

## Health and safety of volunteers working on farms post-flood

The following pamphlet provides information for volunteers, organisers of volunteers, and farmers as part of the flood response and recovery.

**Our suggestion is to use the details in this pamphlet as follows:**

- **Overview of the responsibilities** – information for volunteers, organisers of volunteers and farm owners in regards to health and safety.

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- **Checklist for organisers of volunteers** – this can be used for organisers of volunteers who will use this checklist to brief volunteers over the phone to check a volunteer's suitability for the role by informing of the specific health, safety and other issues around working in post-flood conditions.

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- **Registration form for volunteers** – organisers of volunteers can send this form electronically to volunteers or provide in a hard copy format for volunteers to complete and send back, signed (either physically or confirmed via email) to confirm they understand the specific health and safety and other issues around working in post-flood conditions.

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- **Checklist for farmers briefing volunteers** – farm owners can use this on-farm when they are briefing volunteers on their arrival.

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- **Volunteer Register** – farm owners can use this on-farm for volunteers to fill out their information and to record a time in/out.

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- **Working in a post-flood area** – what farmers and volunteers must be aware of when working in a post-flood area.

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- **Emergency Response Card** – a resource for farmers to have on hand in the event of another emergency.



# Health and safety of volunteers working on farms post-flood



- Want volunteer help on your farm?
- Want to volunteer to help a farmer?
- Call 0800 FARMING (327 646) and we will T you up!

**This pamphlet provides information for volunteers, organisers of volunteers, and farmers as part of the flood response and recovery.**

## What's happening?

Over the coming days and weeks, organisations like Federated Farmers, Beef + Lamb New Zealand, DairyNZ and Rural Support Trusts (the organisers) will be identifying, enlisting and despatching volunteers to farms in the areas affected by the floods. In most cases these volunteers will be members of the public who are giving their time to help people in need and are not people who are regularly engaged by the organisers. These are uncertain times. If you need support please contact the Rural Support Trust on 0800 787 254.

## What does the law say?

- Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 (HSWA) all businesses have the primary duty of care, as far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure the health and safety of workers and others who are working for or influenced by the business.
- A business must take steps to protect its workers and others it interacts with. This includes considering the risks that the business activity creates and the level of influence and control the business has over controlling those risks.
- This responsibility also extends to others, **including volunteers**, who may be at risk from the work being done.

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# Understanding your responsibilities

## Volunteers

### Volunteers in the workplace must:

- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others.
- Cooperate with any reasonable health and safety instructions given by the organiser or farm owner and/or person(s) directing their work.
- Report any health and safety risks and events to the farmer and/or person(s) directing their work.

**Volunteers can stop working, or leave a property at any time they feel unsafe in the work they are asked to do.**

### Organisers of volunteers

The organisers and the farm owners have a shared responsibility for the health and safety of any volunteers sent to farms as part of the flood response. So they need to talk to each other about the health and safety risks that the volunteers might come across when working on a property.

#### What this means in practice is:

- Ensuring volunteers are capable of conducting the tasks they are setting out to do, and providing training or re-allocating them if they are not.
- Providing volunteers with a health and safety induction to ensure they are aware of both the general health and safety risks and the risks specific to the sites they are being sent to.
- Ensuring volunteers know what to do in an emergency.

Note: This information was prepared in line with WorkSafe guidance. For full information see [saferfarms.org.nz](http://saferfarms.org.nz)

- Coordinating with farm owners to make sure that between you, you have identified and have worked out how to manage those risks the volunteer wouldn't expect.
- Ensuring there is good tracking of where people are, by both the organisation and the farmer, especially where people are working alone.
- Ensuring volunteers have the appropriate gear (e.g. clothing, footwear, protective equipment)

## Farm owners

### Farm owners who receive volunteers should:

- Keep a register of volunteers so they know who is on the farm (see "Volunteer Register on page 5).
- Coordinate with the organiser to identify the health and safety risks to volunteers at the workplace and communicate these to volunteers. An induction is good practice, including emergency management procedures.
- Coordinate with organisers to ensure all relevant risks to volunteers on-site are known and managed. This means agreeing with the organiser, at a practical level, about which risks need to be managed and who is responsible for managing those risks.
- Manage accidents and emergencies.
- Ask for support if you need it (see the HELP numbers on this pamphlet).

