

General Field Safety

Environmental Assessment Unit



May 2021 Version 2

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide references to the NCDOT Safety Manual for field related activities performed by NCDOT Staff. The procedure also outlines a procedure for handling unsafe conditions and reporting accidents while out of the office performing field work.

Responsibility

All NCDOT employees are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the NCDOT Safety Manual. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the Environmental Analysis Unit supervisors to make sure all of their employees receive First Aid training and refresher courses to prepare them for handling emergency situations.

Procedures

The NCDOT Safety Manual gives guidance on approved operating procedures that are to be followed by employees while performing various field operations. These are the base standards that NCDOT employees are to follow. However, it is acceptable for employees to take precautions that are above and beyond these standards if they desire. If you are unsure if the precaution you would like to take is acceptable, then discuss the issue with your supervisor. The following procedures can be found in the [NCDOT Safety Manual](#):

- Cold Weather Safety
- Hot Weather Safety
- Insect Stings
- Poisonous Plants
- Ticks
- Snake Bites
- Domestic and Wild Animals

Procedure 1: Pre Field Trip Preparations

The steps below are common sense reminders for preparing for field work. It is intended to be used as an overall check before leaving for the field and not an exhaustive step by step process.

- Step 1.** Review the NCDOT Safety Manual for information on working in extreme weather conditions (hot or cold).
- Step 2.** Check the weather forecast the day before the trip.
- Step 3.** Check the state vehicle you are taking for the following items:
 - Fully stocked First Aid Kit
 - Reference booklet with summarized Contact Information.
- Step 4.** Check to make sure all of the necessary safety gear is packed and loaded such as appropriate footwear and safety vest. If you will be working around active construction, a hard hat will be required as well.
- Step 5.** Always have your NCDOT identification badge on you.
- Step 6.** Always arrange to have another employee accompany you on the field trip.
- Step 7.** Always have a fully charged cell phone.
- Step 8.** If you require medication for allergic reactions be sure to have the necessary medications with you (oral meds and/or epi-pen, etc). Make sure the employee traveling with you is aware of the problem, knows what to do, and knows where all medications are stored.
- Step 9.** If you take prescribed medications for other health issues (i.e. insulin, etc.) be sure to have these medications with you and alert the employee traveling with you.

Procedure 2: Unsafe Field Conditions

Unsafe field conditions could arise at anytime. Below are some basic steps to follow to maintain the safety of you and your team. They are common sense measures that easily come to mind under normal conditions. However, emergency situations dictate that we react automatically. Review and think through potential situations and how you would handle them before being confronted with them in the field.

- Step 1.** Stay calm and assess the situation.
- Step 2.** The first step is always to remove yourself and the team from immediate danger, even if equipment must be left behind.
- Step 3.** If you are confronted by an angry citizen and asked to leave the area, comply with the request. Do not try to explain your presence unless you are comfortable that the citizen does not impose an immediate threat and indicates a willingness to listen.
- Step 4.** If you are threatened with bodily harm by a citizen, seek safety first. Call the Division Office to report the incident and then call your supervisor to discuss and determine if a police report should be filed.
- Step 5.** If you are attacked by a citizen in any way, get to a safe place and call 911 for assistance. Call the Division Office and your supervisor to report the incident only after the situation is stable and you are completely out of danger.

Procedure 3: Reporting Field Accidents

The following procedure shall be followed for reporting all field accidents.

- Step 1.** Attend to the victim FIRST. Call 911 if needed, then perform any necessary first aid. Once the victim is stabilized or EMS has arrived, follow the remaining steps.
- Step 2.** Call the appropriate immediate supervisor. If you cannot reach the supervisor, the following is a list of staff to call (in order) so that the accident is reported promptly.
 - Unit Head
 - Assistant Unit Head
 - Other EAU Group Leaders
 - Group co-workers
- Step 3.** The Supervisor or person contacted will call the emergency contact for the employee and inform them of any accident. If the person contacted is other than a supervisor, advise the supervisor of the accident by calling and leaving a voice mail message.
- Step 4.** Call the Division Office to also report the accident. Speak to the Division Engineer or Division Construction Engineer if possible. A list of Division Office numbers can be found in each EAU vehicle.
- Step 5.** Upon returning to the office, assist the supervisor in filling out the required accident report forms.

Background

NCDOT has published a comprehensive Workplace Safety Manual and has made a commitment to provide the safest possible working environment for employees. Each time employees perform field work they increase their exposure to possible accidents. The manual addresses overall accident reporting. However, it was determined that guidance specific to Environmental staff concerning unsafe conditions and the initial reporting process would be beneficial.

Policy, Regulatory, and Legal Requirements

NCDOT Policy 7500

North Carolina Occupational and Safety Health Act, G.S. 95, Article 16

Warnings and Precautions

Failure to promptly and correctly report accidents could lead to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Resources and Tools

Workplace Safety Manual

Safety Policy and Procedures Manual