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## SAFE OPERATING PROCEDURES

# Domestic and Wild Animals

# SOP 10-4

Hazard Review		
Bites	Rabies or Other Infectious Diseases	Lifting
Slip, Trip and Fall	Pinch Points	

Field employees are at risk from exposure to all types of animals, their waste products and their carcasses. Rodents and other animals can harbor disease-causing agents which may be very harmful to humans. Care should be taken to avoid all wild animals and domestic animals that have the potential to harm you.

To avoid accident or injuries associated with domestic and other animals observe the following guidelines:

- 1) Be aware of your surroundings and note any wild or suspicious acting animals in your work area. If necessary, seek safe shelter from these animals.
- 2) When traveling down the road, be alert for deer prone areas especially during dawn and dusk hours.
- 3) Avoid reaching or stepping into or over hidden areas that may contain such animals. Small holes are an indication of snakes or other small animal that can weaken soil being walked on. Tall grass can hide the holes.
- 4) When working around bridge and guard rails, be mindful of snakes. Snake chaps or gaiters should be worn in areas that snakes are likely to be present; brush piles, tall grass, weeds, rocks with openings where they can hide to protect themselves from predators.
- 5) If bitten by a snake, identify the type if possible or kill it so that proper identification and anti-venom can be administered at the hospital. Snake venom can have immediate or delayed effects that can take 12 to 18 hours.
- 6) When working with soil, be aware of signs that indicate above or below ground animal nests and take appropriate action to prevent contamination by dust or injury from bites.
- 7) Prior to picking up dead animals, spray animal carcasses with a disinfectant (e.g. Lysol) before removal and wear protective gloves to remove animal carcasses. Dispose of dead animals in compliance with applicable county health guidelines. Wash exposed skin with an antibacterial or disinfectant soap after removal and disposal of the animal.
- 8) Check to make sure that you do not have ticks that transfer from the animal to you. Utilize insect repellants when handling dead animals.
- 9) If possible, pick-up dead animals with mechanical devices (davit arm/ small crane) or utilize 2 people.
- 10) Notify homeowners with outdoor pets that you will be in the area ahead of work, if they have pets that are subject to rush or attack personnel working in the area.

- 11) Do not try to pet or household animals that are allowed to roam the yard. Dogs will attack out of fear, protecting territory or unfamiliar noise (like that of equipment operating close by). Look for signs that a dog may attack; Growling, hair standing up on the neck, crouching/attack position, snarling, barking, baring teeth etc.
- 12) If a dog bite or other wild animal bite occurs, make sure the Dr.'s office checks for signs of rabies or other ailment associated with the animal bite. Attempt to contact the homeowner if bitten by a local pet to make sure the pet has had its vaccination shots.
- 13) Be aware that pets in distress may exhibit signs of aggression and may bite when your intentions to rescue/help are good (pets getting on hot pavement, stuck in mud).
- 14) If an animal bite occurs, clean the wound with soap and water, and follow appropriate first aid procedures. Immediately report the incident to your supervisor. Contact with the local Animal Control with the description of the animal.
- 15) Transport any bite victim to the closest NCDOT preferred provider or Urgent Care or Medical Care Facility. (If possible, safely capture or kill the animal so it can be tested for any known disease-causing agents.)
- 16) If exposure to airborne particles and dust from a nest does occur, immediately report the incident to your supervisor. (If possible, and without exposing yourself, mark the site without disturbing it so trained personnel can collect samples to determine if any disease-causing agents are present.)
- 17) Avoid direct contact with bird, bat and other animal droppings and their roosting areas.
- 18) When working around houses with pets that are allowed to roam freely, do not provoke, or try to pet the animals. Keep your distance

<b>Related SOP's</b>
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General SOP's.....Chapter 10