greater WELLINGTON
REGIONAL COUNCIL

# Volunteers – H&S Guidelines

## Bait station and trap servicing for pest animal control

Pest Animals Section, Biosecurity Department


**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

Greater Wellington
Regional Council
Upper Hutt
PO Box 40847

T 04 526 4133
F 04 526 4171
www.gw.govt.nz

Greater Wellington
Regional Council
Masterton
PO Box 41

T 06 378 2484
F 06 378 2146
www.gw.govt.nz


July 2015

# 1. Introduction

**Each volunteer must read, understand and be signed off as trained to this document before any volunteer activities can be carried out**.

Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) undertakes pest animal control across much of the Wellington region, with volunteers forming a vital part of GW's pest animal control team. Whether part of a larger group, or as an individual working alone, our volunteers make a valuable contribution to the Biodiversity of the region; all in their own time and of their own free will. GWRC recognises that volunteers should have their health and safety protected whilst undertaking this voluntary work, because their well-being and work is as important as that of our paid employees.

GWRC wants to promote a safe environment for volunteers to carry out their chosen tasks. To do this GWRC needs to make all volunteers aware of all possible hazards, how to manage and identify them, and to provide training in the safe operation of the equipment we use for pest animal control.

Volunteers also have a duty to ensure they take all practicable steps to ensure their own safety and the safety of others. GWRC welcomes any ideas or concerns from volunteers to ensure the ongoing success of a biodiversity programme.

The safety of the public is a vital part of our pest animal control programme. GWRC has worked hard for a number of years to build up a good system of vertebrate toxic agents (VTA's) and traps that can be safely used in urban environments with the confidence of the public. This confidence can be quickly lost with one mistake – it takes years to build a good name and a moment to lose one. It is paramount that all the toxins and traps used are treated with the upmost care and all instructions are followed correctly.

VTA's have regulations under the Hazardous Substance & New Organisms (HSNO) and Agricultural Compounds & Veterinary Medicine (ACVM) Acts, which include statutory notification and signage requirements. These requirements will be handled by GWRC staff, but volunteers need to be aware that dealing with toxins as they are instructed is part of meeting the requirements of the relevant Acts.

Each volunteer is expected to be a minimum of 18 years of age (unless accompanied by an adult). They must have a good level of physical fitness and be in good health. Any personal essential medication will need to be carried by the volunteer. All volunteer activities are to be carried out during daylight hours.

Thank you for offering to assist GW with pest animal control. Your efforts will help gain back some of the ground that has been lost to introduced predators, and improve the overall biodiversity of the Wellington Region.

## 2. Hazard Identification and Reporting

Performing pest animal control may potentially expose volunteers to a number of hazards. We want all volunteers performing these tasks to be aware of these hazards so they can remain safe and enjoy the task of protecting native flora and fauna.

Before any work is undertaken on a site a site specific work plan (SSWP) must be completed by **all** volunteers who are doing work on the site. Biosecurity staff will provide a template, a list of likely hazards and assist you to fill the initial site plan in. This training document would be a document to refer to and use as part of this plan.

The SSWP provides a place to identify and document hazards likely to be encountered while working at the site and emergency procedure information. This document needs to be reviewed on site and signed off for each visit to the site by each volunteer before any work starts. For large groups there may need to be multiple copies to distribute to individual people working in different areas at different times.

Ways in which the site plan could be re-signed again is:

- when bait is collected off the co-ordinator, or
- a place on the bait station/trap form could be created for hazard review and to record any new hazards, or a
- GWRC job safety review form could be used, these are available from GWRC and included in this document.

In summary - procedures to follow before any work starts on the site each visit:

1. Initial SSWP created, discussed and signed by volunteers trained to this document
2. At every service of bait stations or traps the SSWP is reviewed and resigned by volunteers present
3. Any new hazards added to SSWP
4. SSWP plan is then reviewed and signed again by volunteers visiting the site on consecutive visits

GWRC recommends a new site plan is created once a year.

## 3. Emergency Response

Volunteers need to have emergency response procedures in place to ensure their safety. This includes telling someone reliable where they are going and what their estimated return time is. Volunteers need to state whom they are going with and take some form of communication device such as a cell phone.

The person that you leave your intentions with must have a map of where you are going, the contact details for other volunteer group members or GW staff and the emergency contact phone numbers for emergency services.

- Police Search and Rescue, telephone 111 and ask for POLICE
- Ambulance, phone 111 and ask for AMBULANCE.

