

Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch Hazard Identification, Assessment and Control Document

Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch offers a wide variety of hands on field trips to rural and urban waterways.

Safety Planning

Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch (UMW) staff will inspect all teaching sites for potential hazards before the program commences. UMW staff will remove any hazards they identify or adjust the site location to avoid unmovable hazards. UMW staff carry hand sanitizer, extra water and first aid kits. UMW staff are all Red Cross first aid certified. While the potential hazards identified cross over all Waterwatch programs that happen at waterways, some Waterwatch programs have additional potential hazards associated with them.

Potential Hazards Identified

General Hazards Associated with field trips to waterways

- Sharps
- Adverse weather
- Drowning
- Trip/fall
- Cuts/abrasions
- Infection
- Blue-Green Algae
- Poisonous Animals
- Allergies
- Heat Exhaustion
- Dehydration
- UV radiation
- Unknown pollutants

Water Quality Monitoring

- Sulphuric acid

Storm Drain Stencilling

- Traffic accidents

Risk Assessment

Hazard	Probability	Consequence	Score	Risk
Sharps	3	2	6	Medium
Adverse weather	3	1	3	Low
Drowning	1	5	5	Medium
Trip/fall	3	3	9	Medium
Cuts/abrasions	3	2	6	Medium
Infection	2	3	6	Medium
Blue-Green Algae	2	2	4	Low
Dehydration	3	2	4	Low
UV radiation	3	2	4	Low
Unknown pollutants	2	2	4	Low
Poisonous Animals	2	3	6	Medium
Allergies	3	2	6	Medium

Heat Exhaustion	3	2	6	Medium
Dilute Sulphuric Acid	3	3	9	Medium
Traffic accidents	1	5	5	Low

Probability Matrix

Consequence	Scoring	Certain	Strong likelihood	Could happen under normal conditions	Could happen under abnormal conditions	Remote
		5	4	3	2	1
Catastrophic-Fatal 1 or more deaths; permanent incapacity	5	High 25	20	15	10	7
Critical Temporary incapacity	4	20	16	12	8	4
Major Major injury-hospitalization	3	15	12	Medium 9	6	3
Marginal Minor injury-first aid	2	10	8	6	Low 4	2
Negligible No treatment needed	1	7	4	3	2	1

Hazard Control:

Sharps:

- ◆ Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch (UMW) staff will take due care in inspecting the teaching sites for potential hazards before the program commences will remove any sharps found in the area

Adverse weather:

- ◆ UMW staff may advise teachers if they feel that any participants are wearing inappropriate clothing or footwear.
- ◆ In cases of extreme weather, UMW staff will contact a designated teacher and negotiate the rescheduling of the activity.

Drowning:

- ◆ UMW staff will advise for sites with gentle sloping banks and/or sites that are known to be shallow.
- ◆ UMW staff may opt NOT to participate in an activity if they feel the chosen site is unsuitable or unsafe

Trip/fall:

- ◆ UMW staff may advise teachers if they feel that any participants are wearing inappropriate clothing or footwear.
- ◆ Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch staff may adjust the teaching sites away from trip hazards, or remove them.
- ◆ If UMW staff can not move sites or trip hazards, they will advise school staff and students before the program commences.

Cuts/abrasions:

- ◆ All Waterwatch activities require students where solid closed-toed shoes with good tread.
- ◆ Students that the UMW staff feels are improperly dressed may be refused participation.
- ◆ UMW staff may adjust the teaching sites away from hazards, or remove them.
- ◆ If Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch staff can not move sites or the hazard, they will point them out to school staff and students before the program commences.

Infection

- ◆ Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch (UMW) staff will take due care in inspecting the teaching sites for potential hazards before the program commences.
- ◆ If staff feels the area is potentially contaminated with infectious material, the activity will be moved to another site or rescheduled in consultation with a designated teacher.
- ◆ After the activity, students will be advised wash their hands
- ◆ Disposable latex gloves will be available for all users.

Blue-Green Algae:

- ◆ Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch (UMW) staff will take due care in inspecting the teaching sites for potential hazards before the program commences.
- ◆ Staff will check ACT state advisories before teaching at sites that have been known to support algal blooms in the past.
- ◆ If staff feels the area is potentially contaminated with an algal bloom, the activity will be moved to another site or rescheduled.
- ◆ After the activity, students will be advised wash their hands
- ◆ Disposable latex gloves will be available for all users.

Dehydration

- ◆ Students are strongly advised to bring a filled personal water bottle on all activities that take place more than 100 meters from the nearest source of public drinking water.

UV radiation

- ◆ On high UV index days, students are strongly advised to wear broad brimmed hats and sunscreen at all times.
- ◆ UMW staff will advise teachers on scheduling activities outside the hours of 12 noon and 3 pm during the summer months.
- ◆ On high UV index days, UMW staff will make maximum use of available shade at the activity site.
- ◆ Students that the UMW staff feels are improperly dressed may be refused participation.

Unknown pollutants

- ◆ Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch (UMW) staff will take due care in inspecting the teaching sites for potential contamination before the program commences.
- ◆ UMW staff can advise teachers not to proceed with an activity if, in their professional opinion, they feel the site is potentially contaminated

- ◆ After the activity, students will be advised to wash their hands
- ◆ Disposable latex gloves will be available for all users.

Poisonous Animals

- ◆ Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch (UMW) staff will take due care in inspecting the teaching sites for poisonous animals before the program commences.
- ◆ UMW staff carry snake kits in their first aid kits and have been trained in first aid for snake bites
- ◆ Activities are generally carried out within 40 minutes of a hospital.
- ◆ UMW staff generally carry personal mobile phones to call for medical assistance.

Allergies

- ◆ Participants under age 18 with sever (life threatening) allergies may not attend UMW activities without an EpiPen and a trained carer to administer it should it be required.
- ◆ Disposable latex gloves will be available for all users.

Heat Exhaustion

- ◆ UMW staff will advise teachers on scheduling activities outside the hours of 12 noon and 3 pm during the summer months
- ◆ On hot days, UMW staff will make maximum use of available shade at the activity site.
- ◆ UMW staff carry cool packs among their first aid equipment

Dilute Sulphuric Acid

- ◆ UMW staff will follow supplier and manufacturer's instructions
- ◆ Students under the age of 12 are advised not handle any Waterwatch kit chemicals
- ◆ Disposable latex gloves will be available for all users.

Traffic accidents

- ◆ Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch (UMW) staff will take due care in inspecting the teaching sites for potential hazards before the program commences.
- ◆ UMW storm drain stencilling activities are held in quiet neighbourhoods, well way from large arterial roads
- ◆ Students working near roadways will be issued with fluorescent vests
- ◆ Students participating in storm drain stencilling are advised NOT to leave footpaths and nature strips while engaging in the activity.