

SANDBAG SAFETY TIPS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Safety is the number one priority.

If you have a medical condition that can be complicated by hard work, you should not be involved in the filling, handling, or laying of sandbags.

Wear the proper gear and clothing.

Dress appropriately for the conditions and wear basic protective gear. Dress for the temperature, closed toe boot, work gloves, rain jacket, proper head gear, eyewear, and reflective gear or light colored clothing if working at night.

Always stretch and use proper technique.

This will help prevent injury. Pace yourself depending on your physical condition.

Be aware of your surroundings.

Be wary of heavy equipment and trucks. Also the ground could be slippery or unstable, so watch your footing.

Rest and drink water.

Rotate jobs and take breaks to avoid overexertion and injury, and always drink water.

Avoid touching your face, eyes, and mouth.

Sand and flood water are dirty and contain bacteria, so avoid contact with your eyes and mouth. Always wash your hands before eating or drinking.

Avoid walking or driving in flood water.

The force of the water could sweep you away. There also may be unknown hazards in the water that you cannot see.

Be prepared to evacuate.

Be ready to move to higher ground, as rapidly rising waters or a breach in a levy can cause dangerous situations.

How to fill.

If holding bag - Make sure you stand shoulder width apart and with knees bent. You can also sit or kneel. It is recommended that this volunteer wears eye protection.

Laying and passing bags - Gently hand off the bags. DO NOT throw or toss bags, this could cause injury to yourself or others. It is recommended that the line of volunteers passing sandbags alternate the way they are facing rather than stand side-by-side and twist to hand off bags. If you have to stand side-by-side make sure you move your toes and reduce the amount of twisting.