Children taken outdoors to accompany volunteers are done so at the volunteer's responsibility. They must have the correct clothing for the conditions and enough food and water to sustain them if the trip is delayed for any reason.

Weather forecasts should be consulted before any outdoor volunteer work. The best advice can be found on the Metservice website http://www.metservice.com/national/home.

## Job Safety Review Form (JSR)

# Job Safety Review

*Being Safer Together – Me tiakina tahi tatou*

5718

V1.0, May 2013

greater WELLINGTON
REGIONAL COUNCIL
Te Pane Matua Taiao

Name of task: _____ Worksite location: _____

Start date: _____ Finish date: _____ Job/work number: _____

### 1. Employee/contractor/volunteer names

(All new people working on this site must be inducted to the worksite and this Job Safety Review book)

Name, organisation, phone — Signature

Job supervisor: _____ Phone: _____

### 2. Prompts

- ☐ Plant & equipment
- ☐ PPE
- ☐ Access & manual handling
- ☐ Notifiable work
- ☐ Atmosphere/weather
- ☐ Stored energy
- ☐ Emergencies
- ☐ Non-routine task
- ☐ Unfamiliar location
- ☐ Working with contractor and/or volunteer

### 3. What personal protection clothing and/or equipment must be worn while completing this work? Confirm it is all in good working condition

### 4. List any supporting documents people need to adhere to, eg, safe operating procedures, GWRC guidelines, project-specific health and safety plan

☐ Are all necessary documents available and have they been reviewed

### 5. Is there any specific additional emergency preparedness that needs to be considered due to non-routine task and/or worksite location?

### Job safety analysis

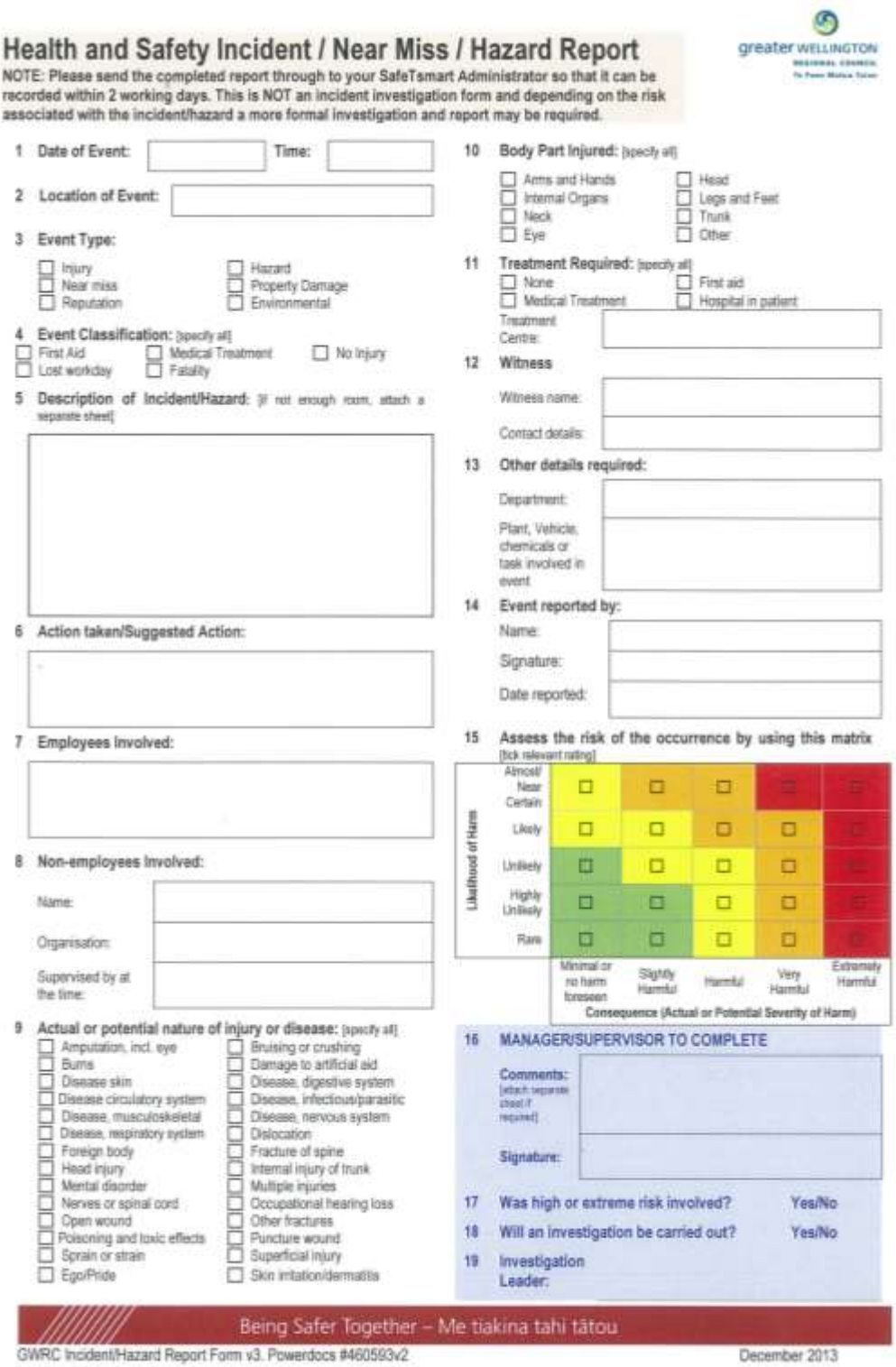
| Step 1. List the basic job steps | Step 2. Potential hazards | Step 3. Identify controls |
|---|---|---|
| | | |

