

Council or DOC then the staff member you are planning your project with will advise you on the correct equipment you will require for specific tasks.

Tree Planting	Wear appropriate safety footwear (no bare feet or open toed shoes)..
Garden Maintenance	Slasher/spade/loppers/secateurs: use safety footwear, gloves.. Scrubcutter/weedeater: use safety footwear, gloves, chainsaw helmet, eye protection, ear muffs. Chainsaw: use safety footwear, gloves, chainsaw helmet, eye protection, earmuffs, approved chaps. Lawnmower: use earmuffs, safety glasses.
Minor Building	Electric tools: use earmuffs, isolating transformer, eye protection. Check whether consent is required.
Litter Collection	Not on the road! Leather/disposable gloves, or use a shovel/tongs. High visibility jacket for working on a road reserve. Do not pick up needles, have a sharps container for broken glass. Do not pick up biologically or chemically contaminated waste - contact Council to arrange removal. Avoid poor lifting technique.
Painting	Electric tools: use earmuffs, dust mask, isolating transformer, eye protection. Adequate ventilation.
Working at Heights	No working above three metres. Ladders to comply with NZ Safety Standard

### Accidents and Incident Reporting

If a serious accident involving a volunteer occurs while working on Council land, Council comes under legal responsibilities. The project should be stopped, emergency services called if needed and report the injury to Council immediately. A Council officer will assess the incident and respond appropriately with your group. Minor injuries should also be reported and you should consider how these sort of injuries could be avoided in the future.

*If in doubt, call Council's Parks and Reserves section and ask!*

### Community Events on the Road

For any community event that uses the road or footpath, a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) is required. This is a legal requirement. The reason for this is that anything that could cause a motorist to be distracted, or that changes the normal driving conditions of the road, is regarded as a **Hazard**.

A TMP is simply a plan that makes sure that motorists and people participating in the event are kept safe. The TMP must be signed off by a person with proper qualifications (called an STMS). You can contact the Land Transport section of Council to discuss your TMP. Traffic Management means that you may need marshals (who have been properly trained), signs and cones and proper reflective and other gear.

A TMP will cost around \$200 for your group to write up and, if you need people to act as marshals for you on the day, it will cost about \$1,200, so budget for this when you seek grants. To get a TMP can take up to a month, so plan well ahead.

Council will take traffic management seriously. If you do not have a TMP, your event will not proceed. If the right signage or trained marshals are not provided, the event will be shut down. This seems fairly 'hard-line' but peoples' and motorists' safety is the first priority, and it's the law.

These guidelines are for your protection and enjoyment of your chosen project. If you have any questions please contact Ruapehu District Council.

*Good luck with any projects you are involved with and thank you for the work and energy you bring to Ruapehu!*



*a guide to*

# Working Safely for Your Community

## Parks and Reserves Volunteer Guidelines

How to work safely when volunteering for a community project or event. We take the mystery out of the Health and Safety Act with practical guidelines on how to work safely, to get you home to your family with all your fingers intact!

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*The information in this brochure is a guide only, and is not a statutory document*

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## Introduction

Volunteers are part of the lifeblood of our community. Ruapehu District Council really wants people to volunteer and do things around the community to make it look better. We know that people are sometimes quite nervous about doing this because of Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 requirements (the Act) and because most people don't understand any more what they can and can't do safely. Volunteering is supposed to be fun and safe for all and great for our health as well.

Volunteers are protected either via 'an enforceable duty' or a 'duty of care'. This means that, although you do not legally have to produce a health and safety plan for your activity, you still have responsibility to ensure both you and your volunteers are working safely, in a safe and healthy environment.

