SAFETY HANDBOOK FOR VOLUNTEERS

For emergencies call 911

Table of Contents

Volunteer Responsibility *2*

Contacts *3*

General Policies *5*

Volunteer Safety *6*

Tools and Devices *9*

First Aid and Emergency Care *12*

Volunteer Responsibility

I am volunteering to work at the RCHFH worksite, ReStore or offices at my own risk after reading the RCHFH Safety Handbook. If for any reason I believe that my working at the RCHFH worksite, ReStore, or offices might endanger me or others, I must immediately report this to the Construction Director or other RCHFH staff immediately at the worksite, the ReStore Manager at the ReStore or the Community Outreach Coordinator at the RCHFH offices.

This might include, among other things, communicable diseases, physical impairments and medication (prescription and otherwise that might impair my judgment).

If I encounter an injured person at the worksite, ReStore, or RCHFH offices, I should not attempt to provide medical attention to the person unless I am trained and certified. If I encounter an injured person at the worksite, I will notify the Construction Director or other RCHFH staff immediately.

If I encounter an injured person at the ReStore, I will notify the ReStore Manager immediately.

If I encounter an injured person at the RCHFH offices, I will notify the CEO or COO immediately.

Contacts

For an electronic copy of this Safety Handbook & more information about Rutherford County Area Habitat for Humanity visit www.rchfh.org.

The on-line version of the Safety Handbook supersedes any printed version.

Main Office Line (call first)

(615) 890.5877

Construction Director

Steve Arnold – (615) 804.8842

Community Outreach Coordinator

Megan Hutchings – (615) 890.5877 x106

ReStore Manager

Tina Busey - (615) 890.5877 x109

Our Mission Statement

Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope.

General Policies

Unlawful Harassment and Discrimination

RCHFH expects all volunteers to behave in a way that reinforces the Christian mission and founding principles of the organization. All volunteers should be treated with respect and consideration and feel that RCHFH provides a safe and productive environment. RCHFH prohibits any actions or conduct that may discriminate against or harass others.

If you feel that you have been harassed, you should notify the Office Manager of your concerns without delay. RCHFH will investigate all claims of prohibited harassment.

Resolving Issues with Others

As in all workplaces, personal differences may occur among individuals. It is important for you and RCHFH that issues are not allowed to fester and detract from your important contribution to this ministry.

We believe that the quickest way to resolve issues is to approach the individual(s) involved so that an appropriate solution can be reached. If this initial conversation does not lead to resolution or you feel uncomfortable discussing the matter with the person directly, we ask that you speak with a RCHFH Supervisor or CEO to resolve the matter.

Workplace Violence

RCHFH can best perform its mission when all associates coexist in a climate that supports a free exchange of ideas and utilizes constructive methods of conflict resolution. Habitat is committed to creating and maintaining an environment free from disruptive, threatening and violent behavior.

RCHFH Equipment and Property

Please be respectful of RCHFH property, tools, and equipment. Take good care of tools and supplies so that they remain in good and safe working conditions. All tools, equipment, and supplies cost money and you can help us maximize resources with proper usage and storage.

Dress Code

RCHFH maintains a policy of conservative attire worn in good taste and appropriate to the situation. Attire should be appropriate for the task to protect you from worksite hazards.

All volunteers must wear close-toed shoes (i.e. work shoes, boots or sneakers) when volunteering at the ReStore or construction sites. Sandals, flip flops, open toe and high heel shoes are unsafe and prohibited on the worksite.

Drug and Alcohol Use

RCHFH is a Drug Free Workplace. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of controlled substances is prohibited at all our facilities. At no time will drugs or alcohol be permitted at the RCHFH worksite, ReStores, or office.

Smoke Free Environment

RCHFH is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that is safe and healthy. The use of tobacco products in the ReStore, Office, on the Worksite, or during other volunteer tasks is prohibited.

Volunteer Safety

Cell Phone & Ear Bud Usage in the ReStore

At RCHFH, safety is our highest priority. To help maintain a secure and focused environment for everyone, the use of cell phones and ear buds is not permitted while volunteering in the ReStore.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us ensure a safe and productive experience for all.

Safety is everyone's concern. Every volunteer on an RCHFH site becomes a safety leader the moment they arrive. An observer can often see danger better than the worker involved in the project and it is their obligation to speak to the worker and RCHFH Supervisor. Since Habitat work crews normally have a high proportion of inexperienced people, everyone must pay particular attention to safety.

Be conscious of the safety of others as well as your own. Always be cautious. Safety is based on knowledge, skill and an attitude of care and concern. Ask questions. There is always an RCHFH Supervisor on each site that can help you identify inherent hazards and instruct you on how to avoid them.

Guidelines for a Safe Build

Be honest about your comfort level. There is no need to be a hero on a Habitat build. If the thought of working at heights bothers you, stay off the high ladders.

