

# SAFETY TALK

## Rodents, Snakes, Insects and Flying Insects

### Insects, Spiders and Ticks

- To protect yourself from biting and stinging insects, wear long pants, socks, and long-sleeved shirts.
- Use insect repellents that contain DEET or Picaridin.
- Treat bites and stings with over-the-counter products that relieve pain and prevent infection.
- Avoid fire ants; their bites are painful and cause blisters.
- Severe reactions to fire ant bites (chest pain, nausea, sweating, loss of breath, serious swelling or slurred speech) require immediate medical treatment.



### Rodents and Wild or Stray Animals

- Dead and live animals can spread diseases such as Rat Bite Fever and Rabies.
- Avoid contact with wild or stray animals.
- Avoid contact with rats or rat-contaminated buildings. If you can't avoid contact, wear protective gloves and wash your hands regularly.
- Get rid of dead animals as soon as possible.
- If bitten/scratched, get medical attention immediately.



### Snakes

- Watch where you place your hands and feet when removing debris. If possible, don't place your fingers under debris you are moving. Wear heavy gloves.
- If you see a snake, step back and allow it to proceed.
- Wear boots at least 10 inches high.
- Watch for snakes sunning on fallen trees, limbs or other debris.
- A snake's striking distance is about 1/2 the total length of the snake.
- If bitten, note the color and shape of the snake's head to help with treatment.
- Keep bite victims still and calm to slow the spread of venom in case the snake is poisonous. Seek medical attention as soon as possible.
- Do not cut the wound or attempt to suck out the venom. Apply first aid: lay the person down so that the bite is below the level of the heart, and cover the bite with a clean, dry dressing.



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## Flying Insects – Bee Stings

Outdoor workers are at risk of being stung by flying insects (bees, wasps, and hornets) and fire ants. While most stings cause only mild discomfort, some may result in severe allergic reactions that require immediate medical care and may cause death.

### First Aid

If a worker is stung by a stinging insect:

- Have someone stay with the worker to be sure that they do not have an allergic reaction.
- Wash the site with soap and water.
- Remove the stinger using gauze wiped over the area or by scraping a fingernail over the area.
  - Never squeeze the stinger or use tweezers.
- Apply ice to reduce swelling.
- Do not scratch the sting as this may increase swelling, itching, and risk of infection.



### Protect Yourself

- Wear light-colored, smooth-finished clothing.
- Avoid perfumed soaps, shampoos, and deodorants.
  - Do not wear cologne or perfume.
- Wear clean clothing and bathe daily.
- Wear clothing to cover as much of the body as possible.
- Avoid flowering plants when possible.
- Keep work areas clean. Some insects are attracted to discarded food.
- Remain calm and still if a single stinging insect is flying around. (Swatting may cause it to sting.)
- If attacked by several stinging insects, run to get away. (Bees release a chemical when they sting, which attracts other bees.)
  - Go indoors.
  - Shaded areas are better than open areas.
  - Do not jump into water. Some insects (ex. Africanized honey bees) are known to hover above the water.
- If an insect is inside your vehicle, stop slowly, and open all the windows.
- Workers with a history of severe allergic reactions to insect bites or stings should carry an epinephrine autoinjector and wear medical ID jewelry stating their allergy.

### Resources for Rodents, Snake and Insects:

[https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/rodents\\_snakes\\_insects.pdf](https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/rodents_snakes_insects.pdf)

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/2010-117/default.html>

# SAFETY TALK

## Safety Talk Sign-In Sheet Rodents, Snakes, Insects and Fly Insects

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Crew: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor/Talk Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name

Signature

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