☐ Does this Job Safety Review require further discussion or review?

**Once work is completed, return a copy to your manager/supervisor**

## Reporting Hazards

This form must be completed in the event of any accident or if any new hazards highlighted and forwarded to GW IMMEDIATELY.



**Health and Safety Incident / Near Miss / Hazard Report**

NOTE: Please send the completed report through to your SafeTsmart Administrator so that it can be recorded within 2 working days. This is NOT an incident investigation form and depending on the risk associated with the incident/hazard a more formal investigation and report may be required.

1 Date of Event: Time:

2 Location of Event:

3 Event Type:
- ☐ Injury
- ☐ Near miss
- ☐ Reputation
- ☐ Hazard
- ☐ Property Damage
- ☐ Environmental

4 Event Classification: [specify all]
- ☐ First Aid
- ☐ Medical Treatment
- ☐ No Injury
- ☐ Lost workday
- ☐ Fatality

5 Description of Incident/Hazard: [if not enough room, attach a separate sheet]

6 Action taken/Suggested Action:

7 Employees Involved:

8 Non-employees Involved:
- Name:
- Organisation:
- Supervised by at the time:

9 Actual or potential nature of injury or disease: [specify all]
- ☐ Amputation, incl. eye
- ☐ Burns
- ☐ Disease skin
- ☐ Disease circulatory system
- ☐ Disease, musculoskeletal
- ☐ Disease, respiratory system
- ☐ Foreign body
- ☐ Head injury
- ☐ Mental disorder
- ☐ Nerves or spinal cord
- ☐ Open wound
- ☐ Poisoning and toxic effects
- ☐ Sprain or strain
- ☐ Ego/Pride
- ☐ Bruising or crushing
- ☐ Damage to artificial aid
- ☐ Disease, digestive system
- ☐ Disease, infectious/parasitic
- ☐ Disease, nervous system
- ☐ Dislocation
- ☐ Fracture of spine
- ☐ Internal injury of trunk
- ☐ Multiple injuries
- ☐ Occupational hearing loss
- ☐ Other fractures
- ☐ Puncture wound
- ☐ Superficial injury
- ☐ Skin irritation/dermatitis

10 Body Part Injured: [specify all]
- ☐ Arms and Hands
- ☐ Internal Organs
- ☐ Neck
- ☐ Eye
- ☐ Head
- ☐ Legs and Feet
- ☐ Trunk
- ☐ Other

11 Treatment Required: [specify all]
- ☐ None
- ☐ Medical Treatment
- ☐ First aid
- ☐ Hospital in patient

Treatment Centre:

12 Witness
- Witness name:
- Contact details:

13 Other details required:
- Department:
- Plant, Vehicle, chemicals or task involved in event:

14 Event reported by:
- Name:
- Signature:
- Date reported:

15 Assess the risk of the occurrence by using this matrix [tick relevant rating]

| Likelihood of Harm | Minimal or no harm foreseen | Slightly Harmful | Harmful | Very Harmful | Extremely Harmful |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Almost/ Near Certain | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Likely | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Unlikely | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Highly Unlikely | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Rare | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Consequence (Actual or Potential Severity of Harm)

16 MANAGER/SUPERVISOR TO COMPLETE
- Comments: [attach separate sheet if required]
- Signature:

17 Was high or extreme risk involved? Yes/No

18 Will an investigation be carried out? Yes/No

19 Investigation Leader:

Being Safer Together – Me tiakina tahi tātou

GWRC Incident/Hazard Report Form v3. Powerdocs #460593v2 December 2013

Post to either: Pest Animals, Biosecurity Department, PO Box 40 847, Upper Hutt, or Fax 04 5264171 or Pest Animals, Biosecurity Department, PO Box 41, Masterton, or Fax 06 378 7994 or pest.animals@gw.govt.nz .

