

# Safety ALERT

Sharing information to prevent incidents

## Target audience

All Sydney Trains workers, including contractors, who may encounter snakes at their workplace or when undertaking work.

## The Issue

Snakes are known to become more active as the weather warms up and are seen to emerge and bask in the sun to warm up by lying on warm surfaces (e.g. asphalt, concrete and rocks which absorb heat) or under warm surfaces (e.g. building materials, such as corrugated roofing iron).

Snakes are also likely to be found in areas of long grass, stockpiles of materials (such as sleepers), under doors, drainage structures (such as culverts) and around permanent water sources.

While snakes are generally not aggressive and usually don't seek confrontation with humans, they may retaliate if they feel threatened or provoked.



## What you must do

- Do not step or put your hands where you cannot see and avoid walking through thickly vegetated areas and step onto, rather than over, structures as there may be a snake on the other side.
- Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as over-the-ankle boots, should be made available to personnel working in areas where there is a risk of encountering snakes and appropriate communication tools should be available when undertaking isolated or remote work.
- Under no circumstances should a worker attempt to catch, handle, injure or move a snake. They will defend themselves if confronted or threatened and most snake bites occur when people try to catch or kill a snake.
- Contact WIRES on 1300 094 737 or [WIRES Australian Wildlife Rescue Organisation](#) should an expert snake handler be required.
- All native animals in NSW are protected under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*. It is an offence to harm native fauna and flora, and penalties apply.
- Good housekeeping practices and awareness when working in the rail corridor and long grass areas will help minimise the risk of snake habitats and reduce snake interaction.
- All site or field-based first aid kits where there is a risk of encountering snakes are to have compression bandages for snake bites.
- If bitten, it is important to keep the person calm, immobilised and seek immediate medical treatment. First aiders and workers should refresh themselves on the correct technique in applying a compression bandage to a snake bite.

Contact your SEQR Business Partner or Line Manager if you have any questions.



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