



Shoreline Cleanups Work Day Safety Briefing

During the Shoreline Cleanup Work Day, GBF wants you to uphold the utmost priority of safety for participants. The following document outlines some of the Safe Operating Procedures (SOP) that pertains to the type of work being completed for this project.

Working near Water

Background

The following hazards may occur when working around water:

- Drowning
- Lightning strike

Personal Protective Equipment (suggested)

- Before starting shift, apply sunscreen and insect repellent. Reapply as needed.
- Wear sun hat or cap
- Rubber boots, running shoes or closed toed sandals.

Safe Operating Procedure

Before you start make sure the following safety equipment is in the immediate work area:

- Emergency Phone with emergency number posting
- (PFD's) Personal Flotation Devices (if applicable)
- First Aid Kit
- Water for hydration

Always work in groups or pairs. Always tell a site coordinator or GBF Lead where you are going in case of an emergency.

Warnings:

- Be aware of soft shoulders on the edges of the water, as slipping or falling into the water may occur.
- Be aware of hazards under the water such as sharp metal, mussel shells, etc.
- Watch your footing on slippery rocks and never walk on loose terrain.
- Stay a safe distance, when you can, from the water's edge.



- Do not work around water during a thunderstorm and **do not go in water up to 1 hour after last lightening flash.**
- Frequently check weather forecasts and know when to call off a clean up.
- Be wary of wave conditions and water temperature and watch for signs of hypothermia which include shivering, slurred speech or mumbling, slow and shallow breathing, and drowsiness or very low energy.

Trash Handling Safety

Background

The following hazards may occur when picking up trash:

- Encountering sharp objects such as syringes
- Heavy items that cause strain
- Hazardous Waste
- Animals

Personal Protective Equipment (suggested)

- Gloves
- Trash picker

Safe Operating Procedure: Syringes

All sharp and dangerous items found on the shoreline, including syringes and broken glass, are to be placed in a sharps container. If no one in your cleanup group is comfortable collecting syringes, clearly mark the location of syringes and contact local authorities for collection.

ONLY adults should handle collection of syringes. Ensure children know to reach out to an adult to handle these items.

Never handle these items with your bare hands. Always pick up syringes with the needle pointing down and away from your body, and place needle end first, in a rigid container.

Needle punctures must be treated immediately. If a participant is pricked, take them to the nearest hospital, as medical treatment may be necessary.

Safe Operating Procedure: Heavy items that may cause strain

Do not remove large items that are too heavy for you to carry. Gather a team and work together to remove the item if appropriate.

Do not use your back when lifting heavy items. Always bend at the knees.



Safe Operating Procedure: Hazardous Waste

If you encounter any waste you think may be hazardous, mark the area with flagging tape and contact local authorities immediately.

Be cautious when dealing with chemical containers or five-gallon drums as their contents may be dangerous

Safe Operating Procedure: Animals

Never approach any animal, dead or alive.

If you encounter a live entangled animal, notify appropriate authorities (Human Society, SPCA, Conservation Authority, Parks Board, etc.). DO NOT attempt to disentangle an animal yourself.

Working in Sun/Heat

Background

The following hazards and corresponding symptoms may occur when working in hot conditions:

- Sunburn
 - Pink or red shade to the skin, skin feels warm or hot to the touch, tender or itching skin
- Heat Rash
 - Red bumps on the skin, prickly or itchy feeling to the skin, blisters and inflammation
- Heat Cramps/Fainting
 - Profuse sweating, involuntary spasms of muscles
- Heat Exhaustion
 - Cool, moist skin with goose bumps, heavy sweating, faintness, dizziness, weak and rapid pulse, muscle cramps
- Heat Stroke
 - Throbbing headache, dizziness and light-headed, lack of sweating despite heat, red, hot and dry skin, nausea and vomiting

Mitigation Strategies/Safe Operating Procedure

- Wear appropriate clothing- ie: wear light, loose clothing and a hat
- Hydrate! Keep water or electrolyte drinks readily accessible. Suggested intake of at least 1 cup every 20-30 minutes or as necessary.
- Take regular breaks- avoid overexertion; take breaks in shaded or cool areas
- Job Rotation- rotate difficult work tasks between two or more volunteers when possible



Other safety concerns:

Be aware of biting insects such as mosquitoes, blackflies and ticks. Apply bug repellent as needed and always check yourself for ticks after working outside.

Always wear safety gloves and use trash pickers when possible.