# 4. Instructions for servicing equipment

## Possum and rat bait stations

- Collect baits from the collection point before each servicing run. This is to ensure bait is stored safely and is kept in a fresh state. Any bait temporarily stored at home must be kept away from children and animals, preferably in a locked storage facility. Bait must be stored in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight

- Bait stations must be checked at one to three monthly intervals as directed by GW.

- Measure and record bait taken from bait stations on the bait station recording forms

- Renew, adjust and replace bait stations when worn, lost or damaged

- Because of the toxins used, animal carcasses will rarely be found. Any carcasses found should be removed from tracks and waterways and placed in dense vegetation to decompose inside the operational area.

## Bait stations with loose pellets:

All bait stations are to be replenished with fresh bait and all old bait brought out in a plastic bag and returned to the bait depot for appropriate disposal.

Upon arrival at each site:

- Slide the bait station off the bracket, remove the lid and empty any old bait into plastic bag

- Make sure bait stations are cleaned of any old bait residue before refilling, any wet material can be scraped from the station with a stick

- Fill the bait station to the appropriate level, using the cap of the station to scoop the pellets into the station. Fill the station over the bait bag, allowing any spilt bait to fall back into the bag

- Replace the bait station on the bracket, ensuring no pellets have fallen onto the ground

- All bait station trees are to be lured with flour and icing sugar mix after filling. The flour/icing sugar lure must be visible on the tree from 360 degrees.

## Bait stations with rodent blocks:

Upon arrival at each site:

- Slide the bait station off the bracket, take the cap off and either remove the wire rod or hold the mouth of the station up to the light so you can see the state of the blocks. Replace any eaten blocks

- If not much bait has been taken e.g. only one block has been eaten leave as is. Any blocks that are 80% or more eaten, remove and replace if necessary

- If bait appears to be mouldy, smelly or wet and soggy remove those blocks and carry out in a rubbish bag and them take back to the collection point for disposal.

## Possum Traps:

- Collect baits (if required) for possum traps from the collection point

- Check traps at least once a month

- Each time remove the dead animal and if it is not too decomposed record sex and age as well as any observations of note

- Replace bait if necessary (probably will need to after one month), reset trap

- Use flour lure supplied, flour tree on all sides. Use apple bait if traps are within 200m of a house

- Dispose of possum carcasses away from public walking tracks and away from trap sites

- If rodent interference on trap bait is becoming a problem use a rodent block as bait.

### How to set the traps

**Timms**

1. Make sure the trap is unset. To unset the trap, trigger the mechanism by smacking the sides of the trap heavily with your open palms.

2. Turn the trap upside down and push the bait onto the bait rod as far as the bend.

3. Place the trap the right way up. Press down on the top of the trap while pulling the nylon cord with your other hand until the striker bar locks into position. When the trap is unset the sensitivity of the trigger action can be adjusted by bending the bait rod where it contacts the cross rod (approximately 50mm from the tip).

4. To remove a possum from the trap, pull the nylon cord to release the pressure on the striker bar and pull the possum free. Dead possums can be buried in the garden or secured in a plastic bag and put out in your domestic rubbish bag.

Some possums will also be carrying a Joey (baby possum) in their pouch. They also need to be destroyed by a firm blow to the head.

**Possum Master**

1. Ensure the safety catch is in the **safe** position.

2. Push the bait onto the bait hook.

3. Apply pressure to the front of the trap, ready to push the fly arm over with your other hand.

4. Push the fly arm down, pulling the cord forward with your thumb.

5. The trigger will locate automatically, and the safety catch will be on.

6. Position the noose cord around the plastic hooks. Position the trap on a tree using only a small headed nail. Secure the cord. Release the safety catch. The trap will lift off the nail and hang on the cord when the possum is caught.

7. To release a dead possum, follow steps 3-5.

**Possum Warrior Trap checking**: When you get to a bait station site have a look around for a Warrior Trap. It maybe hidden behind a tree but is not normally more than five metres from the bait station.