## Working as a Volunteer in Public Places

### *Do I need permission?*

YES. To work on a public area (such as parks and reserves, walkways, etc), you need to:

- 1 Complete a simple Parks and Reserves Volunteer Agreement form and get permission from Council's Parks and Reserves section (phone number on back).
- 2 Pick up a 'Hazard Board' from Council and fill it in before anyone lifts a tool to work.
- 3 Tell the Parks and Reserves section when and where so they can check your safety precautions.
- 4 **NO** permission will be given from Council for working on a road—this is a NO GO area as everyone's risks are too high.
- 5 If you wish to pick up litter and use bags supplied by Council, you will need to complete the Litter Collection part of the Volunteer Agreement form.

### *Identify Hazards*

The Act says that we must take all practicable steps to ensure the health and safety of the volunteer. Before you begin work in an area, you need to walk around the 'work site' and identify all the possible risks in the job you'll be doing. These risks commonly include:

- Tools you need to use.

- Risks to pedestrians or other volunteers around you.
- Risks to motorists near where you are working.

Write down the risks as you walk around and then write down what you will do to "Eliminate, Isolate or Minimise" each risk. You have just produced your first **HAZARD PLAN**—well done!! Write this onto the Hazard Board that you can borrow from Council so everyone can see and understand the risks. Ask questions of your volunteers to see if they get it.

### *Keeping Yourself Safe*

While working in any area there are some basic requirements to follow before starting.

- Make sure you are briefed properly for the task.
- Make sure you have a Hazard Plan or can identify the hazards in the area.
- If you don't feel safe, stop what you are doing.
- Know where a first aid kit is, who is trained to use it, and how to raise the alarm if needed.
- Not sure what to wear? Think about what you will be doing and dress appropriately. It is always a good idea to have a sunhat, warm hat and jacket.
- Be 'sunsmart' — slip, slop, slap. Wear sunscreen and remember to reapply often throughout the day.
- Wear comfortable and practical covered footwear.
- Bring something to eat and drink — no alcohol — and remember not to share drinks.
- Don't overdo it — take plenty of breaks and ensure you work as a team. Avoid heavy lifting and strains.
- If you suffer from allergies, asthma, or have a medical condition, ensure you have any medication you require and let the first aider in the group know.
- Don't work alone.
- Let someone know if you are leaving your site, don't just wander off.
- If a site is out of bounds for safety reasons, stay well away from it.

**Choosing to ignore good safety advice is not sensible for you or fair for your family who want you home in one piece!**

### *Safety Equipment*

- You should check safety equipment before you start.

- Safety gear should be appropriate to the task and the equipment being used. See the table for Essential Safety Guidelines (over page) if you are unsure.
- Power or mechanically driven tools should only be used by those with proper training, experience and safety equipment, and the use of these should be discussed with Parks and Reserves staff at Council.

### *Be a Safe and Happy Team*

Teamwork is the key to any volunteer operation — work together!

- At break times and the end of the day, ensure all group members and all your equipment is together. A sign in and out sheet is a good idea.
- Don't work alone. Try a buddy system, a great way to meet people and increases safety.
- Ensure all volunteers are aware of any hazards.
- If you are working over a large area, wearing high visibility vests can be a good way to make volunteers easier to locate.

### *Taking Responsibility*

Set a high standard of safety — as leader of the volunteer group, sign off the Hazard Plan that everyone understands it before they start out — put yourself on the line, not your friends.

**Test yourself: How would you answer these questions?**

- 1 Have I or my volunteers got the right equipment? *(A: If no, get it before starting.)*
- 2 Do I/they know how to use the tools? *(A: If no, get someone who can use them safely.)*
- 3 Could that branch I'm trimming off the tree land on some poor pedestrian? *(A: If yes, stop when people get close. Shoo away your kids, and mark out a fall-area with colourful objects for people to avoid.)*
- 4 Do I need to go onto the road? *(A: If yes, then Contact Council's Parks and Reserves section.)*

### *Essential Safety Guidelines*

There may be projects where special safety conditions will apply, such as working at height or on roadsides. Contact the Department of Labour for advice on this. If you are working with