



Fieldwork Safety Protocol

June 6, 2017

CONTENTS

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS	3
<i>FIRE & AMBULANCE.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>HOSPITALS</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCIES & SPILLS.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>UNIVERSITY OFFICES</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>ADDITIONAL PREPAREDNESS RESOURCES.....</i>	<i>3</i>
FIELDWORK PROTOCOL	4
INTRODUCTION.....	4
SCOPE	4
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS.....	4
GENERAL SAFETY	5
VEHICLE AND DRIVER SAFETY	5
SAMPLING SAFETY	6
WATER SAFETY	6
USE OF BOATS	7
PROGRAM AVAILABILITY.....	7
PROGRAM REVIEW	7
APPENDIX A.....	9
PROJECT SPECIFIC SAFETY PLAN TEMPLATE	9

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Wilkes Department of Public Safety (24/7/365) 570-408-4999

Always notify the Department of Public Safety for any incident including injured or sick person, chemical spill or fire.

Fire & Ambulance

Emergencies 9-1-1
Wilkes-Barre Fire Department (non-emergency) 570-208-4260

Hospitals

General Hospital 570-829-8111
Geisinger North Hospital 570-826-7300
Geisinger South Hospital 570-826-3100
Poison Control Center 800-222-1222

Environmental Emergencies & Spills

Datom Products, Inc. 570-343-2878
Safety-Kleen, Inc. 570-825-8134
Stericycle, Inc. 570-820-9912

University Offices

Facilities Management 570-408-2349
Health Services 570-408-4730
Human Resources 570-408-4631
Risk Management 570-408-4554
Student Affairs 570-408-4100

Additional Preparedness Resources

American Association of Poison Control Centers 800-222-1222
American Red Cross – Wyoming Valley Chapter 570-823-7161
Cocciardi & Associates 800-377-3024
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 800-621-3362
Luzerne County Emergency Management 570-820-4400
Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) 717-651-2171
U.S. Department of Homeland Security 202-282-8000

FIELDWORK PROTOCOL

INTRODUCTION

Fieldwork is an important part of teaching and research at Wilkes University. Since fieldwork activities take you off campus, this guide is intended to help you plan and prepare for health and safety problems you might encounter in the field.

This fieldwork protocol is organized into several distinct sections. The first section of this guide provides you with resources both on campus and outside the university. The next section covers “Emergency Preparedness” to assist you before you leave, while you are doing fieldwork and with emergency medical care. The following sections discuss general safety information, vehicle and driver safety, sampling safety, and specific safety plans.

SCOPE

This fieldwork safety protocol applies to all Wilkes University employees, students, and volunteers performing research or work while on campus or in the field.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

In order to be prepared for emergency situations:

- A. Provide a copy to each member of your team and leave a copy with the Dean's Office, Public Safety, and a responsible party. Include the following:
 - a. Your itinerary: Locations, arrival and departure dates, names, addresses and phone numbers of all fieldwork participants.
 - b. Contact person: Name and phone number of a person to contact in case of emergency- a spouse, parent or friend, as well as a campus contact.
 - c. Activities: General nature of activities being conducted.
 - d. Local contacts: Names of people at or near your fieldwork site who can reach you if necessary, as well as your check-in/check-out arrangements.
- B. Always work in teams of two (2) or more individuals and stay together when in the field – NEVER CONDUCT FIELDWORK ALONE.
- C. Always carry a charged cellphone when working in the field and if cell service is not available make a note of nearest point of service or public landline.
- D. IN THE EVENT OF A LIFE THREATENING SITUATION – DIAL 911 DIRECTLY, then immediately call your field supervisor.
- E. Have a list of relevant phone numbers along with directions to the nearest medical centers.
- F. Notify your field supervisor when entering and leaving the field each day and report any incidents, medical or otherwise, immediately.
- G. IF YOU HAVE A KNOWN INSECT ALLERGY YOU MUST CARRY AN EPIPEN, ALWAYS.
- H. First Aid kits will be carried at all times, and regularly restocked.
- I. Every effort should be made to avoid working from dusk to dawn, however, always carry at least two flashlights with extra batteries.
- J. Carry a GPS device. Do not rely on cell phone apps for global positioning services.