If the trap has a possum or other animal in it:

1. Use the power bar tool. Slide the loop end under the trap handle until the welded L bracket meets the trap handle. Open the trap. Hook the wire loop over the trigger bar at the top of the trap and trigger the trap to lock in safe position. Slide the safety bar along the jaw lip by pulling the power bar handle to allow the safety bar to slide in from the side. Then lock in position by slowly releasing the power bar to the locked position.

2. If the possum hasn't fallen out, pull it out, and **remove any fur or decaying carcasses from the trap,** very important.

3. Remove the bait if it is still there, fix up the bait hook if required and place a fresh bait on the hook. Place the bait in your rubbish bag and carry out.

4. Set the trap again and remove the tool. Lure the tree with flour bottle and record what sex and approximate age of the possum or other animal, if the possum is rotten record it as DP(decayed possum), and if anything needs to be changed in the traps location.

If the trap is still set:

1. Use the power bar tool. Slide the loop end under the trap handle until the welded L bracket meets the trap handle. Use the power bar tool to unset the trap completely by releasing the trigger bar as you lower the lever end of the power bar tool. Open the trap again. Hook the wire loop over the trigger bar at the top of the trap and trigger the trap to lock in safe position. Slide the safety bar along the jaw lip by pulling the power bar handle to allow the safety bar to slide in

from the side. Then lock into position by slowly releasing the power bar to the locked position.

2. Remove the bait if it is still there, fix up the bait hook if required and place a fresh bait on the hook. Place the bait in your rubbish bag and carry out.

3. Set the trap, remove the tool and record that the trap was still set – SS.

If the trap is sprung with no animal caught:

1. Have a very good look for any possum fur and record the trap as EP –escaped possum if there is. If the bait is gone with no possum fur it is likely to have been sprung by rats, record as SP.

2. Use the power bar tool. Slide the loop end under the trap handle until the welded L bracket meets the trap handle. Set the trap. Hook the wire loop over the trigger bar at the top of the trap and trigger the trap to lock in safe position. Slide the safety bar along the jaw lip by pulling the power bar handle to allow the safety bar to slide in from the side. Then lock into position by slowly releasing the power bar to the locked position.

3. Remove any fur or decaying animal parts from the trap.

4. Remove the bait if it is still there, fix up the bait hook if required and place a fresh bait on the hook. Place the bait in your rubbish bag and carry out..

5. Set the trap again and remove the tool. Lure the tree if required and record if anything needs to be changed in the traps location.

## Mustelid traps (DOC 150, 200 or 250 Model)

- Collect baits (if required) for mustelid traps from the collection point
- Check the traps at least once a month
- Unset the trap if still set, see instructions No.2 below
- Each time remove dead animal and fur and record sex and age as well as any observations (if possible). Replace bait if necessary (probably will need to after one month)
- Use eggs if pet cats are in the area
- Dispose of mustelid carcasses away from public walking tracks and away from trap sites.

### Setting and unsetting the DOC150 and 200 traps:

1. To open the tunnel remove the holding screw with a number two square drive screw driver. Once screw is removed, the tunnel lid will pivot aside, allowing access to the trap.

2. Hold the trapping plate firmly while pressing down on foot plate and slowly release trapping plate over trigger arm, lower gently until trigger plate is resting on foot plate.

3. Place bait in the nail pedestal at the enclosed end of the trap. This will attract mustelids to step on the foot plate, and prevent bait being taken from outside the enclosed end of the trap.

4. The trap will be supplied in the un-set position. This is safe to handle. To set the trap, pull firmly upwards on the wire setting loop, positioned at the outside end of the mesh trapping plate. This will raise the trapping plate.

5. Once the trapping plate reaches approximately 75 degrees it may be easier to pull the edge of the trapping plate rather than the setting wire. Continue to lift the trapping plate until it touches the trigger arm. The trigger arm hangs vertically and has 'trigger' stamped on it.

6. Continue lifting past the trigger arm, allowing the end of the trigger to drop on to the arm of the foot plate. The trigger should swing out freely over the trapping plate. The trapping arm should now be fully extended at approximately 90 degrees

7. Slowly ease the trapping plate back down slightly, which will allow the end of the trigger to move back and slide up the stainless arm of the foot plate and catch on the raised sear. The trigger arm should hold the trapping plate up, and leave the trapping plate locked open. If the trap will not stay set, ease the trapping plate up and down until the trigger locks it open. It should remain locked open.

