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| **Company Information** |
| **Company Name:** |  |
| **Workplace Location:** |  |
| **Name of Safe Work Practice:**   |  | **Release Date:** |  |
| **Safe Work Practice #:** |  | **Revision Date:**  |  |
| **Management Signature:** |  | **Date of Approval:** |  |
| **Instructions** |
| This safe work practice must be reviewed annually or any time the task, equipment, or materials change. |
| Do **NOT** perform the duties listed in this *Safe Work Practice* until you have been appropriately trained and authorized to do so by your supervisor |
| **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** |
| **Bear Spray** | **Explosive Noise Deterrents (Bear Bangers)** | **Whistle** |
| **Hazards** |
| Wildlife encounters are inevitable in agricultural work. Although attacks are rare, workers are at risk of bear, cougar and/or snake encounters which could result in serious injuries. |
| **Steps** |
| **1** | Respect all wildlife – all are potentially dangerous. |
| **2** | Never approach or attempt to feed wildlife. |
| **3** | Put all garbage in approved garbage receptacles.  |
| **4** | Never bury food or garbage. |
| **5** | Be aware of your surroundings and signs of wildlife (e.g. tracks, scat, damaged trees). |
| **6** | Avoid wildlife kill areas as bears may aggressively protect them. |
| **7** | Report wildlife sightings and aggressive behavior to the Supervisory Staff. |
| **8** | Make noise. Many bear encounters occur because the bear did not know you were there. Make a little noise while you are walking or working and you could very well avoid an encounter. |
| **9** | Work in pairs if there is an indication of bears in the area. |
| **10** | It is recommended that you carry a whistle as it can be used to help signal others in an emergency. |
| **11** | There are two types of bears: black bears and grizzlies. In the event of an encounter, it is important to know which type of bear it is, as it can affect the way in which you should respond. |
| **12** | Identify the bears behavior. Understanding what kind of encounter, it is can help you decide the safest way to deal with the situation. There are a few types of bear encounters: * Casual
* Defensive
* Predatory
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| **13** | Don't panic and do not run. A bear can reach speeds of 50-60 km/h and can run both uphill and downhill with ease. |
| **14** | Don't make eye contact, this can be seen as threatening to the bear. Instead, lower your gaze and slowly back away. Assess the bear's reaction and determine the type of bear and type of an encounter this might be. |
| **15** | Once the type of attack and the type of bear have been determined, you can decide on the best course of action. |
| **16** | Carry safety equipment such as bear spray and know how transport and use it safely. Bear spray is effective against all large mammals and should be your first choices as a deterrent. |
| **17** | If you encounter a cougar, directly face the cougar and slowly back away. Maintain eye contact while you move away. |
| **18** | Always leave the cougar a path for retreat. |
| **19** | Make yourself large as possible. Raise and wave your arms above your head to make yourself look big. |
| **20** | Throw rocks or sticks, aggression may scare the cougar away. Convince the cougar that you are a threat, not prey. |
| **21** | Do not run and if attacked, fight back. |
| **22** | When working in rattlesnake country, familiarize yourself with rattlesnake habitat and behavior. |
| **23** | Wear long loose pants and use high leather or rubber boots while working in tall grass or shrubs. |
| **24** | Don’t put your hands and feet where you cannot see them. |
| **25** | Use a stick to turn over an object under which you think a snake could be hidden. |
| **26** | Walk around rocks and logs; do not step over as a snake may be resting on the other side. |
| **27** | If you hear a rattlesnake, stop immediately and locate the snake. |
| **28** | If you are close to the snake, remain still and allow the snake to calm down and back away. |
| **29** | Once you are one snake body length away, step back and go around the snake. |
| **30** | Rattlesnake bites are very rare in British Columbia and are almost never fatal. The most important thing to remember is to get the victim to the hospital. If you are bitten: * Stay calm and leave the area. Move slowly or be carried.
* Remove any tight clothing or jewelry.
* Go to the nearest hospital. Phone ahead if possible, or phone 911.
* Mark swelling with lines and times every 10 minutes or so. This will help doctors assess the severity of the bite.
* **Do not:** apply a tourniquet, attempt to suck out the venom, ice the wound, kill the snake, or bring the snake to the hospital. Snakes are protected by law and doctors do not need to identify a snake to treat a snake bite in BC.
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