

Basic Safety Requirements for Spontaneous Flood Clean-Up Volunteers

1. Pre-Deployment Briefing / Toolbox Talk

- **Mandatory safety briefing** before work begins (Toolbox Talk).
- Cover:
 - Key hazards (contaminated water, sewage and chemicals, unstable structures, electrical risks, dusts)
 - Personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements.
 - Manual handling techniques
 - Decontamination – especially prior to eating - personnel hygiene expectations
 - Fatigue management minimise shift times
 - Slips trips and falls
 - Emergency contacts and procedures.
 - Work zones and restricted areas.
 - Buddy system expectations.

2. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Volunteers must be equipped with:

- Gloves – heavy-duty, waterproof (if available), and puncture-resistant.
- Boots – waterproof (preferably steel-capped) for protection from debris, mud, and water.
- Long-sleeved shirts and long pants – to reduce skin exposure to contaminants.
- High-visibility vests – for visibility around machinery and vehicles.
- Eye protection – for tasks involving debris, high-pressure cleaning, or chemicals.
- Face masks / respirators – especially where there is mould, dust, or chemical exposure. Minimum P2
- Sun protection – hat, sunscreen (SPF 30+), sunglasses if working outdoors.

3. Hygiene and Decontamination

- Handwashing stations or sanitiser available at all sites.
- Decontamination process before eating, drinking, or finishing shift:
 - Wash hands and exposed skin.
 - Rinse and disinfect reusable tools and PPE.
 - Remove muddy or contaminated clothing before entering vehicles or homes.
- Avoid touching face, mouth, or eyes during clean-up.
- Tetanus vaccinations should be up to date.

4. Health and Safety Guidelines

- No one under 18 should be involved in flood debris clean-up.
- Volunteers must be physically capable of performing the assigned tasks.
- Take regular breaks, stay hydrated, and avoid over-exertion.

- Do not enter flooded buildings or confined spaces unless cleared and authorised by emergency services.
- Electrical and gas hazards must be reported—do not touch live wires or attempt repairs.
- Report all injuries or hazards to site supervisors immediately.

5. Supervision and Coordination

- Volunteers should be registered and assigned to a supervised team.
- Work in pairs (buddy system) and if possible, with emergency services personnel for accountability.
- Supervisors should be trained in first aid and emergency response.
- Volunteers must follow instructions from emergency services or authorised personnel at all times.

● Safety Requirements for Volunteers – Flood Clean-Up Operations ●







Your safety is our priority. Before assisting with flood clean-up, please read and follow the safety guidelines below.

☒ Before You Start: Toolbox Talk

- Attend a **mandatory safety briefing** before commencing work.
- Understand:
 - Hazards (e.g. contaminated water, unstable structures, electrical risks)
 - Safe work practices
 - Emergency procedures
 - Buddy system and site layout



Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – Must Wear:

-  **Waterproof gloves** (puncture-resistant)
-  **Waterproof boots** (steel-capped recommended)
-  **Long-sleeved shirt & pants**
-  **Hi-vis vest**
-  **Mask / respirator** (especially around mould or dust)
-  **Eye protection & sun protection** (hat, sunscreen, sunglasses)

Hygiene & Decontamination

- Wash hands regularly – especially before eating or drinking
- Do NOT touch face during clean-up
- Change out of wet/muddy clothing before entering cars or homes
- Rinse tools and PPE after use
- Ensure tetanus vaccination is up to date


Safety Guidelines


- Minimum age: 18 years old
- Stay hydrated, take regular breaks
- Report injuries or hazards immediately
- Never enter flooded buildings or confined spaces unless cleared
- Avoid electrical/gas hazards – report and keep clear
- Always work in pairs – use the buddy system


Supervision & Support

- All volunteers must be **registered**
- Work under **supervision**
- Follow directions from **emergency services** and site leaders

Thank you for helping your community. Stay alert, stay safe, and look out for one another.

 For emergencies, call **000**

 Site Supervisor Contact: _____

 Volunteer Check-In Point: _____