

*District Council of Peterborough*



*Amalgamated 1997*

**DISTRICT COUNCIL  
of  
PETERBOROUGH**

**Snake Management  
Procedure**



# DISTRICT COUNCIL of PETERBOROUGH

## *SNAKE MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE*

- Adoption Reference:** Council Meeting 16/10/2017  
Resolution 82/17
- Applicable Legislation:** NA
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- Review Dates:**

## **1. OVERVIEW**

The District Council of Peterborough recognises its obligation to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable to minimise the risks involved when workers are required to capture and release snakes from the organisations facilities or township areas.

This procedure applies to the Council facilities and snakes on private property.

### **This procedure aims to:**

- a) Raise awareness of the process to follow when the organisations workers encounter snakes in their workplaces.
- b) Provide direction on the process of safely capturing and releasing snakes back into the wild.
- c) Provide guidance on snake related emergencies such as snake bite or escaping of a captured snake.
- d) Capture of snakes from private premises.

## **2. CORE COMPONENTS**

The core components of our Snake Management Procedure aim to:

- a) Snakes shall only be captured by appropriately trained workers;
- b) Appropriate PPE shall be worn by persons attempting to capture a snake;
- c) Snakes will be released unharmed back into the wild as per the Department of environment, water and natural resources (DEWNR) guidelines; and
- d) Establish guidelines on managing snake related emergencies.

## **3. PROCEDURE**

### **3.1 Snake sightings**

When a snake is sighted on Council or private land the following will be followed:

- a) Never harass the snake or attempt to catch it yourself.
- b) Never attempt to kill a snake as this may provoke it and it is also illegal unless the situation is life threatening.
- c) Try to remain calm and ensure the area is made safe by removing all non-essential personnel, members of the public etc.
- d) Where possible appoint a willing spotter to remain at a safe distance but still able to monitor the snakes movements. (Never force someone to do this task unless they are confident to do so).
- e) If the snake is indoors ensure that all escape routes are monitored from a safe distance to ascertain if the snake has left the building or if it remains indoors.
- f) Contact authorised snake catcher and inform of the situation. They are the only authorised persons within the organisation permitted to safely remove a snake.
- g) Keep the area clear and monitor the snake's movements until they arrive.
- h) Follow any reasonable instruction that the snake catcher may give to assist them to capture and remove the snake safely.

## 3.2 Capture and removal of the snake by authorised person

### 3.2.1 Locating the Snake

- a) A first aid kit with the snake bite module and access to a mobile phone shall be within the immediate area at all times.
- b) UVR/Inclement weather shall be considered when working outdoors for extended periods.
- c) Care will be taken when walking on uneven grounds, gloves, sturdy footwear, long trousers, and snake gators shall be worn.
- d) Care is to be taken when lifting objects to locate the snake, lifting with the legs not the back.
- e) Non-essential workers, members of the public etc shall remain at a safe distance.
- f) If the snake cannot be located a spotter should remain in the area for a period of time to ensure it does not return. (Never force someone to do this task unless they are confident to do so).

### 3.2.2 Capturing the snake

- a) A first aid kit with the snake bite module and access to a mobile phone shall be within the immediate area at all times.
- b) A spotter where possible is required to be at a safe distance to raise the alarm in case of an emergency.
- c) The following tools are required to be on hand and used while capturing a snake:
  1. Snake Hook
  2. Snake Tongs
  3. Designated snake bag with securing clip
- d) The following PPE is to be worn while capturing a snake:
  1. Snake Gators and long trousers
  2. Sturdy footwear
  3. Longs sleeves rolled down
  4. UVR PPE as required
  5. Leather riggers gauntlet style gloves are recommended but not mandatory
- e) The tools used to capture snakes shall be used in a way that they not harm the snake.
- f) Capture the snake using the tools provided and secure the snake inside the snake bag ensuring that it is secured correctly.
- g) Snakes cannot be legally killed unless they pose an immediate threat to life.