GENERAL SAFETY

- A. When appropriate, long pants, long-sleeved shirts, sturdy shoes/boots, and other “site specific” apparel should be worn at all times in the field.
- B. Team members will be aware of naturally occurring threats and avoid contact when possible. These regionally include but are not limited to:
 - a. Poisonous snakes
 - i. Timber rattlesnake and Copperhead
 - b. Stinging/Biting insects
 - i. Hornets, Bees, wasps
 - ii. Mosquitos
 - iii. Deer and Dog Ticks
 - c. Dangerous plants
 - i. Poison Ivy, Poison Sumac, Poison Oak
 - ii. Thorned varieties
 - iii. Cut grasses and Nettles
 - d. Large mammals
 - i. bear and white tailed deer
 - e. Zoonotic Diseases
 - i. Lyme Disease (<https://www.cdc.gov/lyme/index.html>)
 - ii. Hanta Virus (<https://www.cdc.gov/hantavirus/>)
 - iii. Rabies (<https://www.cdc.gov/rabies/index.html>)
 - f. Terrain
 - i. Rocks, boulders, mountains
 - g. Weather
 - i. Heat Stress
 - ii. Cold Stress
 - iii. Emergency weather events (heavy rain, lightening, high winds, snow/ice, flood)
- C. NEVER APPROACH POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS WILDLIFE
- D. Individuals should always check themselves and each other for ticks when returning from the field.
- E. When on hunting grounds, or in areas where there may be hunters, team members will wear bright orange hats and/or vests; and will make every effort to conduct fieldwork on Sundays during Pennsylvania’s November deer and bear seasons.
- F. Individuals must abide by the University’s Tobacco Use/Smoking Policy, Alcohol and Drug policies, and all other policies detailed in the Undergraduate Student Handbook while conducting fieldwork and no alcohol will be consumed on field trips.
- G. Review the weather forecast for the days and times conducting fieldwork. DO NOT plan on conducting fieldwork during anticipated weather situations, and monitor the National Weather Service for weather alerts such as Warnings or Watches.
- H. Report any accidents, illnesses, injuries or near misses to the Instructor/Principal Investigator (PI). Instructor/PI will notify the Department of Public Safety and the Dean’s Office immediately.

VEHICLE AND DRIVER SAFETY

- A. You MUST be an approved Wilkes driver to use a University Vehicle. To become an approved driver, you must review the University Vehicle Use Policy (97-4) and submit a ‘Request for Driver Authorization’ form to Public Safety.

- a. [http://www.wilkes.edu/campus-life/safety-security/ assets/University-Vehicle-Use-Policy-Revised-7-2015.pdf](http://www.wilkes.edu/campus-life/safety-security/assets/University-Vehicle-Use-Policy-Revised-7-2015.pdf)
- B. A Fire Extinguisher, First Aid and Roadside Safety Kits are located in all field vehicles and should be regularly restocked.
- C. Before using a field vehicle complete a visual inspection: tires, windshields, and fuel and fluid levels.
- D. Always wear seatbelts and obey traffic laws and drive according to weather conditions.
- E. Off-road vehicle use is prohibited unless accompanied by the Instructor/PI.
- F. Plan to conduct fieldwork away from roadways or other areas with vehicle traffic. If this is unavoidable, additional precautions must be addressed in the project Specific Safety Plans (Appendix A).

