

VOLUNTEER SAFETY INFORMATION

Protect Yourself! You may be exposed to:

Rodents, Snakes, and Insects



Insects, Spiders and Ticks

- To protect yourself from biting and stinging insects, when possible, wear long pants, socks, and long-sleeved shirts.
- Use insect repellents.
- Treat bites and stings with over-the-counter products that relieve pain and prevent infection.
- Avoid fire ants; their bites are painful and cause blisters.
- Severe reactions to fire ant bites (chest pain, nausea, sweating, and loss of breath, serious swelling or slurred speech) require immediate medical treatment.



Rodents and Wild or Stray Animals

- Dead and live animals can spread diseases such as Rat-bite Fever and Rabies.
- Avoid contact with wild or stray animals.
- Avoid contact with rats or rat-contaminated buildings. If you can't avoid contact, wear protective gloves and wash your hands regularly.
- Get rid of dead animals as soon as possible.
- If bitten/scratched, get medical attention immediately.

Snakes

- Watch where you place your hands and feet when removing debris. If possible, don't place your fingers under debris you are moving. Wear heavy gloves.
- If you see a snake, step back and allow it to proceed.
- Wear boots at least 10 inches high.
- Watch for snakes sunning on fallen trees, limbs or other debris.
- A snake's striking distance is about 1/2 the total length of the snake.
- If bitten, get medical attention immediately.



- Note the color and shape of the snake's head to help with treatment.
- Keep bite victims still and calm to slow the spread of venom in case the snake is poisonous.
- Do not cut the wound or attempt to suck out the venom. Apply first aid: lay the person down so that the bite is below the level of the heart, and cover the bite with a clean, dry dressing.

This is one in a series of Volunteer Safety Information Fact Sheets highlighting Samaritan's Purse North American Ministries programs, policies, or standards.

**www.spvolunteernetwork.org
828-262-1980
disasterrelief@samaritan.org**