

Keeping people safe Health and Safety in APS NSW

Booklet for APS NSW members and volunteers

April 2023, www.austplants.com.au



Our commitment

The Australian Plants Society (APS NSW) is committed to keeping members, volunteers and visitors safe when they participate in our activities.

While the Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislation does not apply to APS NSW as a fully volunteer organisation, the Board is committed to adopting a best practice approach to duty of care and complying with WHS laws and SafeWork NSW guidance by:

- taking reasonable care of our own Health and Safety (H&S)
- taking reasonable care of the Health and Safety of others
- developing and ensuring volunteers, members and visitors follow any reasonable instructions or procedures as relates to WHS.

This means we all need to:

- 1. Take responsibility for our own and others' safety and consult with those around us
- 2. Manage risks of our activities and report any issues or injuries
- 3. Attend or hold induction and training sessions

4. Provide a safe environment in which we operate, including safe materials and infrastructure.

What we all need to do is simple and based on common sense.

If you see something unsafe, SAY something!
If you think something is unsafe, don't do it!

Before doing anything, think about the risks and stay aware.

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING UNSAFE, SAY SOMETHING!!

What's in this booklet

This booklet outlines how we create an environment to keep our members, visitors and volunteers safe. The activities covered by our safety policy and procedures are those managed by the state office, District Groups (District Group) and members and include:

Meetings

Bushwalks and garden visits

Nursery and propagation activities

Bush regen and garden maintenance

Community events

We recognise that many District Groups undertake activities on premises owned by other organisations, such as councils. In these cases, the H&S policies and procedures of those organisations need to be followed (and communicated to members).

There are four sections to this booklet with each building on the previous one.

- Section 1: Information for all members
- ▶ Section 2: Information for volunteer team members
- Section 3: Information for volunteer activity leaders
- Section 4: Information for District Group leaders

Who should read this booklet

If you are a member of the Australian Plants Society NSW (APS NSW), this policy and the procedures apply to you. You should read this booklet and/or participate in an induction or training session run by your group.

If you volunteer for any activities, you should also read the section regarding the extra responsibilities of activity leaders.

At the end, please sign the acknowledgement form and forward to APS NSW at safety@austplants.com.au.

'Safety is a state of mind!

Where to find more information

A lot more information is on our website https://www.austplants.com.au/Health-and-safety including:

- Policy and procedures
- Risk plans
- Attendance forms, incident and injury reporting forms
- Emergency procedures
- Training materials
- Guides for various activities

If anything is unclear, please contact your District Group President or activity leader.

'Working safely may get old, but so do those who practice it'



Section 1: All members

In this section, we cover:

- Responsibilities of all members
- Risks and hazards
- Reporting
- Training
- What to do in an emergency
- First aid

My responsibilities

We are not covered by the NSW Work Health and Safety legislation per se. However, we do have a 'duty of care' to:

- Ensure we all take reasonable care for our own Health and Safety
- Ensure we take reasonable care of our members and visitors
- Ensure members and visitors follow reasonable instructions/ procedures with regard to their activities

Insurers increasingly want to see a robust Health and Safety system in place. This means that we each need to:

- Know our responsibilities
- Lead by example i.e. do things safely ourselves
- Discuss safety, share information and seek views
- Know the risks of activities I participate in
- Take care of anyone hurt
- Report any injury or incident
- Attend training and induction if volunteering
- Know emergency procedures
- ► Be clear on first aid availability
- Use safe gear

This applies to:

- Board members of APS NSW
- State office volunteers
- District group leaders (committee members and other key leadership roles)
- Volunteers
- Visitors

The table below outlines these responsibilities in more detail. Please check the table and see what it means for you.



