

MERRA Health and Safety Plan

MERRA Committee, Volunteers and Community

Effective January 2026

General Health and Safety Guidelines for Community Volunteers



In Case of Emergency Dial **111**

The emergency tab on your mobile will access the number pad press **111**

Where possible have someone with you when you are volunteering in the community. If it's not possible to have someone with you make sure someone knows where you intend to be and when you are due to return.

Take a mobile phone with you if you have one.

Be aware of the location of the nearest first aid kit.

Don't operate machinery/tools or undertake tasks for which you have no experience/training in operating or appropriate safety/protective clothing. Don't take risks which may cause harm to yourself or others. Be aware of local hazards

- steep and slippery cliffs/ terrain/ walking tracks
- no footpaths
- slippery rocks in tidal zone

Please report any hazards/ accidents/near misses in public areas to the team leader of your volunteer/ community group.

Additional Health and Safety Guidelines for Specific Community Groups

Community Response Group (CRG)- Emergency Response

Have protective clothing appropriate for the tasks you're performing

Don't operate machinery unless you can do so safely - chainsaws, generators, vehicles

Treat all power lines as LIVE

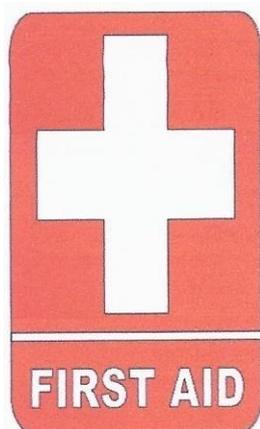
Work in teams and as a team.

Fire Trailer Crew - Community response in the event of fire

Appropriate clothing/ footwear is NON-SYNTHETIC - long trousers worn on the outside of boots, a long-sleeved shirt or jersey and hat to protect from sparks/flame

Only operate the fire trailer, pumps, hoses and equipment if you have been trained, they are hazardous and may not work if operated incorrectly. Training for the 'crew' is currently scheduled for the last Sunday morning of every odd month.

Remember to keep hold of the outlet nozzle **at all times** when the hose is under pressure.



In case of burns stop the burning process as quickly as possible and ensure victim and rescuer is removed from further danger - flames, sparks, hot liquids, live electricity. Remove clothing (if not stuck) and **cool the burn with cold running water for 20-25 minutes** to remove heat, prevent burn progression and relieve pain. Don't use ice- or ice-cold water as this can stick to the burn and restrict blood flow to the damaged area which can worsen damage, delay healing and increase the risk of infection.

Seek medical advice for chemical/electrical burns, if children or the elderly are burnt, deep burns, if the burn is larger than a \$2 coin, affects the airways, face, hands, major joints, feet or genitals.

Ensure any incidents or near misses are reported to the fire team leader.

Volunteers- Animal Pest Control

Refer to attached document

Volunteers - Weed Pest Control

Refer to attached document

(Note that volunteers working on council reserves (e.g. Ngaio Bay) are required to complete volunteer Health and Safety forms which are held by the Council Ranger who also records volunteer hours).

Volunteers - Rubbish Collection Day

Wear appropriate clothing including gloves

Ensure tetanus protection is up to date (or action if harmed by rubbish)

Only collect rubbish from areas that you can safely access.

Be very aware of traffic on the road - have an escape route in case of inconsiderate drivers.

Community Events – BBQ/picnic, AGM , etc.

Safe operation of gas barbeques away from groups of people.

Knowledge of position of First Aid Kit and ideally a first aider at community events.

Remove or clearly mark any obvious hazards.

Animal Pest Control

Handling Pesticides

Handling baits that poison animal pests is an identifiable risk. Persons handling bait should: -

- wear rubber gloves on both hands while distributing bait into bait stations
- wear a protective mask to prevent inhaling dust fumes from the bait
- dispose of used gloves by returning them with their bait box
- dispose of old bait by returning it with their bait box
- wash hands, wrists and forearms with warm soapy water thoroughly

Storing Bait Boxes

Storing bait boxes is also an identifiable risk. Persons storing a bait box on their premises should: -

- keep the lid firmly secured at all times that the box is not being used
- store the box above where a child or domestic pet can get access to it
- store the box where the chance of it falling on someone is minimised

General for Pesticides

- All adults living in the house should be made aware of the existence of a bait box on the property. They should be made aware of what it looks like and advised not to touch or open it.
- Bait which drops to the ground inadvertently should be picked up where possible. This is particularly important when the bait station being emptied or filled is on private land close to a dwelling or on a street frontage where passing children or pets might see it.
- Wear appropriate clothing and footwear when distributing poison. Many stations are in thick and/or spiny bush or on unstable banks.
- Use common sense when accessing bait stations. Do not attempt to fill risky bait stations where a fall that may result in injury is possible. Mark the station for relocation. Access to bait stations changes over time - bush grows, paths cover over, trees are blown over or removed. Always be assessing these changes and report issues.
- Refer to the safety data sheets for toxins used in our programmes (D-Block and Double Tap). These can be downloaded from [HERE](#).

Traps

- Extreme caution should be exercised when setting traps.
- Hands and fingers should be kept away from the kill bar area of the trap.
- Traps should always be assumed to be armed in the first instance.
- Set traps using a rope rather than with your hands
- Never touch the inside of a trap or put your hand in a trap once it is set.
- Where a draw string is used to set a trap, watch that the string is clear of hands and fingers as the string itself can inflict significant damage if it catches a hand or finger as the trap goes off. A trap can go off once it is set and while it is being positioned. Exercise extreme caution on a trap once it is set.
- Check traps frequently and dispose of animal kill as quickly as possible using gloves and always wash your hands immediately after disposal.

General

- Where applicable, check weather & tides and try to work with an outgoing tide to allow sufficient time to return.
- Where volunteers have severe allergic reactions to bee or wasp stings, carry your EpiPen with you, Report any sightings of wasp nests to MERRA.

Weed Pest Control

Identifiable Risks/Hazards

- Storing Herbicides
- Handling Herbicides
- Storing Tools
- Using Tools
- Access
- Disposal

Storing Herbicides - because their purpose is to kill things it is important that all herbicides are stored in such a way that they are inaccessible to any person/thing that are not intended to use them. All herbicides/devices used to apply should be clearly labelled, containers properly sealed, and ideally stored in a locked cupboard with if practical a hazardous substance indicator.

Handling Herbicides

- only handle if you are confident that you can do so without causing harm
- wear appropriate clothing, footwear and protective clothing as relates to the substance - gloves/ ventilation mask/goggles when handling chemicals or equipment containing chemicals.
- read handling instructions - mix with care and in correct sequence.
- dispose/clean protective gear, equipment, residual chemicals safely and thoroughly
- wash hands- exposed skin thoroughly using warm soapy water

Storing Tools

- tools should be stored/ transported in such a way that they can't cause harm to any person/thing

Using Tools

- only use equipment which you can handle safely without causing harm to any person/unintentional thing
- wear protective clothing appropriate to the tool
- ensure you have sufficient space and can position yourself to operate the tool safely

Access

Geography is such that access can be difficult and is changing.

- only work in areas where you feel that you won't harm yourself
- If possible, work in pairs (at least) ensure that you have at least 1 cell phone and access to a first aid kit.

Disposal

- ensure that anything toxic is disposed of thoughtfully
- try not to create tripping or walking hazards

Reporting

Report any hazards, near misses, accidents or gaps in this information to the person responsible for weed control on the MERRA committee to keep information accurate and volunteers as safe as possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mein', is positioned above the typed name.

Signed by: Barry Mein, MERRA Chairperson

Date: 24 January 2026