Proper Safety Equipment

- Appropriate clothing
    - This is as important to safety as the proper selection and use of tools. Workers must wear work shoes, boots or sneakers. Any person wearing sandals, flip flops, open toe or high heel shoes will not be allowed to remain on the worksite.
- Hard hats
    - Hard hats are available onsite and must be worn when determined necessary by a Habitat Site Supervisor.
- Protective eyewear
    - Eyewear is available onsite and should be worn when determined necessary by an RCHFH Supervisor.
- Dust masks
    - Dust masks are available onsite and should be worn when installing insulation or in heavy dust situations.
- Earplugs
    - Earplugs are available onsite and should be used when subjected to loud noises for an extended period of time.
- Gloves
    - Work gloves are available onsite and should be worn when carrying materials.

Think about your task. If you are uncertain about how to accomplish your task or how to operate a tool or piece of equipment, ask a supervisor. Concentrate on the task at hand. Avoid distractions. Inspect all power tools, hand tools, and ladders. If any unsafe tools or conditions come to your attention, contact the supervisor immediately.

Tools and Devices

Powered Tools

Before utilizing any powered tools or devices, wait for proper instruction. Each volunteer should receive instructions before a power tool is used, including what could happen if not used correctly. A supervisor should give instructions to all volunteers, including experienced do-it-yourselfers.

Check all power tools – switches, cords and plugs – for any defects. Pay special attention to blade guards to make sure they operate correctly. Under no circumstances should you ever disable a blade guard. Defective tools should not be used, and an RCHFH supervisor should be notified so that they can remove the tool from service immediately.

Always examine extension cords before use. They should be of sufficient size (check with an RCHFH supervisor) and in good condition. Keep cords out of mud or water and avoid stepping on them.

Hand Tools

When using hand tools, it is important to select the proper tool. Make sure you are using the right tool for the job at hand and make sure it's the proper size. If you're unsure, ask an RCHFH supervisor.

Always check the condition of a hand tool. Avoid tools with loose handles or tools that are dull. Make sure the tools are clean and free of oil or dirt that can cause a tool to slip.

Additionally, ensure that you are holding the tool correctly. A hammer should be held at the base of the handle to ensure maximum efficiency, while a knife should be held in such a manner as to allow you to cut away from your body. Handle and carry all tools with care. Carry only a few tools at a time or carry them in a tool belt with special compartments. Keep sharp or pointed tools pointed away from you.

Be conscious of where you lay your tools down in consideration of both yours and other's safety. Never lay a hammer down on the slope of a roof or the top of a stepladder. Use extreme caution with a saw. Never bind a saw blade, especially a power saw. It can result in a very dangerous bucking action that can cause serious injury. Support what you are cutting in a proper fashion to avoid kickbacks or to prevent a cut board from falling where it could drop on someone.

Ladders

Inspect all ladders before use. If the ladder is unsafe, don't use it. Look for wear and tear, loose rungs and other defects. Use ladders of proper length. An extension ladder should reach three feet above the work level. Move your ladder with your work. Don't lean too far. If both of your shoulders are outside the ladder you are leaning too far and serious injury could occur.

Set your ladder at the proper angle, following the 4:1 rule (for every four feet of height, the bottom of the ladder should be one foot away from the wall.) You are at the correct angle if, when you place your toes against the base of the ladder and stand erect, you can reach out and grasp the rung at shoulder height.

Always place your ladder on solid footing. Avoid mud or gravel. If there is a risk of the ladder slipping, tie or stake the ladder down. If the ladder is not level, dig the ground out from under the high leg rather than "block up" the other leg. Always face the ladder.

Carry tools in a container so that your hands are free to climb. If you are uncomfortable with ladder placement or stability, find an RCHFH supervisor.

Be cautious with aluminum ladders. Never use an aluminum ladder near electrical lines, in inclement weather or on windy days.

Worksite and Tool Maintenance

Always maintain a clean worksite. Keeping a neat and organized worksite contributes to efficiency and is important in preventing accidents. Clean up all rubbish and scrap as you go. Do not allow wood scraps, nails or any trash to pile up. They interfere with work and can be a hazard. Protruding nails from loose lumber is a hazard. Remove or flatten them before discarding.

Keep up with tools and equipment that are not being used and return them to the tool container. This protects the tools as well as the workers.

First Aid and Emergency Care

RCHFH strives to have a person certified in First Aid and CPR on site at all times.

The location of the first aid kit and how to get emergency help will be explained to the group during the morning orientation.

Emergency Medical Treatment

If you see someone hurt or you yourself are injured, notify any identified safety professionals and any RCHFH staff immediately or call 911 for serious injuries. First aid kits are located in the Habitat trucks.

Bloodborne Pathogens

- *What are bloodborne pathogens?*
    - Bloodborne pathogens are viruses or bacteria present in human blood and bodily fluids, which can infect and cause disease in humans. Any contact with infected blood or body fluids carries the risk of potential infection.
- How to protect yourself from blood borne pathogens?
    - Protect yourself first… treat the injured party SECOND.
    - Treat all blood and body fluid spills as if they are infectious.
    - Wear appropriate personal protective equipment. Most accident responses will require only gloves for adequate protection. However, other protection may include gowns, face shields, facemasks and eye protection.
    - If performing mouth to mouth resuscitation, always use a pocket mask equipped with a one-way valve to prevent contact with potentially infectious body fluids.