

Health and safety plan for workers carrying out possum trapping

This plan has been developed to help protect against hazards associated with possum trapping carried out on residential and rural properties. Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 the Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Group (OPBG) will make every effort to enable their workers (employees, volunteers, contractors) members of the public and people in the vicinity to return home safely each day. As a worker, you are responsible for taking all practicable steps to ensure your own safety and that of others associated with your work, such as other workers, property owners, and homeowners and their families.

Hazards and their management

Three main categories of hazard are considered in this safety plan:

1. Environment: may include the terrain, water bodies (e.g. streams), weather conditions, fire and vegetation.
2. Resources and equipment: may include the use of traps.
3. People: may include failure to follow instructions, undisclosed or unrecognized medical conditions, wearing clothing that is inadequate for the conditions, and inadequate fitness or agility for the task being performed. Account also needs to be taken of risks to residents and pets on a property.

The attached Hazard Identification Form lists the hazards that have been identified by OPBG in each of these categories and the actions that should be taken to eliminate or minimise each hazard. In most cases the actions listed are intended to minimise the hazard involved.

Safety briefing

Before starting work, you will be given a safety briefing by the team leader (Trustee, Manager, Volunteer Coordinator or other designated person). The briefing will identify the significant hazards and the control measures intended to eliminate or minimize them. In all cases you are expected to follow the reasonable directions of the team leader.

If you will be working alone, you will be expected to act as the team leader by identifying the significant hazards and the control measures you will take to eliminate or minimize them.

If a volunteer, you are required to complete a Personal Details Form before undertaking any work for OPBG. In this form, you acknowledge that you have received training for the activity that you are volunteering for.

In the event of an incident

- Stay calm, think things through before acting
- Call out, ask for assistance from residents or neighbours
- Assess the situation, ensure the scene is safe for you and others, check for potential hazards
- Reassure the injured person, administer first aid
- Call for medical assistance

Other persons assisting you

You are obliged to brief anyone accompanying you on the Health and Safety Plan for this work; for example, advice on suitable clothing and footwear, identification of the hazards and actions that should be taken to reduce the risks associated with each hazard.

Incident/near-miss reporting

Report all incidents involving injury and near-miss incidents to the team leader coordinating your work. The information you report will assist the OPBG in identifying a safety problem and how it might be addressed.

Feedback on this safety plan

Any comments you have on this plan, including changes to suggested control measures or the identification of additional hazards, will be welcomed and will help OPBG to improve its safety planning. Please provide feedback to the team leader coordinating your work or any of the following safety contacts.

Contact

Team leader	
Name	Paula Cross, Operations Manager
Phone	021 242 4996
Email	operations@opbg.nz
Community coordinators	
Name	Marcia Dale, Guardians
Phone	021 0237 5970
Name	Maggie Evans, Peninsula
Phone	021 242 4944
Trustees, Health and safety	
Name	David Chalmers, Trustee
Phone	027 248 1970
Name	Marita Eisenlohr, Trustee (Secretary)
Phone	021 1922 877
Duty Phone – 7 days	021 221 6106

Adopted by the Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Trust Board: 17/8/16

Amendments approved by the Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Trust Board: 8/11/2017

Amendments approved by the Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Trust Board: 19/11/2018

Annual review approved by the Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Trust Board: 17/2/2020

Amendments approved by the Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Trust Board: 20/4/2020

Amendments approved by the Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Trust Board: 19/7/21

Revision approved by the Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Trust Board: 13/2/23

Amendments approved by the Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Trust Board:

OPBG Hazard Identification Form			Activity: Possum trapping
Responsibility: Operations Manager			Review period: Annually
Hazard	Significant Y/N	Action E/M	Actions
Environment			
Steep terrain	Y	E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid if possible. Always use the three points of contact rule: i.e. three limbs on stable ground (e.g. with both feet on ground, use vegetation or other secure objects to hold onto).
Slippery, uneven surfaces	Y	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear suitable footwear. Consider using walking poles. Watch out for vines, branches, rabbit holes, rocks and other potential trip hazards on track surface. Carry first aid kit available.
Elevated trap sites (e.g. tree branch)	Y	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit to the height at which trap can be operated without straining or risking a fall.
Hazardous weather	N	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check forecast before commencing activity; plan activity according to forecast. Wear suitable clothing (i.e. allow for extreme heat, cold, wind, rain, etc.). Carry water to prevent dehydration. If weather conditions deteriorate unexpectedly, do not hesitate to change plans and return early from the field.
Animals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dogs Livestock Wasps/Bees 	Y	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid areas where aggressive dogs are known to reside. The following website has good information to prepare yourself in case you find yourself in a threatening situation with a dog http://www.dogsafety.govt.nz/Grownups-Dealing-with-Dogs-Reading-Dog-Behaviour. Be aware of livestock. Be aware of and avoid existing beehives. Note wasp presence and avoid nests.
Pets on property			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide owners with guidelines on the selection of baits, delayed activation of traps (e.g. night setting). Do neighbours have pets? If so, advise them of trapping activities.
Tree-branch/tree fall	Y	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid working in strong winds. Check Peninsula weather forecast (e.g. www.windy.com, www.windfinder.com).
Plants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poisonous Thorny Spiky Stinging plants 	N	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn to recognise plants that can cause harm (e.g. giant tree nettle, stinging nettle, hawthorn). Avoid or handle with care; cut back with loppers or other long handled equipment if possible. Wear relevant protective clothing (e.g. gloves, sting resistant trousers, protective glasses).

