



First aid and emergency response

What is the issue?

Having the emergency response procedures and equipment, and the first aid skills to respond to an incident and help someone injured in or around the dairy.

Why is it an issue?

Farming is a dangerous occupation. We not only need to reduce the risks of injury, we must also put in place processes that will ensure we can respond effectively if an incident does occur.

What are the consequences of ignoring it?

The best chance a seriously injured person has of surviving is for them to receive emergency medical help as soon as possible. Basic first aid is a way to keep someone alive – by helping them to continue breathing and stopping their bleeding – while waiting for emergency medical assistance.

A seriously injured person may die if someone is not on hand to administer appropriate first aid while waiting for emergency medical help.

How safe is your dairy now?

Do you have a plan to follow in case of an incident or medical emergency? Does everyone working in the dairy know what must be done to put that plan into action? Do you have emergency response equipment, such as fire extinguishers?

Who on staff is trained in first aid?

Do you have a first aid kit in the dairy and do all your workers know where it is located? When was the last time someone checked its contents were all there?

What can be done right now?

Identify the potential incidents that can occur in and around the dairy. These will include fires, chemical spills, machinery and equipment accidents, drowning, snake bites, and rescues from vats or silos.

Develop an emergency response procedure in conjunction with your family and staff.

Avoid you or your staff working alone, where possible.

Ensure you have reliable communication systems available. Then, if an accident does happen, there should be someone on hand to respond, administer first aid, if necessary, and raise the alarm.

A suitably stocked and packaged first aid kit is a 'must' in the dairy – it may even be necessary to have more than one. The kit should be easily accessible, e.g. hooked on a wall, and signposted, and



Safety in the Dairy - Hazard sheet

everyone working in the dairy should know where to find it. It should also be easily carried to an injured person.

The first aid kit should contain disposable resuscitation face shields and disposable gloves to provide an infection control barrier for the injured person and the one administering the first aid.

Put emergency response information near the telephone or in another readily accessible part of the dairy that everyone knows about. The type of information that should be available includes:

- phone numbers for the fire brigade, ambulance and police (000) and Poisons Information (131 126); and
- Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) in case of a chemical incident – the requirements of the MSDSs should be reflected in the contents of your first aid kit (See ‘Chemicals’ note).

There should be adequate fire extinguishers around the dairy, suitable for the different types of fires that might breakout, e.g. a dry powder type for electrical fires. Make sure that the extinguishers are routinely inspected and everyone is trained in their use.

What are the next steps?

As many dairies are in isolated areas and emergency medical assistance may be a while in arriving, it is vital that dairy workers are trained to an adequate level of first aid and that these skills are supported by equipment that meets the needs of the workplace. In fact, it may pay to ensure all workers are trained in basic level first aid and that at least one person on-site is trained in level 2 first aid. That person should be known to all and be responsible for keeping the first aid kit up to date.

To work out your dairy’s emergency response needs, you will need to consider the:

- size and layout of the workplace;
- workplace location;
- number and distribution of employees and non-dairy personnel;
- nature and hazards of the work;
- known occurrences of accidents and illnesses;
- physical condition of employees;
- existing medical conditions; and
- distance from the workplace to the nearest available and appropriate medical or occupational health services.

By identifying these elements, and with some help from first aiders, fire services and the MSDSs, you should then be able to create a profile of the dairy’s first aid needs and an emergency response plan that would include, for example:



Safety in the Dairy - Hazard sheet

- the contents of your first aid kits;
- the number and location of first aid kits;
- suitable means of communication, including mobile phones and UHF radios;
- suitable transport for the sick or injured;
- employee training in emergency response that will include evacuations, fire extinguisher use, chemical spill containment and clean up, and advice on the availability of first aid assistance;
- an operational emergency chemical shower and eye wash;
- spill containment equipment and disposal processes;
- the number and training of first aid personnel;
- the closest hospital or emergency medical assistance;
- the language in which information should be provided; and
- clear information for locating the injured person, such as a fire map or GPS references.

Develop a communication system that enables regular contact. This may include:

- notification of whereabouts;
- use of mobile phones and UHF radios;
- regular call-ins; and
- physical checks.

What actions are not optional

First aid skills and first aid kits must be available to all who work and visit the dairy.

If you are an employer, you must display an 'If you are injured poster' in the tea room or dairy. These are available from your workers' compensation insurer.

An accident and injury register must be completed.

Accidents resulting in death or an injury requiring substantial medical treatment must be reported to WorkSafe immediately, by phoning 132 360, followed by written notification within 48 hours.

Records of the incident must be kept for 5 years.

If a death does occur, the employer must ensure the incident site is not disturbed, unless some safety-related action is necessary.

An employer must also notify WorkSafe, by phoning 132 360, of a serious incident that exposed people to risk. That usually means plant, excavations or building collapse, fires and explosions, or dangerous goods spills and leaks. Notification also needs to be in writing within 48 hours.



Safety in the Dairy - Hazard sheet

Where to go for more information

WorkSafe Victoria First aid in the Workplace Code of Practice 1995	www.workcover.vic.gov.au
First FAQs	www.workcover.vic.gov.au
St John Ambulance First aid kits and training	www.stjohn.org.au
Australian Red Cross First aid kits and training	www.redcross.org.au
Chubb Fire safety information and extinguishers	www.chubb.com.au
WorkSafe incident notification	www.workcover.vic.gov.au