

# HAZARD IDENTIFICATION AND RISK ASSESSMENT<sup>1</sup>

**At no time should the achievement of work outcomes be allowed to compromise safety.**

## Bushland Regeneration Worksite Safety

The following information on worksite safety will ensure that your experience and that of your fellow co-workers is an enjoyable and rewarding one.

**All volunteers working on registered work sites are covered by personal accident insurance provided that:**

- They are working on an approved BLI worksite and/or activity.
- They are working to an approved worksite plan.
- They have participated in site induction for hazard identification and risk assessment
- They follow any safety or other legal directions from the site coordinator or BLI staff
- They sign on prior to commencing work on each occasion

## Common Risks to Landcare Workers & Strategies to manage them

### ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS, INCLUDING HEAT, UV RADIATION AND COLD

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Bushland regeneration work can be very physically demanding, especially in hot weather. To avoid dehydration and heat stress drink plenty of water and have regular breaks in the shade. Other risk management strategies include:

- 3.1.1 Applying 30+ sunscreen
- 3.1.2 Wear a hat, sunglasses and appropriate clothing
- 3.1.3 Limit or avoid working in direct sun

### SLIPS, TRIPS AND FALLS

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Strategies to avoid the risk of tripping, slipping and falling include:

- 3.1.4 Familiarising yourself and co-workers of terrain before commencing work
- 3.1.5 Avoid obvious hazards such as boulders or tree roots, steep embankments, loose rocks etc.
- 3.1.6 Ensure boots are firmly laced
- 3.1.7 Keep tools away from pathways and from underfoot.
- 3.1.8 Cease work if conditions are considered too hazardous

### FALLING OBJECTS

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Treed areas can be hazardous. Visually check your worksite for dead wood, dying trees, hung up branches and trees that may easily become uprooted. Avoid working in these areas and under trees in windy conditions.

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<sup>1</sup> To be used when inducting visitors and new members to the site, using the separate site induction form.  
*E:\google drives\office\Landcare Groups\Landcare Group Documents & WHS\Landcare Site Documents 2025\BLI site induction- Harard Identification and Risk Assessment reference sheet.docx*

## BITES AND STINGS

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Beware of ticks, spiders, ants, snakes, wasps, bees and plants that scratch and sting. Risk strategies to avoid being scratched, bitten or stung include:

- 3.1.9 Wear appropriate PPE, including tick repellent clothing where mandatory
- 3.1.10 Familiarise yourself and alert other group members to plants at worksites that have thorns, prickles or stings
- 3.1.11 Apply insect repellent to brim of hat, cuffs and collars to deter ticks and other stinging insects
- 3.1.12 Walk heavily in suspected snake habitat.
- 3.1.13 Where practicable, avoid working in known snake habitat during early spring when snakes are generally most aggressive.
- 3.1.14 Do not work in a circular or 'surrounding' formation that might prevent a snake from escaping.
- 3.1.15 If a snake is seen, stay clear and point out its location to nearby workers.

Check your site for wasp and ant nests and mark any found prior to work.

Some people may have an allergic or asthmatic reaction to certain plants and substances. Strategies to reduce the risk of such reactions include:

- 3.1.16 Identifying and monitoring group members with a history of allergic reactions or asthma
- 3.1.17 Be aware and alert other group members to plants that can cause allergic reactions such as small and large leaved privet and wild tobacco bush.

## TICK REACTIONS AND DISEASES

Beware of ticks throughout the mid north coast. Ticks can cause itching and discomfort, allergic reactions and carry diseases including tick typhus, spotted fever and other diseases. Risk management strategies include:

- 3.1.18 Reduce tick access to skin by wearing tick repellent coveralls, and broad-brimmed hat (reduces likelihood of ticks from getting into hair and down the neck of clothing).
- 3.1.19 If possible, wear light coloured clothing so that any ticks on clothing are more readily spotted.
- 3.1.20 Apply repellent containing to exposed skin, around ankles and hat brim.
- 3.1.21 Minimise disturbance to vegetation by working for short periods in one location where ticks are a problem.
- 3.1.22 After leaving tick area, have team members check each other for ticks – hair, behind ears, back of neck, etc.
- 3.1.23 If you do get a tick in the skin it is important to kill it in situ. DO NOT squeeze or agitate the tick when in the skin and alive. Kill in situ (in site) with scabies cream (Lyclear) or WartOff freeze spray, as provided in First Aid kits. Continue as directed on Lyclear tube. If the tick does not drop off, wait until it has died and then remove with the appropriate tool (tweezers or tick remover).
- 3.1.24 Seek medical help if tick cannot be safely dealt with.
- 3.1.25 Encourage team members to check themselves fully when showering.
- 3.1.26 If possible place clothing in a hot dryer for 20 minutes and wash clothing on a hot wash.

