

Sharing the Outdoors with Rodents, Snakes and Insects

Whether you're on the job or doing chores around the house, it's important to take precautionary measures when it comes to rodents, snakes and insects. When you're cleaning up debris or moving materials around outside, you may encounter at least one of the three, so it is important to be prepared. Below are a few tips on how to handle these interactions:

Rodents and Wild or Stray Animals

- Avoid contact with wild or stray animals, dead or alive. They can spread diseases, such as Rate Bite Fever or Rabies.
- Wear protective gloves whenever possible.
- Dead carcasses should be removed from the area as soon as possible.
- If bitten or scratched, seek medical attention immediately.

Snakes

- Wear heavy gloves when removing debris. Always watch where you are placing your hands and feet and if possible, don't place your fingers under debris being moved.
- If you see a snake, step back, give it space and allow it to proceed.
- Wear boots that are at least 10 inches tall.
- Be watchful for snakes sunning on fallen trees or other debris.
- Snakes striking distances are about half their body length.
- In case of a snake bite, keep the victim still and calm to slow the spread of venom if the snake is poisonous. Seek medical attention immediately.
- If bitten, pay attention to the color and shape of the snake's head to help with treatment.

Insects, Spiders and Ticks

- Wear long pants, socks and long sleeve shirt to protect yourself from biting or stinging insects.
- Use insect repellents.
- Treat bites and stings with first aid products that relieve pain and prevent infection.

Clearly, when working outdoors, there are various risks that should be taken into consideration to have a productive experience. Being observant of your surroundings, planning your activities and taking precautionary measures can go a long way into getting tasks completed without incident. These tips can be helpful in reducing unnecessary exposures or injuries. Remember, a big part of being safe is being alert and prepared.

References:

OSHA Quick Card 3274-09N-05, Rodents, Snakes and Insects

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