Not following the right steps means

- People could get hurt
- Insurance protection may be impacted
- People are potentially liable

Everyone is responsible for safety

Area	Responsibility	Board & state office	District Group leaders	Activity leaders	Team members	Members and visitors
Take responsibility and consult	Know responsibilities	√	V	√	V	V
	Lead by example i.e., role model safe behaviours	√	√	√	V	V
	Have an action plan	√	V			
	Discuss safety, share information and seek views	√	√	√	V	V
Manage risks and report	Know the risks of activities we do	√	√	V	V	V
	Do a risk plan/assessment before each activity and communicate	V	√	V		
	Maintain a risk register	V	V	√		
	Communicate reporting procedure	√	√			
	Take care of anyone who is hurt	√	V	√	V	V
	Report the injury or incident	√	V	V	√	√
	Investigate all incidents and injuries and act (keep a register)	V	V	1		
Induct/train	Induct/train people to be safe	√	V	√		
	Attend training and induction	√	√	√	√	√
	Record training	√	V			
Provide a safe environment	Know emergency procedures	√	√	√	V	V
	Communicate emergency procedures	√	√	√		
	Have first aid kit and trained first aiders	√	√	√		
	Ensure insurance up to date	√				
	Provide safe equipment and gear and fix things that are unsafe	V	V			



Risks we face

We enjoy many different activities, including meetings and events, bushwalks and garden visits, nursery and propagation activities, bush regen and garden maintenance and community events like plant sales.

Each has hazards that pose potential risks to us. Before any activity, review the risks and develop a risk plan to manage any risks for yourself and others.

At meetings - I watch for...

- Lifting heavy objects
- Slips, trips, falls e.g. power cords
- Health issues from kitchen and food preparation
- Burns from hot water and heating appliances
- Traffic hazards
- Dealing with an emergency

On bushwalks and garden visits – I watch for...

- Slips, trips and falls
- Heat, sunburn, rain, lightning, flood, bush fires
- Falling branches
- Snakes, spiders, ticks
- Personal limits
- Getting lost

In the nursery and propagating - I watch for...

- Slips, trips and falls
- Breathing in dust from potting mix
- Lifting heavy objects
- Heat and sun exposure
- Injuries from using tools and machinery or sharp vegetation
- Animal bites or stings
- Unaccustomed physical work or working beyond capabilities
- Chemicals before using any chemicals, discuss with your leader

In bush regen & garden maintenance — I watch for...

- Slips, trips and falls
- Lifting heavy objects
- Heat and sun exposure
- Injuries from using tools and machinery or sharp vegetation
- Animal bites or stings
- Unccustomed physical work or working beyond capabilities

Before any activity, check out the risks and ensure you are prepared – there are draft risk plans on the

website

At community events - I watch for...

- Slips, trips and falls
- Lifting heavy objects
- Heat and sun exposure
- Dealing with public
- ► Covid-19 or other infections
- Emergency procedures

Prepare by:

- 1. Knowing the risks/hazards
- 2. Completing a risk plan and/or reviewing the one prepared by the activity leader
- 3. Carrying water
- 4. Wearing the right gear and having the right equipment
- 5. Having a current first aid kit handy
- 6. Briefing people beforehand

WE USE A MATRIX TO DETERMINE HOW RISKY SOMETHING IS

- IMPACT MEANS
 HOW SEVERELY
 SOMEONE
 COULD BE HURT,
 OR HOW ILL
 COULD IT MAKE
 THEM
- > LIKELIHOOD IS HOW LIKELY IT IS TO HAPPEN

		← Impact —				
		Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Significant	Severe
^	Very likely	Low med (2)	Medium (3)	Med high (4)	High (5)	High (5)
_	Likely	Low (1)	Low med (2)	Medium (3)	Med high (4)	High (5)
Likelihood	Possible	Low (1)	Low med (2)	Medium (3)	Med high (4)	Med high (4)
 - -	Unlikely	Low (1)	Low med (2)	Low med (2)	Medium (3)	Med high (4)
	Very unlikely	Low (1)	Low (1)	Low med (2)	Medium (3)	Medium (3)

If an accident or incident happens

- Take care of the person immediately
- Call for medical attention if required
- Report the incident to the Activity Leader, who will brief the District Group President and APS NSW President
- Write up a report on the incident and submit to <u>safety@austplants.com.au</u>

APS NSW holds a record of all incidents and injuries that occur, and updates the risk register as appropriate when new risks come to light.



Injuries and Illness Reporting Form

We want to send our members and visitors home in as good or better condition than when they arrived!

If anyone is injured or becomes ill during an APS NSW activity, please advise the activity leader, who will inform the District Group President and APS NSW President as soon as possible.

Please complete this form and send to the District Group and APS NSW as soon as possible.

