|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Section: | Occupational Health and Safety Management System | Issued By: | Environment, Health and Safety |
| Issued Date: | 2021.05.05 |
| Program | Working Alone | Revised Date: |  |
| Reviewed Date: |  |
| Pages: | 5 + Appendix | Revision #: |  |
| By: | MM |

# 

# 1.0 Purpose

The University of Calgary recognizes the importance of providing a safe and secure work environment for the University community. The University will meet or exceed all regulatory requirements employees who work alone. The intent of the W.A. Ranches Research Working Alone Program is to promote awareness and facilitate a healthy and safe work environment when individuals are working alone.

# 2.0 Scope

Managers/Supervisors should plan work at the W.A. Ranches in a way that does not require individuals to work alone. If working alone is unavoidable or deemed necessary, the W.A. Ranches Research Working Alone Program must be followed, in addition to ranch communication protocols. Working alone situations must be assessed from a risk standpoint.

Where research employees are working alone at the W.A. Ranches, this must be identified on the Field Level Hazard Assessment (FLHA) for the work and consideration must be given to mitigating the risk.

An individual is considered to be working alone if they work alone at a work site where assistance, in the event of an injury, illness or emergency is not readily available. Three factors must be assessed when determining if assistance is readily available:

* + - 1. Are other individuals who are capable of providing assistance aware of the employee needs?
      2. Is it reasonable to expect that individuals who are capable of assisting will provide helpful assistance?
      3. Will assistance be provided within a reasonable period of time?

**Due to the nature of their work, W.A. Ranches operations personnel cannot be expected to provide *immediate* assistance in the event of an injury, illness or emergency.**

Volunteers are not permitted to work alone.

**3.0 Responsibilities**

# 3.1 Managers/Supervisors Responsibilities

* + Complete a Field Level Hazard Assessment (FLHA) in accordance with the Hazard Assessment and Control Procedure, and ensure that Working Alone is identified with appropriate hazards and controls documented, including application of this program.
  + Accompany the worker to the W.A. Ranches at least 2 times before sending them on their own
  + Complete and approve a Working Alone Plan Form, and communicate it to all stakeholders involved with the work such as a designated contact and the lone worker.
  + Provide a two-way satellite GPS messenger device (eg. Spot X) for working alone.
    - Set up the emergency call out according to the instructions in the Emergency Call-Out procedure
    - Test the device while accompanying the worker to the Ranch during the first few times
  + If the risk assessment reveals a high risk rating working alone is ***prohibited***.
  + Ensure the communication plan and emergency response procedure is documented, followed and that a copy is readily accessible for the duration of the work.
  + Take required escalation steps if the lone worker misses a check in.
  + Record the check in times from lone workers.
  + Contact Environment, Health & Safety for guidance related to application of the Working Alone Program, if required.

# 3.2 Lone Worker Responsibilities

* Participate in the creation, review, or update of the FLHA with the manager/supervisor.
* Participate in and follow the requirements of the approved Working Alone Plan.
* Use the two-way satellite GPS messenger device as outlined in the Working Alone Plan and immediately stop work if the device fails (eg. runs out of battery).
* Keep a copy of the Working Alone Plan readily accessible for the duration of the work.

**3.3 Designated Contact Person Responsibilities (if applicable)**

* Participate in the creation, review, or update of the FLHA.
* Participate in and follow the requirements of the approved Working Alone Plan.
* Keep a copy of the Working Alone Plan readily accessible for the duration of the work.
* Take required escalation steps if the lone worker misses a check in.

**4.0 Risk Assessment of Working Alone Activities**

Low risk tasks are usually encountered in an office setting and include hazards such as noise, repetitive motion, static posture, eye strain, etc. Outdoor tasks at the ranch start as a medium risk for working alone.

**4.1 Medium Risk Tasks**

The FLHA must be used for reference when determining the level of risk associated with an activity. Medium risk tasks have potential for injuries of increased severity, but the likelihood of an incident occurring is low. Examples of activities/hazards that may be considered medium risk include, but are not limited to:

* Walking in a pasture
* Electrical (shock)
* Vehicle collision
* Working with power tools
* Manual material handling greater 20 pounds
* Hazardous energy release
* Crushing

**4.3 High Risk and Prohibited Tasks**

Any tasks that are assessed to be high risk are ***prohibited*** from being done by a lone worker. In addition activities that involve any of the following are prohibited from being done by a lone worker.

