

# Animal Place Volunteer Safety Manual

(Updated 9/20/2013)

## Safety Policy Statement

It is the policy of Animal Place (AP) that accident prevention shall be of primary importance in all phases of operation and administration.

## Volunteer responsibilities

Each volunteer is responsible for his/her own safety. AP has taken the necessary steps to maximize your safety with proper equipment, policies, procedures, and training. Your cooperation is essential to ensure a safe volunteer environment. After reading this manual, sign the acknowledgement of receipt form provided to you.

## ABCs of Sanctuary Safety

### Arriving for your volunteer shift

Grass Valley: **Sign in** at the education center (the white house). While signing in, pick up a radio located near the sign-in sheet and radio staff of your arrival. Wait for instructions before entering sanctuary grounds.

Vacaville: Check in with Jan Galeazzi, Rescue Ranch Manager.

- **Tip: Let us know you are here!**

### Communications

Grass Valley: Portable two-way radios are to be picked up in the education center and turned on when you arrive. At the end of your shift, turn your radio off, return it to the education center, and place it in a charger (make sure the light turns on). This is your main communication device with employees and other volunteers while working at the sanctuary.

- **Tip: Always carry a 2-way radio.**

Vacaville: No radios available.

### Gates and Latches

Never go through gates that lead into other areas of the sanctuary without permission. Always close and latch any gate, door or pen after entering and exiting.

- **Tip: Close all gates and latches**

### Protective clothing

Knee-high rubber boots are **mandatory** during spring, summer and early fall. Closed toed shoes are mandatory during winter and boots are encouraged. Long pants are required. Weather is unpredictable – wear layers. Work gloves are advisable and, in some situations, required. Gloves are available on site. **Do not purchase or bring gloves or boots made from leather or wool.** Boots and gloves can be purchased at hardware stores or Gemplers ([www.gemplers.com](http://www.gemplers.com)).

- **Tip: Dress code: knee-high rubber boots, closed-toed shoes, and long pants.**

## **ABCs of Sanctuary Safety continued**

### **Lifting**

We recommend lifting a moderate to heavy load with the help of others. When lifting, bend your knees, grasp the load firmly, and then raise the load, keeping your back as straight as possible. Get help for heavy loads such as bags of feed or bales of straw. Do not try to lift heavy objects on your own.

- **Tip: Save your back! No lifting heaving objects.**

### **Animal handling safety**

All volunteers undergo training by experienced staff members during orientation and volunteer workdays. As a rule, never approach the large animals (cattle, pigs, goats, sheep) without an Animal Place staff member. Never enter areas with large animals present without an AP staff member present. If you are uncomfortable at any time while working with animals, remove yourself from the situation and immediately notify an AP staff member using your radio.

- **Tip: Large animals can cause large injuries.**

### **Zoonotic diseases**

Any volunteer who has concerns regarding zoonosis should see the supervisor. It will be the responsibility of the supervisor to share proper protocol and information regarding zoonotic diseases. If you are the guardian to farmed animals, domestic birds, or rabbits at home, please take extra precaution. We request you wear freshly laundered clothing that has not come into contact with your animals when volunteering at AP. Also, we recommend you change your clothes before coming into contact with your own animals.

- **Tip: If you have farmed animals at home, take extra precaution.**

### **What to do in the event of an accident**

If you or another volunteer are injured while volunteering, inform your supervisor immediately. Any accident involving a member of the public should also be reported immediately. In most situations, the supervisor will assess the injury and make a decision regarding treatment. If the injury requires outside treatment, you will be required to visit a hospital specified by AP.

- **Tip: Get hurt, radio your supervisor ASAP!**

Volunteers should seek treatment through their regular medical care providers. They should use their own medical insurance, then file a claim for any unreimbursed out-of-pocket medical expenses under the terms of our Volunteer Liability insurance policy. Forms and information on claims procedures may be obtained from the Director.

First aid kits: Animal Place maintains first aid kits in two locations: (1) the office kitchen, and (2) animal care room. Every volunteer will be shown the exact location of each first aid kit.

## **Fire Prevention**

Fire is a real threat at Animal Place.

Grass Valley: There are three entrances to the property. We have a fire safety plan in place.

Vacaville: There is only one vehicular entrance and exit to the property.

Volunteers must practice the following:

- No smoking on sanctuary grounds
- Minimize the use of extension cords
- Use caution with portable heaters (keep away from flammable material)
- Never start a burn pile without the presence of an AP staff member
- All fans used to keep animals cool must be turned off, then unplugged at end of each work day
- Do not park your vehicle over tall grass

### **If a Fire Should Occur**

If you smell or see smoke, immediately notify an AP staff member. If an AP staff member is not immediately available, call 911 and report that you smell or see smoke, and ask if there are fires in the area.