APS NSW keeps a register of injuries to help improve its health and safety environment.

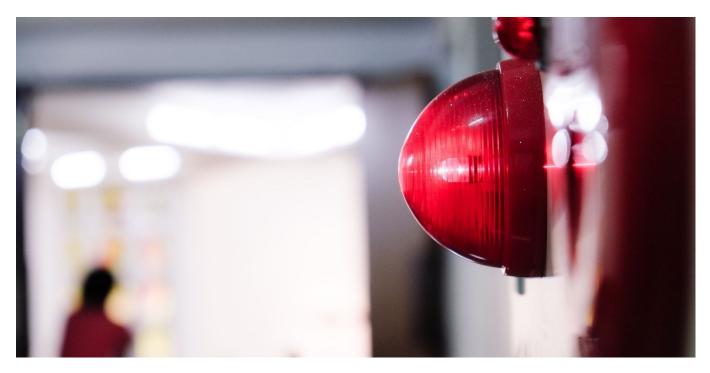
If a person was not injured in the incident, use the Hazard/Incident Reporting Form.

District group or state office location
Name of injured person
Address of injured person
Age of injured person
Role of injured person (Volunteer, visitor, contractor):
Task being undertaken at time of injury or illness
Date and time of injury or illness
Nature of the injury or illness including where injured (i.e. on body)
Witnesses and roles, include contact details
Location of incident
Description of incident including cause of injury and details of any first aid given (please continue over page if not enough room). If any equipment or other factor was involved, please detail.

It's up to each
person to help us
keep improving our
safety record



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What to do in an emergency

Emergency procedures are required at all locations where APS NSW operates. Having such a plan is a legal requirement.

When the District Group operates on grounds or in facilities managed by another organisation, they will likely have emergency procedures, which should be followed.

If these procedures do not exist, APS NSW and District Group activities need to have an emergency procedure.

An emergency procedure includes the following:

- What kind of emergencies might occur
- What you will do if there is an emergency
- Emergency contacts
- Evacuation and emergency procedures
- After an emergency
- Testing the plan
- Training
- Reviewing, recording and updating the plan



Each District Group should develop their own emergency procedures for their location. This is the role of the District Group President and/or committee/safety officer.

At the start of any meeting or activity, tell people what to do in an emergency.

A template for developing an emergency plan is found on the APS NSW website in the safety section. https://www.austplants.com.au/Health-and-safety

First aid kits and training

You need to know where the first aid kit is held!

First aid must be available at all activities. This is a legal requirement for workplaces and is the right thing for APS NSW to do given our activities.

First aid is the immediate treatment or care given to someone suffering from an injury or illness until advanced care can be accessed or the individual recovers. The aim is to:

- preserve life
- prevent illness or injury from becoming worse
- relieve pain, if possible
- promote recovery
- protect the unconscious.

First aid can reduce the severity of an injury or illness and in extreme cases, could mean the difference between life and death.

First aid kits



A first aid kit should be kept in an accessible location, be fit for purpose, and maintained.

It should include basic equipment for administering first aid. i.e., to treat cuts, scratches, punctures, grazes, splinters, muscular sprains and strains, minor burns, snake bites, bleeding wounds, broken bones, eye injuries and shock.

Extra equipment may be needed in remote places, e.g., allergic reactions.

If you are leading a walk or activity, you should carry one yourself.

Talk to the District Group regarding getting one for you.

Of course, you must maintain it.

First aiders

In determining whether the group should have a first aider, or more than one, the risks of your activities should be considered. As a guide, SafeWork NSW provides ratios of first aiders to people and generally we fit into the one first aider to every 30 to 40 people.

Work out if you need a first aider on your activities and consider being trained yourself. Talk to your District Group about options.

Recap of Health and Safety approach

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY AND CONSULT

- Know responsibilities
- · Lead by example i.e. role model safe behaviours
- · Participate in safety discussions and share info

MANAGE RISKS AND REPORT

- · Understand the risks before each activity
- · Report hazards, incidents and injuries

TRAIN/ INDUCT

- · Participate in any briefings and training sessions
- · Listen to pre-activity talks

PROVIDE A SAFE SPACE

- Know emergency procedures
- Know where first aid kit is and who are first aiders
- If you see something not safe, say something

Make sure you know the contact details of your District Group President and the activity leader. It's also a good idea to:

- Download the app: Emergency Plus, which is tells you exactly where you are (i.e., GPS coordinates)
- Know where the closest medical facility is



It's all about taking care of people, as well as the plants!