* Being in a pasture with cattle present
* Handling of livestock
* Confined space entry (university employees are not permitted to enter confined spaces)
* Electrical systems rated at more than 750 volts
* Work involving excavation and/or tunneling
* Work performed at a height of 3 meters or more, without a guardrail and/or when a travel restraint or personal fall arrest is used.
* Use of supplied air respiratory equipment or self-contained breathing apparatus
* Risk of drowning
* Welding operation where a fire watch is required
* Ladders
* Chainsaw use

In addition to the items listed above managers, supervisors and the EHS Department have the authority to identify other prohibited work activities.

4.4 Summary of Working Alone Program Requirements

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Risk** | **Working Alone Program Requirements** |
| Medium | * Review of FLHA to confirm all hazards are identified and controls are implemented * Working Alone Plan required |
| High | * Working Alone Prohibited |

# 5.0 Working Alone Plan

Plans must be developed for all employees that must work alone W.A. Ranches. The Working Alone Plan must be completed in its entirety. The plan must be developed by the Manager/Supervisor in consultation with affected employees and designated contact persons (if different than manager/supervisor).

The Manager/Supervisor must review the plan with lone workers prior to working alone, and it is best practice to document this review meeting. The plan must be updated if there are any changes such as location, working conditions, or work activities. The plan must also be reviewed if a new hazard is identified or an incident occurs.

The steps for completing the Working Alone Plan include:

1. Locate the Field Level Hazard Assessment (FLHA) associated with the work activity. Identify each task that is being included in the working alone plan and determine the hazard rankings for Severity (S), Probability of Incident (P), and Frequency of Exposure (F). Where multiple tasks are included in the plan, the task with the highest level of risk shall be referenced. Ensure the risk ratings are documented on the FLHA.



1. Identify the work location, which may include a description of the location, legal land description, coordinates, etc.
2. Identify and acquire the two-way satellite GPS messenger device and set it up according to the emergency call out procedure.
3. Determine the frequency of check-in while the employee is working alone. The frequency of check-in must be based on the level of risk. At minimum, this must be at the beginning and end of the work shift and is in addition to check ins/outs with ranch management for ranch communication policy. If the shift is longer than 6 hours, check in at the mid-point of the shift is required. More frequent check-ins may be required based on the nature of the work being performed.
4. Determine and document the escalation steps that will be followed if there is a missed check in from the lone worker.
   1. The monitoring center for the GPS device will identify a missed check in. They will attempt to contact the lone worker through the device.
   2. If the monitoring center cannot reach the lone worker, they will follow the emergency call out procedure provided to them.
      * The center will start with the first contact which is usually the lone worker’s supervisor or a designated contact.
      * If the supervisor or designated contact is not available, Campus Security is the third contact. They will contact EHS immediately.
   3. The monitoring center will be able to provide GPS coordinates of the lone worker.
   4. Whomever is notified of the missing lone worker by the monitoring center must try to reach the lone worker once again either through the device and cell phone.
      * If that fails, then call the W.A. Ranch Manager to ask for assistance in locating the employee.
   5. If the W.A. Ranch employees cannot locate the missing worker based on the GPS location, continue reaching out to the missing worker through the device and cell phone; and call 911 for additional assistance.
5. Review the document with the worker and designated contact person (if different than manager/supervisor) who will be working alone and ensure agreement with the plan.

The lone worker, the manager/supervisor, and the designated contact person (if applicable) must have a copy readily accessible for the duration of the work.

# 6.0 Document Management & Retention

A copy of the Working Alone Plan must be readily accessible to the lone worker and designated contact person while the work is in progress. Ensure a copy of the Work Alone Plan is retained for three (3) years beyond its expiry date in either electronic or paper format that is readily accessible.

# 7.0 Definitions

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Field Level Hazard Assessment (FLHA) | As defined by the Hazard Identification, Assessment & Control Procedure. |
| Lone Worker | A University of Calgary employee or student who is undertaking work activities that fall under the Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Act, Regulations and Code Part 28. |

# 8.0 References and Additional Resources

* UCalgary Environment, Health and Safety
* UCalgary Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS)
* UCalgary Emergency Communication webpage
* Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Act, Regulation and Code