**Either the organiser or the farmer can deem any given volunteers unsuitable on the basis of risk to health and safety and decline the volunteers' help.**

# Checklist for organisers of volunteers

The organiser of volunteers undertakes to check a volunteer's suitability for the role by informing them of the specific health and safety and other issues around working in post-flood conditions.

Items to cover	Tick to confirm
Aware that there will be risks associated with flooding and debris (risks are noted on page 6 of this pamphlet).	
Provide information on working in post-flooding conditions.	
Describe the type of work that needs to be done, and skill level and fitness required.	
Note formal qualifications and /or experience including first aid qualifications.	
Inform volunteers of the general health and safety risks of the work and workplaces, plus site specific risks if known.	
Advise that the farmer will provide details of what to do in an emergency.	
Appropriate clothing and footwear.	
Provision of food and drink.	
Transport.	
Organisers of volunteers need to ensure they have a sign in/sign out process for volunteers.	
Volunteers are made aware that this is a sensitive situation and no imagery is to be taken.	
Is the volunteer willing and able for the work involved?	

# Registration form for volunteers

Personal details of the volunteer	
Name	
Address	
Contact phone number	
Emergency contact	
Any health issues?	

Items to check	Tick to confirm
Aware that there will be risks associated with post-flood conditions (risks are noted on page 6 of this pamphlet).	
Aware that working in post-flood conditions on farm is a physical role and a good level of fitness is required.	
Know what work I will be doing and what is expected of me.	
Have received and understand the information on working in post-flood conditions.	
Have appropriate clothing.	
Have appropriate footwear.	
Have enough food and drink for 24 hours.	
Aware this is a sensitive situation and no imagery is to be taken.	
Aware that I must communicate my departure and arrival to and from the farm to the organiser.	

***Any volunteer can decline to work on the farm if they are unhappy with any of the farm conditions.***

All volunteers shall follow the 4 golden safety rules **S-T-O-P**

1. **S**afety First
2. **T**hink before you act
3. **O**bserve & Obey
4. **P**ermission to stop any unsafe practice

Signed by the volunteer having read and checked off the above (accepted by email or physically).

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Date: .....

# Checklist for farmers briefing volunteers

## The farmer needs to make sure they communicate with the volunteer/s the following:

- Made clear where they will be going/working.

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- Advised them of anything they wouldn't expect that would be a risk to them.

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- Advised of any other activity on farm that could pose a risk to them.

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- Determined what they are going to be doing, what risks that poses to others and how we are going to manage and communicate those risks.

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- Advised of farm rules (e.g. speed limits, alcohol) and my expectations of their behaviour on farm.

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- Ensure that the volunteers understand what to do in an emergency.

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- Determined appropriate time in/time out reporting (noted on the "Volunteer Register").

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- Noted volunteer contact details on the "Volunteer Register".

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- Ensure that the volunteer is trained, competent and aware of the risks for the work tasks they have been asked to perform, e.g. volunteers should not be riding quad bikes unless they are trained and competent.

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- I have provided the volunteer with any additional instructions to complete the task safely.

## If necessary the farmer will:

- Print and mark-up farm map.

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- Get volunteer/s to call in at house before starting.

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- Take them over any difficult area/s.

## Emergency management

The aim of emergency management procedures is to minimise the impact of emergency events with a focus on protecting life. The Emergency Response card on pages 7 and 8 provides a systematic process that can be applied in the event of an emergency. This is important because shock or stress can often result in confusion and disorientation.



