



Community Safety Advice

Weeding

How to stay safe when weeding



Disclaimer

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Definitions

Hazard: A hazard is a source or a situation with the potential for harm in terms of human injury or ill-health, damage to property, damage to the environment, or a combination of these.

Risk: A risk is the chance of something happening that will have a negative effect.

PPE: PPE refers to anything used or worn to minimise risk to workers' health and safety. This may include, but is not limited to: gloves, glasses, ear plugs, etc.

Should you be conducting these activities?

Before performing any weeding activities, research if you need a permit or written/verbal approval to do so. In public areas, weeding should only be carried out if you are a registered volunteer and have received permission from the relevant land manager. Use chemicals on your own property at your own risk.

Consider joining a local environment group to participate under their approvals and insurance. For local groups on the Bellarine, head here:

www.environmentbellarine.org.au/cb_pages/groups_and_organisations.php



Emergency Contacts

Police, ambulance, fire – 000
Poisons Information Centre – 13 11 26

General tips

Weeding is a great way to help our local flora by reducing competition for space, light and resources. However, there are always safety concerns when you are entering a natural area. Below are some general tips to ensure your ongoing safety, and the following pages describe some of the more common hazards and how you can act to avoid them.

This list is not exhaustive and acts as a guide only. You are liable for any injury, damage or loss caused as a result of any weeding or related activities.

- Respect all wildlife and reduce disturbance as much as possible
- Abide by all laws regulations that relate to you or the area that you are visiting, even if on your own property
- Bring a friend or family member with you or let somebody know where you will be and for how long
- Make sure you have a fully charged phone in the event of an emergency
- Pack food, water and/or medicine if you intend to be outdoors for multiple hours
- Make sure that you correctly use the appropriate tool
- Monitor the weather forecast before and during your activity and consider rescheduling if extreme (high heat, cold, storm, etc). Monitor weather here: <http://www.bom.gov.au/>



How you can avoid general hazards

Please note: This list is not comprehensive and Bellarine Catchment Network are not liable for any injury, damage or loss as a result of the participant encountering any of these hazards or any other hazards not listed whilst undertaking the described activities.

SLIPS, TRIPS & FALLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid working on a sharp incline or decline;• Identify and avoid holes such as rabbit holes;• Identify and avoid loose, uneven ground or surfaces;• Identify and avoid trip hazards such as branches; and• Consider wearing PPE (gloves, enclosed shoes, hat and protective glasses).
SNAKE BITE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and avoid high risk areas – tall grass, etc;• Avoid working in a circle;• Learn how to treat a snake bite in an emergency;• Avoid approaching snakes and advise other people around you if one is seen; and• Consider wearing PPE (gloves, enclosed shoes, hat, protective glasses).
INSECT BITES & STINGS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid putting hands in dark areas, near rubbish or in holes;• Identify and avoid ant nests, bee's nests or other;• Advise others in vicinity; and• Consider wearing PPE (gloves, enclosed shoes, hat, protective glasses).
COLD WEATHER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wear warm clothing and have extra layers available;• Have warm drinks frequently;• Avoid long periods in exposed weather or when wet, windy and cold;• Consider postponing activities if unfavourable.
HOT WEATHER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wear light clothing and a broad brimmed hat;• Apply sunscreen at regular intervals;• Drink cool water regularly;• Avoid working long periods in exposed sun, wind etc; and• Consider postponing activities if unfavourable.

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SHARP OBJECTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wear glasses and hard hat if working in dangerous areas;• Be alert of branches and spikes at head and eye level;• Wear full PPE (gloves, enclosed shoes, hat, protective glasses).
REPETITIVE STRAIN	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rotate tasks and avoid doing one activity for more than 1 hour;• Conduct warm up stretches and movement activity to reduce chance of strain injury;• Have straight back and bent knees when performing tasks that require lifting and lowering;• Maintain regular rest breaks, rotate tasks alleviate strain to muscle groups.
TRAFFIC (ROAD AND FOOT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Considering wearing high visibility clothing;• Avoid working unnecessarily close near roads or paths;• Make sure that you have the proper approvals to work in a public space.

