.gov so we can remove your location from the SC AAS Atlas and collect any kit materials that are property of SCDES.

There are many opportunities to become a part of SC AAS! You can host a workshop at your organization, sponsor additional kit loan locations, become certified and volunteer, become a trainer, and more.

Thank you for your interest, and please reach out if you have any questions or if you would like to discuss hosting a water quality monitoring kit.



CONTACT US:

[SCAAS@DES.SC.GOV](mailto:scaas@des.sc.gov)

[WWW.SCADOPTASTREAM.ORG](http://www.scadoptastream.org)