# Working in a post-flood area

## When working in recently flooded areas, farmers and volunteers must be aware of and consider the following:

- a. Road and ground conditions may be slippery due to mud and silt. Caution is to be applied at all times. When driving and in doubt of the conditions, walk the ground first.
- b. Residual flooding may exist in some places. Caution is to be taken when crossing static bodies of water. Do not attempt to cross moving flood waters.
- c. Electrical and gas equipment may be unsafe due to water damage. If electrical or gas equipment has been submerged it must be checked by a competent person before being used. Never handle a downed power line and always treat as live.
- d. Buildings and structures may be damaged by fast moving water. Check the structures are still sound before moving across them or working within them. If in doubt, stay away from them.
- e. Never use petrol or diesel powered machinery indoors or in confined spaces due to risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- f. Exercise caution around hay, grain, silage and/or other agriculture materials that have got wet. Mould and fermentation can generate toxic gases, particularly in confined spaces. If exposure is necessary, respiratory equipment is to be used. Also be aware that mould in wet hay can cause spontaneous combustion.
- g. All flood waters should be assumed to be contaminated. Only drink from water sources that are known to be safe or use bottled water.
- h. When cleaning up spilled or damaged hazardous substances, follow the instructions on the products Safety Data Sheet (SDS). When in doubt, stop and seek professional help from FENZ (Fire and Emergency NZ).
- i. Wash hands thoroughly before eating and drinking.

## Help



Emergency Services 111

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Federated Farmers helpline 0800 327 646

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Rural Support Trust 0800 787 254

# Event emergency response card

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURE

**Assess** the situation

**Prevent** the situation from worsening

**Decide** on a plan of action

**Allocate** tasks

**Execute** the plan

## EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

Emergency Services

Poisons Centre

Medic Alert

PCBU/Farm Manager

B+LNZ National  
Extension Manager

## EVENT LOCATION INFORMATION

At address/rapidnNumber  on  Street/Road

GPS Location

## POST EMERGENCY ACTIONS

Notify the PCBU/Farm Manager and B+LNZ National Extension Manager of the emergency

Do not interfere with scene once situation is dealt with

Report emergency to Worksafe on 0800 030 040 if the emergency involved:

- Death or unconsciousness
- Injury or illness requiring immediate medical treatment
- Exposure to a substance that requires medical treatment within 48 hours
- A person(s) health and safety being seriously threatened or endangered as a result of a work situation

Report any emergency to the PCBU/Farm Manager and B+LNZ National Extension Manager

# Cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR)

- Danger:** Check for the safety of yourself, the patient and bystanders
- Response:** Check for response, tap the patient, gently shake and shout
- Send for help:** Call for Emergency services
- Airway:** Open the patient’s airway, tilt their head back
- Breathing:** If the patient is not breathing normally then start CPR
- CPR:** Start CPR—30 chest compressions; two breaths
- Defibrillation:** Attach AED (Defib) if available. Continue 30:2 CPR cycles

**CALL**  
Dial 111

**PUMP**  
Position hands in the centre of the chest

*Firmly push down five centimetres on the chest 30 times*

**BLOW**  
Tilt chin  
Lift head  
Check breathing

*Give two breaths. Continue with 30 pumps and two breaths until help arrives*

## Emergency first aid

### CONTROLLING BLEEDING

1. Apply direct pressure to the wound
2. Raise the limb
3. Apply a pad and firm bandage

Remember:

- Always check circulation below the bandage
- If there is tingling, numbness or blueness, loosen the bandage

### POISONING

Seek medical advice, call the poison centre or an ambulance (dial 111)

Remember:

- Do not make a person vomit without advice from a medical professional
- Do not give fluids without advice from a medical professional

### BURNS

1. Cool the burnt area with cool water for 10-15 minutes
2. If necessary, cover the burn with a clean dressing or plastic wrap before taking the person to medical aid

Remember:

- Do not burst blisters
- Do not remove clothing that is stuck
- Do not apply creams

### BREATHING DIFFICULTIES

1. If a person is breathing but unconscious, turn them onto their side
2. Clear their airway from obstructions, such as their tongue or vomit
3. Seek medical help, if necessary