Quick quiz

- 1. Who is responsible for workplace Health and Safety in APS?
- 2. What are the three main risks/hazards of your APS activities?
- 3. How do you prevent slips, trips and falls?
- 4. What do you do if you see something unsafe?
- 5. Who do you talk to about this?
- 6. What do you do if someone is getting over fatigued on a walk?
- 7. If someone is injured on an activity, what do you do?
- 8. Who do you report it to?

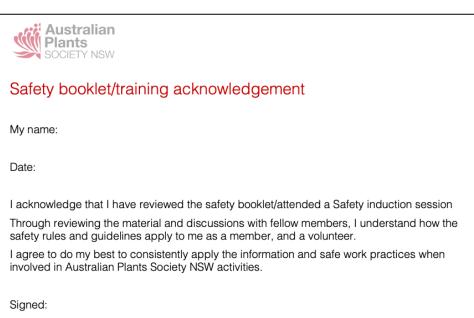
Print name:

- 9. Where is the closest first aid kit in your group?
- 10. Do you know what to do in an emergency?

Next steps

Please sign and return the attached form to your Group to say you have reviewed this booklet and understand what it means for you as a member. This form is available on the website at:

https://www.austplants.com.au/Health-and-safety





Section 2: Volunteers

In this section, we cover:

- Responsibilities of volunteers
- Risks and hazards and how to mitigate them
- Reporting incidents and injuries
- Extra information for District group committees

My responsibilities

As an APS NSW volunteer, you play a vital role in helping us achieve our mission.

You might be volunteering in a meeting, on a bushwalk, on garden visits, propagating, garden maintenance or bush regeneration or other activity.

If you are an activity leader, and have a team of people assisting you, it's vital to ensure they are briefed as well. Your role includes actions before, during and after the actitivity.

Whether you are leading an activity or participating as a volunteer team member, you have a safety responsibilities to consider.

Check the table on page 5 to see your responsibilities as an activity leader or team member.

Whether leading a team or being a team member, you play an important safety role

Risks

Your first step is to understand the risks and hazards of the activities you are involved in. More information at: https://www.austplants.com.au/Guides-to-keep-us-all-safe

Volunteer team members need to ensure they understand the risks, whereas activity leaders need to do a full risk assessment and risk plan. The main risks we face are:

- Manual handling
- Slips, trips, falls
- Dealing with an emergency
- Heat, storms/lightning, flood, fires
- Snakes, spiders, ticks
- Personal limits, sunburn, dehydration



Manual handling and heavy and awkward objects

- Know your limits to lift objects
- Don't lift items above your head
- Use the right posture
- Get help



Slips trips and falls

- Muddy ground and fallen trees
- Rocky and mossy paths
- Power cords and obstacles
- Crooked and uneven paving
- Stairs
- Water on floors



Solutions - In the bush or garden

- Stay alert
- Watch out for muddy ground
- Don't cross floodwaters
- Wear the right footwear
- Take care on rocky terrain
- Get under cover in lighting storms (not under a tree or in water)

Solutions – in a facility

- Swiftly clean up spills
- Cover up power cords
- Fix worn mats
- Keep the place tidy
- Pay attention to stairs
- Do not carry too much
- Ensure good lighting

Dealing with an emergency

- Who are the emergency contacts?
- How and where do you evacuate to?
- How will you check that everyone is out?
- Who will be contacted? Include emergency services numbers. What are phone numbers?
- How to provide medical help where is the first aid kit, who are first aiders, what medical facility is closest

Snakes, ticks, insect bites

- Stay aware in the bush
- Carry first aid kit with snake bandages, tick freeze and sting ointment Encourage people to spray their clothes and themselves with insect repellent

Heat, storms, flood and fire

- Check out conditions ahead of time
- Have contact numbers for everyone
- Reschedule if danger is high
- Bring extra water
- Ensure people have right shoes, hat and clothes
- Get under shelter if lightning (not under a tree or in water)



Personal limits, dehydration, sunburn, getting lost

- Be aware of the people around you
- Have someone at the end of a bushwalk to prevent laggards getting lost
- Have extra water
- Carry first aid
- Know nearest medical facility locations
- Have Emergency Plus on your phone (GPS location)
- Have emergency contact numbers in your phone
 - Emergency 000, 112 for remote
 - Poisons 131126



Activity leader actions – before, during and after

Here is a snapshot of your actions, as an activity leader, before during and after any activity.