- **Tip: Suspect fire? Radio supervisor ASAP. Don't delay!**

### **Fire extinguishers**

Fire extinguishers are located throughout the sanctuary. All volunteers will be shown their location and will be instructed on their usage. They are located:

- Education Center
- Animal Care Room
- Every Barn (Grass Valley & Vacaville)

### **In case of a fire**

1. Remain calm.
2. Use your radio to alert employees and volunteers.
3. Notify an AP staff member of the fire's location. If the fire is small and on sanctuary grounds, an experienced AP staff member may utilize a fire extinguisher. Unless trained, NO volunteer should attempt to put out a fire themselves.
4. Meet at the education center for a head count.
5. An AP staff member will contact the appropriate authorities.
6. For the safety of all, volunteers will carpool off of the sanctuary property.
7. AP staff is SOLELY responsible for the care of the animals. Volunteers are responsible for getting themselves safely off the property.

- **Tip: Alert everyone via radio, go immediately to the education center, and follow staff instructions.**

## **Rattlesnake Safety Policy**

Rattlesnakes reside on the sanctuary because of the high rodent population. The grain we use to feed the animals attracts rats and mice, which in turn, attracts snakes. Because of the obvious danger rattlesnakes pose, we take this safety policy very seriously.

**Rattlesnake season:** Snakes are seen in Spring, Summer and Fall. Spring time is the most dangerous season for rattlesnake encounters because:

- Rattlesnakes are emerging out of hibernation.
- They are hungry and tend to be less tolerant.
- The grass is tall in areas because of rain and it is more difficult to see them.

All volunteers will receive mandatory Snake Safety training prior to the Spring emergence of rattlesnakes.

### **Safety preventative procedures**

1. **Radio:** Always have your radio with you and turned on at all times.
2. **Clothing:** Wear work gloves and knee-high boots. Snake guards are available and can be worn over boots.
3. **Equipment:** Always use pitchfork when reaching in to get a flake of straw or alfalfa. **Never** use hands.
4. **Mindfulness:** Be alert at all times, especially when reaching down to pick up something. Be aware of where you step.
5. **Entering stalls and barns:** Open the door, and always look down first before entering
6. **Night time:** Always have flashlight with you when walking outside at night. Rattlesnakes come out at night during summer months.
7. **Precautions when walking:** Do not walk through tall grass. Stay on gravel paths so you can easily see what is in front of you. Always keep your eye to the ground when walking.
8. **Sound:** Rattlesnakes often (but not always) rattle their tail as a warning. If you hear a strange noise, stop and look.
9. **Baby snakes:** Don't let the size fool you. Baby rattlesnakes are more dangerous than adults. Baby rattlesnakes cannot control how much venom they release, so they intend to inject all of it.

### **Areas we have found snakes**

- Inside the barns
- Inside the feed room stalls
- Inside the tool room in big barn
- Rabbit pasture
- Coiled up against or under watering cans or watering troughs
- Inside and around the water
- Basking on rocks, cement, gravel or other warm areas in the morning
- Hiding in shady, moist spots during mid-day
- Out on warmed cement or under vehicles at night.
- Sunbathing on gravel and dirt paths

### **What to do if you find a snake**

1. Immediately radio an AP staff member.
2. Step away from snake.
3. When a second person arrives, one person stay to watch where snake goes (from a safe distance) and have the other retrieve the supervisor if you are unable to reach them with your 2-way radio
4. If a third person is available, have that person retrieve the needed equipment to catch the snake.

Snake tongs are kept in outside of the Animal Care Room and in the Garage/Education Center  
All volunteers will be shown where these tongs are located. Trash cans with lids are kept next to the snake tongs.

**NEVER PICK UP A SNAKE YOURSELF.**

### **What to do if someone gets bit**

1. Remain calm.
2. Radio someone immediately.
3. Remain where you are located, until an AP staff member arrives with a first aid kit.
4. Allow bite to bleed freely for 15-30 seconds.
5. Cleanse and rapidly disinfect area with Betadine.
6. Someone will drive you to the hospital.

### **If Bitten:**

1. **Do not** eat or drink anything.
2. **Do not** engage in strenuous physical activity.
3. **Do not** cut into bite mark.
4. **Do not** apply oral (mouth) suction to bite.
5. **Do not** apply hot or cold packs.

### **Other wildlife**

**Black widow spiders:** Only the females are venomous and are identified by the red hourglass located on their belly. These medium-sized black spiders reside in cool, dark places like under wood piles.

**Wild boars:** They periodically come onto the sanctuary, but this is usually early morning hours before volunteer shifts begin. You will be notified if we have recently observed a wild boar.

**Coyotes:** There is not need to be concerned for your safety, but do not approach. If, however, you see a coyote inside the sanctuary property, please notify the supervisor.

**Bobcats/Mountain Lions/Bears:** If you notice a bobcat on the property, notify an AP staff member. Do not approach. Stand tall, make noise, and back slowly away from the animal.

**Yellow jackets and fire ants:** If you notice an infestation of fire ants or a large gathering of yellowjackets, please notify an AP employee. **If you have ANY allergic reaction to the stings and bites of these species, let an AP staff member know immediately.**

AKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT

After receiving and reading the Animal Place Volunteer Safety Manual, each volunteer must sign the following.

*I have received and read the Animal Place Volunteer Safety Manual. I understand that it sets forth the safety procedures and guidelines I must follow.*

Volunteers Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Signature: \_\_\_\_\_