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry water (e.g. drinking water) and soap for washing off stinging nettle hairs, etc. • Consider carrying antihistamines for itching and swelling; hydrocortisone cream for inflammation. • Learn to use inner bark of Tree Nettle to relieve pain. • For further information on stinging nettle symptoms and treatment go to: http://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/conditions-and-treatments/accidents-and-injuries/bites-and-stings/stinging-nettles
Traffic	N	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid areas where there is heavy/rush hour traffic. • Plan activity during quiet traffic periods. • Wear high-visibility vest/clothing.
Equipment			
Kill traps			
Setting traps	Y	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to trap instruction sheets for safety instructions. • Follow manufacturer's instructions. • Use setting tools when available. • Ensure all persons using traps have received adequate training.
Cutting bait (e.g. apples)	N	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare bait at home (or Hub) on stable surface or wear leather gloves.
Removal of possum carcass	Y	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear gloves; dispose of or wash after use. • Provide plastic bags for disposing of carcasses.
Live traps			
Cutting bait (e.g. apples)	N	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare bait at home (or Hub) on stable surface or wear gloves.
Carrying firearms	Y	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry unloaded firearm in cab of vehicle or preferably in a rack or locked container or canopy while in transit.
Using firearms	Y	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All operators must be familiar with the OPBG Health and safety plan for workers undertaking possum shooting and the OPBG Night shooting SOP. • All operators should have basic first aid training. • Permission should be gained from property owners for the use of firearms and information sought on hazards in the area in which they may be used.
Removal of possum carcass	Y	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wear gloves; dispose of or wash after use. • Provide plastic bags for disposing of carcasses.
People			
Medical conditions	Y	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete personal details form and give to OPBG coordinator. • Carry identification card listing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name • Address • Phone number • Medical conditions including medicines, allergies etc.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency contact person details • Have an emergency strategy. • Be honest with yourself and others if a task looks too difficult. • Important Contact Numbers (to be carried on person): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency - 111 • Healthline Health Advice - 0800 611 116 • Poison Control Centre – 0800 764 766 • AED Locations - https://aedlocations.co.nz
Working alone	Y	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise responsible person of intentions (e.g. location, route, completion time and who to contact if you fail to return) before setting out. • Stick to intentions. • Advise responsible person when you return. • Wear high-visibility clothing. • Carry an effective means of communication for the area in which the activity is being undertaken (e.g. mobile phone, PLB or VHF radio). • Carry personal first-aid kit including antihistamine.
Lack of fitness/agility	Y	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work within personal limits.
Property owner recruitment	Y	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain procedures for siting, setting and clearing traps, and disposal of carcasses. • Explain risks (e.g. to children, pets, etc.). • Provide written information about traps (i.e. user instruction sheets). • Obtain signed agreement (Land Owner Consent Form) on planned activities (i.e. position of traps, where they can be and cannot be placed according to property owner, when they can be set, etc.).
Property owner operation of traps	Y	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide manufacturer's instructions • Provide training. • Provide setting tools when available. • Provide plastic bags for disposing of carcasses.
Young children on property	Y	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site traps above 1.5 metres or set trap at night and unset in the morning (if required)).
Pets on property	Y	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidelines on selection of baits; delayed activation of traps.
Difficult / Aggressive People	N	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure contact is made with residents prior to undertaking activity. • If confronted, do not argue, and report incident to Operations Manager or Volunteer Coordinator. • Make note of the date of incident / record name, and address of difficult resident.
Covid19 – risk of spread through contact with people or objects	Y	M	<p>Follow current government guidelines for each Alert Level (https://covid19.govt.nz)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To minimise the risk of spreading COVID-19 • To protect at risk people (those with underlying medical conditions or above the age of 70)

		<p>General safety measures to control the spread of COVID-19 at all levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay at home if sick • Regularly disinfect surfaces • Cough/sneeze into elbow • Wash and dry hands regularly • Do not touch your face • Maintain physical distancing of at least 1m while working • Maintain your bubble with people you are not normally in contact with, i.e. 2m distancing • Disinfect shared tools and equipment* at the start and end of each day and between users • Travel to the work location in your bubble or alone • Record visits and contacts during tasks through the GHS app or work diary <p><i>* do not disinfect traps or bait stations handle with gloves.</i></p>
<p>Key: E=Eliminate M=Minimise</p>		

* All workers have the right to remove themselves from any situations that they consider unsafe.

Otago Peninsula Biodiversity Group 'Worker Trapping' Health and Safety Plan

Training Record - to be signed and returned to your team leader/OPBG officer co-ordinating your work.

I _____ have read and understand the Worker Trapping health and safety plan provided by OPBG and confirm that I have been given appropriate training for my work.

Please sign below:

Signature	Date
-----------	------

Trained by:

Signature	Date
-----------	------