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SAFE OPERATING PROCEDURES

Poisonous Snakes, Spiders, Insects and Plants SOP 10-17

Hazard Review		
Snake bites	Tick bites	Insect stings
Poisonous plants	Cuts	Punctures
Required Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (Based on job specific hazard review)		
Insect repellent	Safety toe shoes/boots with ankle protection	Long sleeve/legged clothing
Puncture resistant work gloves		

1. Employees should utilize Operational Risk Management prior to beginning work. Employees should wear work boots, long pants and long sleeved shirts when going into areas where snakes may be.
2. Employees should avoid wearing perfumes, aftershaves, etc., to minimize attraction of snakes or insects.
3. Work should be scheduled in infested areas during the cool months.

Snakes

1. Wear high top safety toe boots with ankle protection.
2. Employees should make as much noise as possible when approaching a possible snake area to give the snake time to leave.
3. Employees should be equipped with a bush axe for clearing underbrush and for protection.
4. Employees should avoid reaching or stepping into hidden areas whenever possible.
5. If a snake bite should occur, the employee should:
 - a. Remain as calm as possible.
 - b. Move away from the snake.
 - c. Apply a constricting bandage (not tourniquet) between the wound and heart. A finger should be able to pass under it. Apply ice, if available, to bite area.
 - d. Allow a fellow worker to transport him/her to the closest medical facility.
 - e. Identify the snake and alert medical facility of type.
6. Under no circumstances should incisions and suction be used.

Insect Sting or Spider Bite

Employees should:

1. Wear light-colored, smooth-finished clothing.
2. Avoid areas where spiders or insects might be whenever possible.
3. Avoid highly fragrant after-shaves, colognes, etc., that may attract insects.
4. Use available insect repellent (Spray Insect Repellent DOT #134002049).
5. If a sting or bite does occur, any stinger should be removed with a knife blade or fingernail. The area should then be treated with Sting Kill Swabs (DOT # 134001850) and/or Hydrocortisone (DOT # 134002350). Employees that are aware they may be allergic to insect bites should carry their prescribed EpiPen, alert other employees they are allergic to certain types of insects, and explain to them what they should do in the event the allergic employee is stung and becomes unresponsive.

- In the event of a sting, if medical attention is not readily available, consider seeking medical treatment.

Ticks

Ticks are especially important to pay attention to because of the possibility of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever or Lyme Disease.

To minimize exposure, employees should follow these guidelines:

- Wear appropriate clothing when working in wooded areas.
- Check yourself at least twice a day, paying particular attention to the hair, neck and groin area.
- Use the available Tick Repellent (DOT #34-02050).
- Notify your supervisor if a tick is found and request that the date and condition (i.e. attached? crawling?) be noted for future reference. (If possible retain engorged ticks and place in a container for identification of the tick type.)
- Call your NCDOT preferred provider if fever, chills, headaches or muscle aches develop within 3-10 days after exposure. In some cases, a rash may develop on the wrists and ankles 1-3 days after the fever begins.

Poisonous Plants

NCDOT employees typically have exposure to at least three types of poisonous plants: poison oak, poison ivy and poison sumac. Reactions can range from mild (very little or none) to severe (rash and blisters). Employees who have no reaction may not have become sensitized; but once they are, future exposures may result in an allergic reaction.

To avoid problems with poisonous plants, employees should:

- Learn what the plants look like. Avoid working in severely infested areas if at all possible.
- Wear long sleeve shirts, long pants, and work gloves. If you are performing clearing activities with either hand (e.g. bush axes, machetes or powered tools), use eye goggles/safety glasses to prevent poisonous plants from contacting your eyes.
- Use silicone protective or other barrier creams where available.
- Use TECNU poison ivy wash (NCDOT # 34-01610) on any place that may have been exposed. In some cases, applying TECHNU, even 24 hours after exposure, may help.
- Ensure that any clothes or shoes that may have been exposed are thoroughly washed. Leftover oils on anything could cause a reaction even days later.
- If a severe reaction develops, contact your NCDOT preferred provider for possible treatments.
- Avoid rubbing your eyes if you have been in contact with poisonous plants.

Related SOP's

General SOPs	Chapter 10	