
General Safety Guidelines

There is always the potential for injury and liability issues associated with Day of Caring, just as there is any time a volunteer offers his or her services. To avoid the potential hazards that can occur during any event of this nature, please review the safety guidelines to help ensure that Day of Caring is a rewarding and safe experience.

Actions to Think About If an Accident Happens

- Stay calm. Have all of the other volunteers stop working if there is any reason to believe that the work is unsafe, or if the volunteers simply cannot focus sufficiently on the project's task. Be sensitive to the mood and needs of the volunteers.
- Designate someone else to oversee the other volunteers so that you can focus on the injured volunteer.
- Express concern for the injured person and aid them in obtaining necessary treatment.
- Try to determine the seriousness of the accident. If the person has a serious injury call 911 immediately. Then call an emergency contact for the injured person **and** United Way of Yellowstone County Day of Caring emergency contact 406-670-5208.
- **Do not admit liability.** Try not to say anything about why you think the accident occurred or who may be at fault.
- Complete your agency's accident report form.
- Ensure that all appropriate agency representatives are aware of the injury.

Simple Safety Suggestions

To help avoid accidents, the chart below suggests safety plans that each Agency/Organization representative and Volunteer Team Leader should be aware of and consider prior to Day of Caring.

| Task | Potential Hazards | Safety Plan |
|--|--|--|
| Landscaping | Foot (Cuts, Abrasions) | Boots, Closed Shoes |
| | Hands (Cuts, Abrasions) | Work Gloves |
| | Legs (Cuts, Abrasions) | Long Pants |
| | Sunburn | Wear Sunscreen |
| | Bug Bites | Bring Bug Spray |
| Clearing Trails | * Chain Saw Use | Hard-toed Boots |
| | | Ear Plugs or Muffs |
| | | Gloves, Long Sleeves |
| | | Safety Glasses, Goggles |
| Painting (Interior or Exterior) | Eyes | Safety Glasses |
| | Hands | Gloves (Latex or Work) |
| | Ladder Use (Use scaffolding when necessary) | Waist never above top of ladder Never reach past arm length |
| | | |
| Carpentry/Renovation | Eyes | Safety Glasses, Goggles |
| | Foot | Hard-toed boots |
| | Hands | Gloves |
| | Falls | Approved Ladders or Scaffolding |
| | *Power Tools | All guards in Place Extension cords with GFCI's |

*** Volunteers should not operate power tools unless they are trained to do so.**

Risk Assessment Checklist

The following risk assessment checklist will help ensure that your Day of Caring project, staff, and volunteers will be as safe as possible. The checklist should be completed for each project and/or project site.

Overall Safety

- Prior to any work being done, confirm with Volunteer Team Leader that emergency contacts for every volunteer are on site.
- Adequate liquids are available to volunteers to ensure proper hydration to eliminate heat stress exposure.
- Adequate breaks are included in the project, especially in very warm conditions.
- A fully stocked first-aid kit is available and readily accessible at all project sites and volunteers and agency personnel know the location of it.
- A list of emergency numbers is available and readily accessible at each work site.
- A working phone is available at each work site.
- Volunteers will work in groups and not alone.
- Power tools/equipment will be checked for safety by a qualified tradesperson prior to use by volunteers.
- Volunteers will not operate power tools or equipment without prior training and authorization.
- Volunteers will be instructed to inform agency personnel with respect to personal health issues as: allergies to plants, insect bites, respiratory sensitivity, sensitivity to chemical vapors and other personal health issues prior to beginning project.
- Personal protective equipment is available for each task, as applicable. (Safety glasses, hearing protection, gloves, hard hats, respirators, etc.)
- Agency personnel will ensure that volunteers are properly dressed for the task prior to the start of activities.
- Training will be planned and presented to all volunteers prior to the start of work that clearly explains tasks, safety measures, and emergency procedures.

Safety Consideration for Specific Projects

Clean-Up Projects (trash and waste removal, general housekeeping):

- Volunteers will be encouraged to use gloves; watch for sharp items, biohazards, puncture hazards, etc.
- Volunteers will be supervised to ensure safe operation of power equipment.
- Only experienced volunteers will operate power equipment.
- Personal safety equipment will be available for use by all volunteers.
- Proper gloves will be used.
- Lightning safety will be practiced in the event of thunderstorms.

Painting and Preparation:

- Potential hazard exposure determined by reading safety data and warning labels on all paints, solvents and thinners.
- Water-based paints used wherever possible.
- Dust masks and respirators are available and will be used by volunteers involved in sanding, scraping or in areas of poor ventilation.
- Ladder and scaffolding safety will be practiced.
- Ensure safe use of any electrical painting equipment.

Construction:

- Ground fault protection used for tools outside or in bathrooms or other wet areas.
- Safety glasses and hearing protection will be available and used.
- Volunteers will wear proper footwear (no athletic shoes).

Splitting Firewood:

- Safety glasses will be made available and used.
- Only qualified, experienced operators will use hydraulic/electric equipment.

Cleaning Animal Pens:

- Advise volunteers to use caution to avoid slipping on animal waste, holes or other uneven surfaces.
- Dust masks/respirators will be used when adding or removing bedding material.
- Proper personal hygiene will be stressed.
- Volunteers will be alerted to animal habits and behaviors.
- Behaviorally challenged animals that could become aggressive will be kept away from volunteers.
- Smoking will be prohibited.
- Caution will be stressed to volunteers working with or around sharp pointed tools such as pitchforks and rakes.

Child Care:

- Agency representatives will be present during all interactions between volunteers and children to guard against any behaviors that could endanger the child or be potentially harmful to the volunteer.