Before the activity

- Identify risks/hazards (use sample risk plans) found on the website
- Assess potential for harm using the risk matrix
- Develop plans to address major risks e.g., minimise, eliminate
- Have a current first aid kit
- Consider if you need a first aider, know the nearest medical centre
- Brief your team members, clarify roles and who does what
- Print relevant materials including Sign-in sheet and
 blank incident and injury form

During the activity

- Brief participants on risks and hazards at the start
- Check they have the right gear and water (if relevant)
- Ensure people sign the attendance book and add emergency contacts (if relevant)
- If an incident or injury occurs, care for the person
- Record and report the incident/injury (President District Group and President APS NSW
- Also report incidents and 'near misses' - this helps prepare for the future

After the activity

- If any injury or incident occurs.
 Check on person injured
- Send report to President of District Group and President of APS NSW (safety@austplants.com.au)
- Review the incident to see what could have been done differently
- Discuss with the District Group committee to help prevent future incidents
- Give all forms and risk plans to the nominated person in the District Group to retain for 12 years (the statute of limitations for personal injury) and APS NSW

Guides for more information

There are a range of guides on the website, to provide more information. Please take some time now to review these guides: https://www.austplants.com.au/Guides-to-keep-us-all-safe

Develop risk plans prior to each activity

Draft risk plans are available on the website and should be completed prior to each activity.

As a team member, your role is to understand the risks and help mitigate them.

The aim is to reduce the risk as much as possible, by eliminating, controlling it or other means.

As a team leader, your role is to understand the risks and prepare the risk plan.

https://www.austplants.com.au/Health-and-safety

Here is a sample risk plan.

Might feel bureaucratic, but helps you think ahead



Meetings, events (incl sales events), parties risk plan - indoor focus

Group:			
Activity:	Meeting, event (incl sales), party – indoor		
Date:			
Activity Leader:	Name: Signature: Date:		
Hazard	Risk level (refer matrix)	Action taken to control or eliminate risk, for all hazards rated High, Med Hi, Medium	
Lifting or manoeuvring heavy or awkward objects e.g. tables and chairs	Med Hi	Do not pick up objects that are too heavy for you. If safe, use other volunteers to help move a heavy object together. Take care of trestle tables in windy weather.	
Tripping over obstacles e.g. power cords	Med Hi	Arrange chairs to provide clear access. Prevent access to floor area where power cords lie, or securely tape them down with gaffer tape. For public events, ensure signage is clear for traffic flow.	
Health issues resulting from kitchen and food preparation	Med Hi	Follow procedures for the safe handling of food, e.g. wash hands beforehand, keep kitchen surfaces clean, refrigerate food adequately, do not re-freeze.	
Burns	Med Hi	 Take care with boiling water and tap water, which may be unexpectedly hot. 	
Traffic hazards	Med Hi	Be aware of people and cars in the car park and take necessary care, especially when leaving after dark. For large meetings and events, consider having a traffic controller with hi-vis jacket	
Covid-19 safety and hygiene	Med	Held planning meetings by Zoom as much as possible Adopt social distancing as much as possible when travelling to test conference facilities and tours to-clude people who are unwell from participating to the hand sanitiser and masks as per government guidelines Latest Covid-19 government information and guidelines regularly checked and any amendments made to conference and tour plans identify closest hospital or medical services and how to best access if required identify a place for people to be isolated if	
Emergency occurs, eg flood, fire, electrical outage	Med	required Know the emergency procedures for this location Confirm contacts in case of an emergency Identify evacuation areas	

Reporting incidents and injuries

Sometimes accidents happen and people get hurt. It doesn't happen often, but when it does, we need to take immediate action.

