

For more information about this topic, call the Risk Management Division:

- 1-801-240-4049
 - 1-800-453-3860, ext. 2-4049 (toll free in the United States and Canada)
-

This fact sheet addresses the general conditions and the health and safety guidelines that volunteers should understand before they participate in voluntary cleanup efforts. Before cleanup begins, leaders should discuss these items with volunteers and, if possible, give a copy of this document to each volunteer. Volunteers should read this document before filling in the Record of Donated Labor Hours on the third page.

General Conditions

- Volunteers serve at their own risk. Youth under age 18 should only participate when accompanied by a parent or when parental permission has been given.
- The focus for Church volunteers is to assist in cleanup, not reconstruction. Church volunteers should not work on condemned buildings.
- Volunteer work is to be conducted with the consent and oversight of the homeowner.
- Chain saws are to be used only by adults with experience operating them. They are not to be used to cut large trees or tree trunks.
- Training should be given on incident and injury prevention. Injury-related incidents should be reported promptly to ecclesiastical leaders. Primary insurance coverage is the volunteer's own health insurance.

Health and Safety Guidelines

- Wear appropriate clothing. Also, when appropriate, wear hard hats, hard-soled, high-topped shoes, work gloves, and safety glasses, and use hearing protection. Use repellent in mosquito-infested areas. Use sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30. Dust masks are recommended when working in high dust, ashes, or in smoky conditions.
- Avoid becoming overheated or dehydrated. Drink lots of water (but beware of contaminated water), and rest when needed. Seek medical attention immediately if you have symptoms of heat exhaustion.
- Avoid contact with hazardous chemicals, fallen power lines, stray or wild animals, and rodents and reptiles.
- In enclosed areas, avoid using equipment that produces carbon monoxide gas. This may include charcoal grills, camp stoves, or equipment powered by internal combustion engines, such as generators. Carbon monoxide gas is colorless and odorless, making it difficult to detect, and in an enclosed space it can be deadly.

- Beware of unstable structures, uneven surfaces, and broken glass, nails, and other protruding sharp objects. Tetanus and other needed immunizations should be current.
- Beware of working high off the ground. Tie off to a secure object if possible.
- Always lift with your legs, with knees bent to minimize back strain. Work with a partner, and know your limits. Volunteers with pre-existing health conditions, in particular, should perform only those tasks that are within their limitations.
- Use caution when working with mold. Wear a properly fitting N-95 respirator or dust mask (available at building supply stores) and rubber gloves. Do not attempt to clean up areas of mold that exceed ten square feet. After working with mold, wash using soap or hand sanitizer. Wash hands frequently, and change into clean clothes after working with mold or after participating in any disaster cleanup duties.
- Work teams should always have with them a list of emergency contact numbers, the address or GPS location of where they are working, clean drinking water, soap or hand sanitizer, and a basic first aid kit.
- Treat wounds with soap, clean water, and if available, an antibiotic ointment. Puncture wounds and animal and snake bites require rapid, specialized medical attention.
- Be aware of motorized traffic in the area at all times. When walking or working in areas where motor vehicles are passing or where heavy equipment is being used, walk facing oncoming traffic.
- Go to <http://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/flood-tornado-recovery.html> for further information on health and safety precautions.

