



## BACKGROUND

### What Is fieldwork?

Work-related activities that take place outside. Examples include:

- urban settings
- day hikes
- multi-day excursions
- mine sites
- field trips

### Who works in the field?

**Participants** e.g., students, contractors  
**Leaders** e.g., supervisors, instructors  
**Organizers** e.g., policy makers, bosses



## RESPONSIBILITIES

### Leader Responsibilities

- Establish safe working conditions for all
- Communicate clearly



### Individual Responsibilities

- Know your own limits
- Know when you don't feel safe
- Communicate clearly

#### DID YOU KNOW?

*Under Part II of the Canada Labour Code, you have the right to refuse to perform an activity that constitutes a danger to you or to another employee*

<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/L-2/index.html>

## FIELD ACTIVITY PLAN

**A Field Activities Plan is a document that includes:**

- contact information for all workers
- accommodation and site location info
- known hazards
- emergency plan

**Print copies for:**

- someone at home base
- each person working
- the vehicle



Field Activities Plan	
PI/Supervisor's Name:	
Faculty/Department:	
Department Contact Name and Contact Info:	
Project Description (brief):	
Dates of Research Work:	
Participant Names:	

The Field Activities Plan is an all-encompassing template that contains a hazard assessment, the foundation for an effective safety plan. A hazard assessment is required before any field research activity and should be reviewed whenever there is a change in activities, location or people that will affect the hazards and controls.

MAKING A COPY OF THIS TEMPLATE AND SAVE IT IN YOUR ELECTRONIC DOCUMENTS. PRINT OUT TWO COPIES. KEEP ONE WITH YOU IN THE FIELD AND GIVE ONE TO THE OFFICE OFFICE IN YOUR UNIT.

*A template can be found here, under the Resources subsection*

## GENERAL FIELD HAZARDS

### Vehicles

e.g., cars, ATVs, boats

### Wildlife

e.g., bears, ticks, mosquitoes

### Plants

e.g., poison ivy, dead fall, stinging nettle



### Environment

e.g., weather, terrain, distance to EMS

### Mental health

e.g., interpersonal relationships, feeling down, change in routine, isolation

### Physical health

e.g., tripping, dehydration, rock fall, sore body, allergies

## BATHROOM ACCESSIBILITY

### Leader Responsibilities

- Discuss bathroom access, or lack thereof, before field work starts, so that participants are prepared
- Schedule bathroom stops each day
- Incorporate bathroom-related logistics and hazards into daily safety meetings
- At each stop, discuss places to go
- Do not make participants feel as though they are inconveniencing the group

### Individual Responsibilities

- Use a bathroom technique that works for you!
- Carry your own supplies
- Communicate when you need to go
- Have a bathroom buddy

### Dehydration may mean less bathroom stops, but can result in:

- urinary tract infections, kidney stones, or constipation
- feeling faint or not alert

### Being secretive about bathroom breaks can result in:

- isolation from the group
- encounters with wildlife or machinery

Be aware of insects and dangerous plants when exposing your skin!

*A ziploc bag wrapped in duct tape and filled with baking soda provides a discreet storage place for used bathroom products*

### Tools

- Toilet paper
- Shovel
- Portable bidet
- Stand-to-pee device
- Pee cloth
- Hand sanitizer



## DAILY HAZARDS CHAT

### At the start of each day:

- note potential safety issues/hazards
  - e.g., slipping on wet rocks
- think of ways to mitigate hazards
  - e.g., watch where you step

### During the day:

- vocalize hazards that come up
  - e.g., "black flies are especially bad, make sure to reapply insect repellent"

### At the end of the day:

- what did we do well?
- what could we do better?

*Write hazards down in your notebook at the start of each day, or keep a safety logbook*

## FIRST AID

- Always have at least one first-aid-certified person in the field
- Designate a person as a safety officer/primary first-aid
- Encourage all leaders/participants to become certified in first aid

### Supplement a store-bought first aid kit with:

- extra band aids
- tweezers
- afterbite
- tensor bandage
- blister pads
- antibiotic cream
- hand sanitizer
- pain medication
- aspirin
- bismuth tablets
- allergy medication
- yeast infection cream
- menstrual pads
- super glue



*Consider acquiring/renting an AED*

## MENSTRUATION IN THE FIELD

**People who menstruate have varied symptoms that can be debilitating, including:**

- abdominal cramps
- fatigue
- gastrointestinal issues



### Tools

#### Menstrual cups/discs

- Only need to be cleaned every 12 hours
- Often hold greater volumes than pads or tampons

#### Menstrual underwear

- Available in multiple absorption levels

*If someone tells you they are feeling unwell, trust them to know their body*

## ABILITY

### Leader Responsibilities

- Communicate expectations
- Ask about accommodations in a private & respectful manner
- Plan rest and bathroom stops
- Do not rush participants

### Individual Responsibilities

- Know your own limits
- Advocate for yourself
- Bring the supplies you need
  - e.g., hiking poles for uneven ground, sweet treats if blood-glucose levels vary

*Conduct daily mental and physical health check-ins*

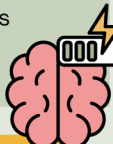
## CULTURE & INCLUSION

### Field work is expensive

- Consider having a selection of field equipment to loan out
- Establish or promote a gear share system with peers
- Have a gear allowance for employees

**Leaders and organizers must open a dialogue on issues related to:**

- fears associated with field work
- hygiene while in the field
- dietary preferences/restrictions
- sleeping arrangements
- alcohol culture
- religious practices



*Different people have different needs for rest and rejuvenation*

- daily recharge time
- socialization and quiet time options

## FIVE DAY PACKING LIST

### Personal

Hygiene

- Bathroom tools (see above)
- Menstrual products
- Towel
- Hand sanitizer

Water bottles (2 L/day minimum)

Lunch container

2x field pants

2x field shirts

3x thick socks

Underwear

Sweater

Cold weather

- Toque
- Gloves

Warm weather

- Sun hat
- Sunscreen

Sunglasses

Aspirin

Personal Medication

### Equipment

Hiking boots

Hiking poles

Rain coat & pants

Multitool

Camera

### If leading

First aid kit

Personal Protective Equipment

- Work gloves
- Safety glasses
- Hard hats
- High-vis vests

Insect/wildlife repellent

GPS

Satellite phone/inReach/SPOT

Discipline-specific gear



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*Please use the QR code provided to answer a few short questions about this guide*

## Disclaimer

*This field safety guidebook is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of wise practices for fieldwork. However, it does not cover every possible scenario or safety consideration. Please adapt recommendations to your specific field conditions. If you have questions, suggestions, or require clarification, please contact [mo.snyder@acadiau.ca](mailto:mo.snyder@acadiau.ca).*