**Setting a DOC 200 trap**

**DOC 200 trap in the set position**

The trap is now set. When a mustelid walks on the foot plate to reach the bait, it will lower the foot plate and release the trigger. The spring will swing the trapping plate down, crushing and killing the mustelid.

Carefully replace the lid of the tunnel and screw back into place. Check the trap regularly.

To clear the trap repeat steps 3 to 5.

**WARNING: Be careful when setting the trap not to catch your fingers.**

## How to set a DOC250 trap

Setting the the DOC 250 is a very similar process but is more difficult to set than the smaller traps and requires the use of a trap-setting tool

- Attach setting-tool to setting handle and back frame. Grasp handle and trap tunnel wall. Firmly pull back on setting-tool to raise kill bar.
- Continue pulling up on setting tool. Bring kill bar over the top of the trigger arm. Once kill bar has passed the top of the trigger arm, release setting-tool VERY SLOWLY.
- Allow the trigger arm to engage the sear. TRAP IS NOW SET. Carefully remove the setting-tool.

## Trap maintenance

DOC traps are designed to be corrosion resistant. The foot plate is stainless steel and the trap body is galvanised or stainless steel. The tunnel is constructed from galvanised nails, stainless screws and H4 treated timber. Do not leave carcasses or bait on the trap to rot, as it will corrode the metal. If the trap requires oiling, use a vegetable or fish based oil.

Here are some important factors when going around the traps:

- The trap location should be able to be found and serviced by everyone who is supposed to be doing the traps, as well as being hidden from undesirables in some areas
- each trap should have displayed clearly in bold lettering the correct identification on a tag, usually a purple triangle
- Traps should be visible to target animals and regularly cleared of surrounding vegetation, both ends can regularly be grubbed if required
- If the trap box wobbles when accessing the trap, this is an indicator that the trap needs to be stabilised and placed on solid, flat ground. All vegetation/rocks need to be removed from under the trap
- Regular clearing of all animal remains and oiling of moving trap parts will prolong the life of the trap
- The trap should go off with a weight of 80 grams, this needs to regularly be tested and traps that don't trigger on this weight fixed up see: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3TaZxIHtsMo and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11t9II2FpFk&list=PLFVxEmJHAaHpmjDSEl4vETSla2CFeKgT_&index=5
- If there is a high percentage of bait missing and traps that had not been sprung, due to mouse activity, seasonal changes of bait to eggs or poison bait blocks could reduce interference

If Timms trap are getting kicked over by stock, secure traps with bungees and rock spikes, drill drainage holes in the top of the trap, oiling moving parts, face the entrance away from salt spray

### At the end of each service:

Report to the volunteer co-ordinator when each service round is completed and:

- return completed bait station/trap forms
- report on the quantity of bait used or animals caught in each control area
- note any plant or animal observations on the "Comments Section" of the bait station forms, especially recovery of native plant and animal populations.

### Other tasks which could be undertaken:

- Trim re-growth on access lines, where necessary, to ensure unimpeded walking access is maintained on the bait station lines – do not use power tools such as chainsaws
- Install and maintain plastic marker tags to mark bait station access lines and solitary bait stations. Greater Wellington will provide galvanised nails and plastic tags
- Report to the volunteer co-ordinator if warning signs about the ongoing possum/mustelid control are vandalised
- Immediately report any mishaps or breaches of public health risks to the volunteer co-ordinator.

If at any time you are questioned by visitors or reserve users about the technical aspects of the bait or programme and you are unsure of what to tell them please refer them to GW Biosecurity.

### Items required for each service run:

- Rodent blocks or pellet bait (enough to do all stations)
- bait station filling sheet or note pad and pen
- protective gloves (if required)
- possum and or mustelid trap baits
- flour lure for possum traps
- spare bait station cap
- plastic bag for spoiled bait
- map
- wet weather clothing, drink, food – check weather forecast
- small first aid/survival kit

- Screw driver for opening mustelid boxes.

**It is very important that you tell someone where you are going and what your estimated time of return is.**

The bait stations and traps that you will be servicing are set up with prior permission and positioned to suit each site for a reason. **Do not move any bait stations or traps**. If you think one needs moving (for any reason) please contact a Biosecurity officer.

I _____ from _____ group

doing volunteer pest control work in _____have read and

understood this document.

Volunteer Name _____

Volunteer signature _____

Date _____

GWRC staff/ group trainer name _____

GWRC staff/group trainer signature _____

Date _____

## 5. Map of Operational area