### 3.2.3 Re-releasing the snake back into the wild

- a) A release site should be selected as per DEWNR guidelines and no more than 2 km away from the areas where the snake was captured. However it is noted that this may not always be possible and the snake must never be released into areas where it could easily re-enter built up areas or place others at risk of interaction with the animal.
- b) Where possible the snake should be released in cooler periods so as not to harm the animal, however due to the climate this is not always possible and keeping the snake in the bag for extended periods may also place the animal in danger.
- c) Select a semi open area where the snake can be released without harming the animal or placing the snake handler at danger. It is recommended that

the area allows the handler a safe and immediate retreat without obstruction (i.e. do not release in the middle of bushes that may impede a safe retreat).

- d) PPE identified in 3.2.2, d) 1 – 5 shall be worn.
- e) Snake handling tools should be on standby in case the captured snake becomes aggressive and requires controlling.
- f) A first aid kit with the snake bite module and access to a mobile phone shall be within the immediate area at all times.
- g) When the snake is released, leave the area immediately.

### 3.3 Snake Related Emergencies

#### 3.3.1 Snake Bite

When a person is bitten by a snake the following guidelines apply:

- a) Use D-R-A-B-C-A approach (Assess **Danger**, Check for **Response** from the casualty, Check **Airway**, **Breathing**, and **Circulation**) to assess the situation and the injured person.
- b) Keep Calm and seek medical aid urgently. **Dial 000 and request immediate response.**
- c) Calm the bite victim.
- d) Apply a pressure immobilisation bandage over the bitten area and around the limb, using a crepe or conforming bandage about 15cm wide. If unavailable, use any material available e.g. a shirt torn into strips.
- e) Apply the bandage firmly enough to compress tissue, but not so firmly as to restrict the flow of blood to the limb below the bandage.
- f) Where the bite is to an arm or leg, bandage from the bite to the fingers or toes, then up to the armpit or groin.
- g) Bandage as much of the bitten limb as possible.
- h) Apply a splint to the bandaged limb with a second bandage.
- i) Do not remove the splint or bandage once applied.
- ii) Continue to monitor the vital signs using “A-B-C” (Airway, Breathing, and Circulation).

**Never under any circumstances should the following methods be used:**

- a) Never wash the venom off the skin as retained venom will assist identification.
- b) Never cut or excise the bitten area.
- c) Never try to suck the venom out of the wound.
- d) Do not try to catch or kill the snake. However, a description of the snake may assist medical aid.

#### 3.3.2 Snake Escape (once captured) or snake located inside of an occupied building

- a) At all times the safety and welfare of all persons, shall be paramount.
- b) The room in which the snake is believed to be, or where the snake was last seen, must be isolated from the rest of the building by closing all doors, and ensuring, that the snake cannot exit under any door.
- c) The Manager/ supervisor, if on a Council or business site is to be notified of the escape as soon as is practicable.
- d) If possible a willing person shall watch where the snake was last seen.
- e) Any members of the public are to be removed from the immediate area.
- f) The snake catcher will immediately assess the situation and consider any help needed.

- g) The snake catcher will conduct the search, and will continue until the snake is located if this is possible.

3.3.3 Snake escape (once captured) or snake located outside a building but in close proximity

- a) At all times the safety and welfare of all persons shall be paramount.
- b) A willing person shall stay in the immediate vicinity of the area where the snake was last seen.
- c) Any members of the public are to be removed from the area in question.
- d) Appropriate tools and emergency measures shall be on hand to capture the snake (see 3.2.2).
- e) The snake catcher will conduct the search, and continue until the snake is found, or until there is a reasonable expectation that the snake cannot be located.

#### **4 TRAINING**

- 4.1 Workers who catch and release snakes shall undergo a recognised training course on handling venomous snakes.
- 4.2 Workers who are authorised to catch and release snakes will hold at minimum or equivalent provide first aid (PFA) certificate.