- ► Take care of the person immediately
- Call for medical attention if required
- Report the incident/injury asap to the Activity Leader, District Group President and APS NSW President
- Do a written report and submit asap
 - Anything which could be done differently?
 - Add the risk to the risk register if not already there
- Follow up on how the person is going

The forms to report injuries and incidents is located on the website. https://www.austplants.com.au/Health-and-safety

Send the completed written report to APS NSW

If there is a serious incident, although no one was hurt, this should also be reported. This ensures we put in measures to ensure it doesn't happen again. There is a separate from called an 'Incident form' on the website.

Quick quiz for volunteer team members

- 1. What are the key risks/hazards in our meeting facility?
- 2. What are the key risks/hazards while in the outdoors?
- 3. How can you reduce the risk of slips trips and falls?
- 4. When you see a power cord across the floor, what do you do?
- 5. If you see a snake on the path, what do you do?
- 6. How can you reduce the risk of someone getting lost on a bushwalk?
- 7. If there's a heavy box in the way, what do you do?
- 8. If there is an injury, what do you do first, second, third?
- 9. Who are injuries and incidents reported to?
- 10. Why download an app like Emergency Plus?

Quick quiz for activity **leaders**

- 1. What do you do before an activity starts?
- 2. If a storm is forecast when you activity is on, what do you consider?
- 3. What is the purpose of the risk matrix?
- 4. Where do I find the draft risk plans to use before an activity?
- 5. If I think someone won't be able to do an activity, what do I do?
- 6. When do I brief the team on the activity and risks?
- 7. If team members don't show, what do I do?
- 8. What do I do if there is an injury?
- 9. What do I do if there is a 'near miss'?
- 10. Who do I send the report to?

ment

Acknowledge- Please sign and return the attached form to your Group to say you have reviewed this booklet and understand what it means for you as a volunteer. This form is available on the website at:

https://www.austplants.com.au/Health-and-safety



Safety booklet/training acknowledgement

My name:

Date:

I acknowledge that I have reviewed the safety booklet/attended a Safety induction session

Through reviewing the material and discussions with fellow members, I understand how the safety rules and guidelines apply to me as a member, and a volunteer.

I agree to do my best to consistently apply the information and safe work practices when involved in Australian Plants Society NSW activities.

Signed:

Print name:

More information for District Group Committees and APS Board

As leaders of groups, we have more responsibilities as relates to systems and processes. Here is a quick check list to ensure we are all managing these safety tasks in a systematic way. This also means we have a responsibility to ensure the facilities, equipment and infrastructure are safe for all to use. Refer back to the table of responsibilities on page 5.

Training and induction

Members and volunteers need to have the right skills to do their jobs. There are various training sessions required:

- Members Overall safety awareness and procedures via video and presentation at District Group level and this booklet and at periodic times e.g., annually
- Volunteers must attend safety briefing and/or review this booklet:
- Where nursery and other activities are conducted on premises owned by other organisations, this training may be provided by them.
- ► APS NSW will provide support to District Groups to undertake the relevant training if they do not have the resources to do so themselves.
- ▶ Training is recorded in the Training Register, managed by APS NSW with the support of the District Group.

Checklist for District Groups

- Clear on your safety responsibilities?
- Are you aware of the main risks of your activities?
- ► How will you introduce safety at your next meeting and what will you say? Newsletters?
- Are any of your activities covered under another organisation? Are you across and following their procedures?
- Do Activity Leaders review risks prior to activities?
- Are members/visitors briefed on risks before activities?
- ► Are safe work procedures needed e.g., Clonex, potting mix? Is glyphosate used?
- ► Is the First Aid kit up to date? First Aiders? Do you need any state support on first aid kits, first aid training, other?
- ► Has the emergency procedures template been adapted for your situation (District Group President or Safety Officer role)?
- Are emergency procedures clear and communicated?
- ls any safety gear needed? e.g., power cord covers, PPE for those propagating
- Is the work environment safe (slips, trips, heavy objects etc.)?
- Do members know what to do if there is an incident or injury? Are you reporting incidents and injuries?
- Do you have a list of volunteers who should do more comprehensive online training?
- Do you have a training plan?

Images courtesy: Bruce Usher, Heather Miles and those in the pictures.