



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
MS AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY
EXPERIMENT STATION

MAFES DAWG TRACKS

As an agriculturally based university, there is a lot of research that takes place outside of a building and in the field. Safety measures needed to be taken before, during and after field research will vary based on the scope of work, location, and number of people participating.

There is a famous quote, with much debate as to who originally said it,

“Nobody plans to fail. They just fail to plan.”

So to help encourage successful, safe field research the following are some activities and planning points to consider.

✓ Define the scope of the field work.

What is the overall task and goal, where will it take place, how long will it last, and who are the participants. This also a good place to point out any permit or site access restrictions.

✓ Create a detailed itinerary.

A written agenda with scheduled times for each day's activity (including breaks) will help the participants know what to expect. If traveling in separate vehicles, this will help guide on where to be & when. It is also helpful to list cell phone #s and address/GPS coordinates for the meeting places.

✓ List the separate tasks to be performed along with their associated hazards and control measures to lower any safety risks. The exercise of creating this list should help bring many safety considerations to mind with questions similar to these...

- How will you travel to the location? (vehicle, plane)
- How will you access the research site? (truck, UTV, boat, walk)

- How will you transport/handle supplies & chemicals? (securement tie-downs, secondary containment bins, backpacks, carts, hand trucks).
- What will be done with any waste generated? (hazardous, regular trash)
- Is power required? (electrical generators, cords, GFCI adapters, air compressors)
- Are there any tools or operations that require PPE or special training?

✓ Consider additional hazards.

- Are there other groups performing work near the research field site that may have effects on the participants?
- Temperature extremes of heat/cold stress. Outline mandatory break times & places to cool down/warm up. Consider providing shade/heat in if static area for a length of time, or appropriate clothing (coveralls, wide brimmed sun hats, insulated gloves).
- Dangerous wildlife and poisonous plants.

✓ Plan for emergencies.

- Appropriately stocked 1st Aid Kit for vehicles, UTV, and backpacks & trained to use.
- Carry communication devices suitable for location (cell phone, radios, satellite phone). Will responders be able to find you or where is the nearest ER?
- Weather guidelines on when to stop work.

✓ Post-field work review. Learn from each day's experiences; what worked & what needs improvement.

For more info contact:

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Sources:

<https://www.cshema.org/>

<https://www.ocrm.msstate.edu/focus-areas/travel>