SAMPLING SAFETY

- A. When possible, appropriate personal protective equipment should be worn when handling small mammals, insects, and plants.
 - a. Nitrile gloves – removed and replaced often
 - b. Protective eyewear
 - c. Insect repellent
 - d. Sun protection (sunscreen, hat, long clothing)
- B. Hand sanitizer will be carried in all field bags and used following all animal captures, and hands should be washed with soap and water as soon as possible after fieldwork.
- C. Transportation of chemicals used for sample collection, preservation, and anesthesia will be in approved container with proper labels.
- D. Copies of appropriate Safety Data Sheets (SDS) will be kept with the field gear and in the vehicles. All individuals will be trained on the contents of each SDS used.
- E. When transporting chloroform, isofluorane, ethanol, acetone, or any other Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) it is important the lids are properly tightened, the bottles remain upright, and the vehicle is well ventilated (open rear windows at least 1 inch). Chemicals shall be transported in suitable containers packed in a secondary containment package with absorbent. Each vehicle shall have a spill kit compatible with the chemicals transported. Every effort shall be made to limit the number and quantity of chemicals used.
- F. Proper disposal of chemicals occurs in the lab and according to SDS.
- G. Tools, including hand tools, soil sampling tools or other devices shall be approved by the Instructor/PI. All individuals that may use tools will be provided training on the safe use and care of the devices.
- H. Identify utility locations if digging in a developed area.

WATER SAFETY

- A. Rivers, canals, lakes and swamps, and their banks: When working in or near water, always be aware of the weather conditions, especially when heavy rains are forecast. Other precautions to consider are:
 - a. Wear footwear appropriate for the tasks, e.g., rubber boots, tabi shoes (i.e., those designed for wading). Do not jump from rock to rock. Always ensure that your footing is safe. Beware of loose /slippery banks.
 - b. Lifejackets (not buoyancy aids) which keep the head above water must be worn in boats.

- c. Be aware of potential fluctuation in water level and current –keep in touch with local resources if possible for up-to-date information.
- d. Have reasonable access to a towel and dry clothes ('reasonable' will depend on temperature – in cold conditions it might be essential to change out of wet clothes immediately).
- e. If you have a break in your skin that could be exposed to water let your supervisor know so that protective measures can be taken or you can be assigned to other duties. Cover wounds with a dressing. Wear protective gloves if appropriate and exercise good hygiene measures (hand washing post-work, avoiding eating or drinking during work etc.)
- f. Never drink untreated water from streams or any source other than a municipal supply. Should you become ill with flu-like symptoms make sure your doctor knows you have been working around water and may have been exposed to certain diseases.

USE OF BOATS

- A. When boats are used, the PI in charge must be familiar with relevant state and federal boating laws. Personnel in charge of boats are responsible for ensuring that the appropriate licenses and any appropriate boat registrations are obtained. Additional information of licensing and training is available from the PA Fish & Boat Commission: <http://www.fishandboat.com/Boat/BoatingCourses/Pages/default.aspx>
- B. Boats should be well-maintained and equipped with adequate spare parts and tools, according to the area worked and the length of the trip. Care must be taken when loading boats. The maximum capacity that the boat can carry must be displayed on the boat and must not be exceeded. Boats must contain adequate safety devices such as distress flares, personal flotation devices, etc.
- C. Only licensed and appropriately trained personnel should be in charge of boats. Boats must be driven with caution and attention to prevailing conditions. Only those personnel necessary and trained for the fieldwork may be carried in boats. No one may go out boating alone.
- D. Before setting out on boating trips, check prevailing and predicted weather conditions. Boat trips should not be undertaken in poor weather (e.g. high winds, rough seas) or when poor weather is predicted over the period of the planned trip. Even when good weather is predicted, changing weather should be anticipated in planning the trip.
- E. Prior to setting out, check the vessel for safety equipment, personal flotation devices, fully charged battery, fuel, spare plugs, cotter pins, anchor and small bucket for bailing.

PROGRAM AVAILABILITY

This program will be made available to all faculty, staff, and students on the Environmental Health & Safety Committees website: <http://www.wilkes.edu/about-wilkes/university-committees/environmental-health-and-safety-committee-ehsc/index.aspx>

PROGRAM REVIEW

The Environmental Health & Safety Committee shall review or facilitate a review of this Program periodically (e.g. annually), when regulations are updated, or as deemed necessary by University operations.