## CUTS AND BRUISES

Working in bushland is likely to cause cuts and bruises, especially when working with tools such as brush hooks, spades, sledge hammers etc. Be aware of your surrounding and of the presence of other workers, keep safe working distances, wear appropriate boots and long sleeves/trousers to avoid cuts.

## EYE INJURY

Eye injuries from tree or shrub branches and twigs can occur easily when working in the bush. Wearing glasses or protective goggles is recommended and is compulsory when using herbicide.

## MANUAL HANDLING AND REPETITIVE STRAIN INJURY

Manual handling is any activity that involves pushing, moving, carrying, pulling, lifting, lowering or holding. Lifting items correctly will avoid back, shoulder and arm injuries. To lift correctly:

1. Check the path is clear
2. Make sure you are able to lift the load safely. If not ask for help.
3. Place feet close to the object, with one foot beside the load and the other behind the load.
4. Bend your knees and get a good hold, keeping your back straight
5. Lift the load using your leg muscles
6. Support the load with your arms
7. When putting the load down use your leg muscles and bend your knees.

Other strategies to reduce risks of injuries from manual handling include:

- Prior to commencement, plan and negotiate the control of manual handling risks by arranging the strategic pick-up or delivery of project materials and tools so as to minimise the amount of lifting and carrying required.
- Reduce the amount of manual handling by:
  - i. Restructuring the task
  - ii. Using mechanical aids, e.g. crowbars, tree poppers etc.
  - iii. Carefully planning the workplace layout
  - iv. Having heavy materials delivered as near as possible to the worksite
- Use mechanical aids (e.g. wheelbarrow) whenever possible
- Use teamwork to lift/carry awkward objects
- Regularly rotate group members between tasks to avoid over-use induced strain.
- Reduce the weights lifted or carried, or the force applied, when working on uneven or slippery surfaces.

## WORKING WITH CHEMICALS

The use of herbicides by volunteers is limited to hand application, such as cut and paint methods. BLI developed a herbicide spraying policy for volunteers, which is attached. Risk strategies for the reducing the risk of hazards involved with working with chemicals include:

- Receive instruction and demonstration of best practice weed control techniques and use of tools
- Receive adequate instruction concerning safe chemical use, associated health hazards and emergency treatment, and the reasons for use and their competency is assessed.
- Using herbicides in accordance to the label.
- Reading Safety Data Sheets (SDS) for each chemical used (included in this kit)
- Ensure that all chemical containers (eg. poison pots or bottles) are secure and leak free.
- Wear appropriate PPE as instructed in the SDS.
- Rotate tasks to avoid prolonged periods of exposure.
- Maintain safe working distance to avoid splash.
- Ensure that there is enough water available should a spill occur and for personal clean up.

## BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS & HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

In urban bushland and coastal environments the bush can be used as a dump of all kinds of waste. The disturbance associated with bush regeneration works can expose this material. Dumped waste can contain relatively inert materials such as bricks or tiles or biologically hazardous materials such as human wastes, asbestos and syringes. Reduce your and your co-workers risk of infection when coming into contact with these hazards by:

- Wearing appropriate PPE at all times, eg. Enclosed footwear, gloves, long sleeves and pants.
- Remaining alert and conscious of hazardous materials.
- Making others aware of biological hazards that you encounter.
- If not safe to remove report to Landcare office
- If suspected asbestos, do not touch, mark the location and report to Landcare office.
- Washing your hands before eating, drinking or smoking

## ABORIGINAL CULTURAL SITES

Volunteers on sites should be mindful of cultural heritage and the land they are on. If you come across anything that you think may be an Aboriginal Site, artwork or artifact do not disturb it, leave it in the area and contact the Landcare Office.

*A copy of the full WH&S policy can be obtained in the local site coordinator's folder.*