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| **OVERVIEW:** | Describes safe work considerations and practices associated hazardous and controlled substance management and handling | | | | | |
| **Personnel required:** | * No minimum personnel – general handling and inventory management can be carried out by lone workers * Two or more personnel are recommended for activities involving actual or potential exposure [refer to task-specific SOPs for guidance]. | | | | | |
| **Equipment required:** | * Adequately stocked first aid kit * Spill containment and recovery kit * Emergency wash-down facilities * Emergency communication systems | | | | | |
| **PPE required:** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |  |

**Authorised persons**

A certified handlers compliance certificate and a current Controlled Substances Licence (CSL) is required for anyone handling, using and disposing of Vertebrate Toxic Agents (VTAs).

Non-certified individuals can handle hazardous substances provided a certified handler is present to supervise the work and provide guidance and assistance as required.

**Hazardous substance register**

A hazardous substances register is maintained to record:

* products stored on site,
* approximate quantities,
* location
* storage compatibility with other products stored in the area

The register must be readily available and regularly updated. For bulk storage, detail should be provided to the local emergency services to ensure that they are aware of what may encounter in the event of an on-site emergency. Worksafe NZ provides detailed guidance at <http://www.hazardoussubstances.govt.nz/>

**Tracking**

Tracking refers to the recording of what happens to the substance through its lifecycle. Tracking is required for the following substances:

* Potassium cyanide
* Sodium cyanide
* Yellow phosphorus
* Sodium fluoroacetate (1080)
* PAPP
* Pindone
* Microencapsulated zinc phosphide (MZP)

**Safety Data Sheets**

Safety Data Sheets (SDS) are held for all hazardous substances used. Users should refer to SD sheets prior to handling.

SD sheets provide key information in relation to:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Storage * Handling * Preparation * Transportation | * Application * Spill containment & recovery * Emergency response |

**VTA Warning Requirements**

Warning signs must be placed at the location where the VTA is stored and has been used. Signage must include details of:

* which VTA has been used,
* what the hazards are
* what to look out for

Signage must be placed at all normal points of entry to the treatment area when using:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Cyanide * 1080 * Phosphorus * PAPP | * MZP * DRC1339 * Sodium nitrite. |

**VTA Pre-operation Requirements**

Follow label instructions and ensure:

* Potential hazards, spillage and accident procedures are discussed before commencing the work.
* Personal protective equipment is worn per label requirements.
* When a forklift is used for loading or unloading VTA, the driver is a licenced forklift operator.
* Lids of drums and bottles are checked and secure for handling, and VTA packaging are inspected for holes and rips.
* Approved Handlers receiving packaged VTAs must check details are correct on label.
* Protective clothing and equipment is removed, and hands/arms/face thoroughly washed before eating, drinking, smoking or using the toilet.
* No person who is not lawfully assisting in that operation may remain in the vicinity of the operation.

**Using Liquid Concentrates**

When using liquid 1080 or Pindone, follow label instructions and ensure:

* Bait preparation techniques (mixing/diluting/spraying/injecting/etc) and potential hazards are discussed with staff before commencing the work.
* Packages with VTA must be clearly marked with the correct label and Safety Data Sheet (SDS) is with the VTA and available at all times.
* Personal protective equipment is worn per label requirements.
* Protective clothing and equipment is removed, and hands/arms/face thoroughly washed before eating, drinking, smoking or using the toilet.
* Suitable antidote, if any, is immediately available and within use-by date.
* Washing facilities are immediately available e.g., soap, paper towels, nail brush and a clean supply of water.
* No person who is not lawfully assisting in that operation may remain in the vicinity of the operation.

**In-field Bait Stations and Ground Based Application**

Follow label instructions and ensure:

* Bait application techniques (placing and removing) and potential hazards are discussed with staff before commencing the work.
* Personal protective equipment is worn per label requirements.
* Where toxic bait is pre-bagged:
* Bags must be clearly marked to identify contents.
* Bags must be carried in a backpack (with plastic liners inside them) with the VTA label securely attached to the outside of the backpack and the SDS readily available.
* Food and drink are kept away from the VTA.
* Protective clothing and equipment is removed, and hands/arms/face thoroughly washed before eating, drinking, smoking or using the toilet.

**Post Operational Clean-up**

Follow label instructions and ensure:

* Clean-up techniques and potential hazards are discussed with staff before commencing work.
* Personal protective equipment is worn per label requirements.
* Contaminated safety equipment, vehicles and any other equipment that has been in contact with VTA are thoroughly washed at a VTAs location where runoff is unlikely to enter any watercourse or water bodies.
* Surplus VTA (meaning fresh bait that is still OK for use) should be stored in its original packaging with manufacturers label attached and SDS available.
* Surplus VTA (fresh bait still OK for use) shall only be passed on or sold to individuals or organisations that are authorised users, in their original packaging, manufacturers label attached and SDS available.
* Any contaminated equipment to be refilled must be triple rinsed.
* No VTA containers shall be re-used for any other purpose.
* Washing facilities are immediately available e.g. soap, paper towels, nailbrush, and a supply of clean water.
* Suitable antidote, if any, is immediately available and within use-by date.
* All equipment used to handle, dispense or carry VTAs (e.g., bait station, back packs) must be fit for purpose and be free of defects (i.e., no rips, tears, holes or cracks).
* Protective clothing and equipment is removed, and hands/arms/face thoroughly washed before eating, drinking, smoking or using the toilet.

**Emergency Management**

In case of spillage, ensure:

* Product label directions are followed.
* Personal protective equipment is worn per label requirements.
* All practicable steps are taken to prevent the spilled substance coming into contact with any person or any other vehicle.
* All practicable steps are taken to isolate and contain the spill
* All practicable steps are taken to prevent the spill entering watercourses, sewers or drains
* The Emergency Response Plan is implemented and followed

Any VTA misapplication or spillage must be report to the consent providers. The NZ Police must be notified of any misapplication or spillage involving:

* Cyanide
* Phosphorus
* DRC 1339
* Rotenone
* 1080

In the event of poisoning:

* Ensure responders will not be exposed to the toxic substance – put on appropriate PPE if required
* Provide immediate first aid [check product label/SDS if uncertain how to respond]
* Request medical assistance (dial 111)
* Call National Poisons Centre if required (0800 764 766)
* Remove any contaminated clothing from patient if required.

**End.**

**DISCLAIMER:**

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