I have read the Fieldwork Safety Protocol and understand the inherent dangers of working in the field. I will follow proper procedure to maintain my safety in the field and the safety of my team.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____

Phone #: _____

WILKES UNIVERSITY
PROJECT SPECIFIC SAFETY PLAN

APPENDIX A

PROJECT SPECIFIC SAFETY PLAN TEMPLATE

- A. A Project-Specific Safety Plan or SOP shall be developed by the Instructor/PI. At a minimum, this SOP shall include the following information:
 - a. A description of the project
 - b. Site-specific hazards
 - c. Chemicals and SDS information
 - d. Emergency contact information
 - e. Directions to the nearest hospital
 - f. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - g. Specific safe work practices
- B. The SOP is to be reviewed annual, where applicable.

WILKES UNIVERSITY
PROJECT SPECIFIC SAFETY PLAN

Project Name:	
----------------------	--

General			
Instructor/PI:			
Course Name:		Course Number:	
Location:			
Project Description:			

Contact Information	
Instructor/PI(s):	
Field Team	

Potential Hazards			
Physical Hazards	<input type="checkbox"/> Rough terrain	<input type="checkbox"/> Falling objects	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote distance
	<input type="checkbox"/> Unusual terrain	<input type="checkbox"/> Roadways	<input type="checkbox"/> Water
	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor cell signal	<input type="checkbox"/> Height/Altitude	<input type="checkbox"/> Noise
Weather	<input type="checkbox"/> Heat	<input type="checkbox"/> Cold	<input type="checkbox"/> Wind
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sun	<input type="checkbox"/> Snow/Ice	<input type="checkbox"/> Extreme Weather
	<input type="checkbox"/> Rain/Flood		
Equipment	<input type="checkbox"/> Tools	<input type="checkbox"/> Ventilation	<input type="checkbox"/> Trenching/Digging
	<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Dust/flying debris	<input type="checkbox"/> Electrical
Chemicals	<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (List)		
Animal/Plant	<input type="checkbox"/> Wild animals	<input type="checkbox"/> Venomous animal	<input type="checkbox"/> Insects
	<input type="checkbox"/> Trapping	<input type="checkbox"/> Handling animals	<input type="checkbox"/> Poisonous Plants
Other			

WILKES UNIVERSITY
PROJECT SPECIFIC SAFETY PLAN

Equipment List			
<input type="checkbox"/> Cell phone	<input type="checkbox"/> PPE	<input type="checkbox"/> SOP	<input type="checkbox"/> Logs
<input type="checkbox"/> Sun screen	<input type="checkbox"/> GPS	<input type="checkbox"/> First aid kit	<input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle kit
<input type="checkbox"/> SDS			<input type="checkbox"/> Fire extinguisher
Other:			

Work Procedures
<i>Describe all field work including safe working procedures</i>

Emergency Procedures	
Medical:	
Fire:	
Spill:	
Exposure:	
Other:	

WILKES UNIVERSITY
PROJECT SPECIFIC SAFETY PLAN

Personal Protective Equipment (<i>check all that apply</i>)	
Eyes:	Safety Goggles <input type="checkbox"/> Face Shield <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> _____
Clothing:	Lab Coat <input type="checkbox"/> Sun Protection <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> _____
Gloves:	Chemical <input type="checkbox"/> Work <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
Requirements:	Standard requirements include appropriate footwear, no loose clothing, and appropriate clothing.
Other:	

Training
<p>All individuals conducting this fieldwork must be informed of the specific hazards and designated control measures. All personnel are to demonstrate specific competency and familiarity regarding this procedure. The Instructor/PI is responsible for ensuring all individuals are trained in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review of this SOP ▪ Signs and symptoms of exposure ▪ Review of field safety protocol (sign) ▪ Review of the applicable SDS(s) ▪ Use of equipment ▪ Vehicle safety

Developed By:			
Date:		Revision 1:	
		Revision 2:	
		Revision 3:	
		Revision 4:	
		Revision 5:	