



Health and Safety Guidance for Community Energy Volunteer

Introduction.

The health, safety and welfare of you, your colleagues and members of the public are essential to National Energy Foundation (NEF) and the Community Action Group (CAG) Network. This guide aims to cover some of the risks that you may encounter while working as a Community Energy Volunteer.

We do realise that we cannot provide a comprehensive summary detailing every eventuality, that you have a personal responsibility to stop and think about any safety implications or risks associated with the task you are about to undertake, and plan a safe way of working. If you are in any doubt as to the risks an activity poses, please seek guidance from the support line. If you find your self in a situation where you feel at risk, in danger or uncomfortable, please discontinue the activity immediately and remove yourself from the situation.

This guide will be reviewed from time to time and we would ask you to let us know if you feel it can be improved in any way.

Driving.

If you decide to drive in the course of your volunteer work, we strongly recommend that you fully comply with all Road Traffic Act Regulations covering areas such as speeding, driving with due care and attention and vehicle maintenance. In addition, you are advised to comply with the following:

- When driving alone, if you possess a mobile phone, ensure that you carry it with you at all times and make sure that it is fully charged and has credit;
- Do not use any type of mobile phone including phones on a hands free system when the engine is running;
- You will need to check with your vehicle insurer that you are covered to us your vehicle for voluntary work.

Extreme Weather.

Some of your work as a volunteer could involve working outside (for example, thermal imaging as part of conducting Home Energy Assessments). You have a personal responsibility to consider the impact of extreme weather conditions when carrying out your duties. Where possible you should postpone your volunteering activities in the event of extreme weather, otherwise:

- in extreme heat, you are advised to wear protective headwear and to wear a sun block;
- always wear protective footwear;
- make sure you have waterproof clothing available when outside;
- carry warmer clothing in cooler weather.





Fire Safety.

When working in a residents property, always make a point of finding out escape routes, and you could even check if their fire alarm is working (could be life-saving for the resident in the future if you discover it isn't, and you follow up that discovery with a referral to Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service for a free 'Home Safety Check').

- Always strictly observe no smoking rules;
- Always make sure that you do not block or restrict fire escape routes;
- If you are working with electrical appliances, always do a visual check of electrical equipment to make sure it is functioning correctly with no frayed or damaged cables or signs of overheating.

First Aid and Accident Reporting.

You have a personal responsibility for first aid and accident reporting arrangements.

- When working on third party premises always make sure that you are familiar with the location of the first aid kit and first aid arrangements;
- All accidents or near misses at a third party site must be reported in accordance with local arrangements;
- If you are involved in an accident or near miss at a third party site you have a legal obligation to report the incident to the person responsible on site.

Lone Working.

In circumstances where you are working alone it may be more difficult to summon assistance in the event of an incident. You have a personal responsibility not to put yourself in a situation where you are threatened or at a high risk level.

- Ensure you carry a mobile phone or have access to one so that you can seek assistance if needed.
- Make sure you do not become isolated.
- Let some-one (such as a friend or relative) know where you are and how long you will be there.
- Seek assistance if you feel vulnerable due to a situation or location, or leave.
- In the event of threatening behaviour from a third party:
 - Seek assistance if you can
 - Stay calm - never meet aggression with aggression, try not to outsmart the person verbally
 - Make sure you have a clear escape route
 - Do not turn your back, move away slowly facing the person
 - Get away as fast as you can, seek a location where you know other people will be.
 - If appropriate, shout for assistance.
 - Report the incident immediately.





Slips and Trips.

You need to remain particularly vigilant that your activities do not pose an increased risk to yourself or members of the public.

Take personal responsibility for keeping your working area free from tripping hazards.

It may be appropriate to designate a working area and keep third parties at a safe distance, for example if setting up an exhibition stand.

Make sure that any spillages are cleared up as soon as a priority; advise those nearby of the slip hazard.

Undertake regular checks to ensure your work area is hazard free.

Ensure any loose cables have been secured away from traffic routes and walkways and tape them down if necessary.

Always wear footwear appropriate to the task you are undertaking.

On a third party site where you are unable to correct any hazards, bring them to the attention of the responsible site safety officer immediately.

