

While our working events have been and continue to be safe places for showcasing the talents of our wonderful breed, accidents do indeed happen when least expected. We can always do better to ensure the safety of our events, so the Working Dog Committee asks that all water and draft tests fine-tune their safety procedures effective immediately.

The Working Dog Committee is asking all judges and event committees to please incorporate the following specifics into your pre-event and during-event processes. While these items are embedded into the regulations and the Working Events guide, the WDC wants to raise safety awareness to a higher level across the country. Also, the WDC has added a few helpful aides that expand on some critical safety topics.

**Committees--please implement these processes:**

The WDC wants to remind you of the safety needs that are required at tests as well as elevate the role of the Safety Officer. Please review this information with everyone on your test committee and your regional club board of directors as needed.

- The Test secretary must distribute a uniquely numbered ID placard to be placed in the entrant's vehicle, and that the unique ID number be recorded on the corresponding Test Secretary's entrant list. That list should include the unique number, entrant name, make and model of vehicle, and cell phone of entrant.
- Veterinarian on site is preferred. Should that not be possible, please make contact with the Vet On Call the week before the test to give them an idea of the number of dogs in the test, conditions, and possible needs. Ideally, they are 10 miles away or less.
- Committees need to have readily available an **Emergency Folder** with:  
Nearest hospital for people with map and driving directions. Nearest vet hospital - confirmed the week before - map and driving directions, less than 10 miles from test site preferred.
- Shade for entrants (dogs and humans) (including the area designated for secluded bitches in season)
- Some of the duties of the Safety Officer have been refined. Effective immediately, please follow these added protocols.

Please make sure your Safety Officer is appointed ahead of time, has no other duties for the day except for dog and people safety, and is prepared in case of an emergency. The main job of the Safety Officer should be to monitor all the areas where dogs and people may be and ensure that proper safety protocols are in place and followed at all times. The safety officer should be familiar with first aid, **the event's safety kit, dog overheating signs and symptoms**, the **locations of help**, and be willing to jump in when needed. The safety officer should review the following links prior to the test weekend, especially the link regarding dog overheating:

FIRST AID for pets:

<https://www.avma.org/public/EmergencyCare/Pages/Basic-Pet-First-Aid-Procedures.aspx>

Specifically Dog Overheating: [Dog Overheating](#)

FIRST AID for people: <http://www.mayoclinic.org/first-aid>

During the tests, the safety officer should check vehicles, and walk around the area to ensure that if there are dogs in any type of vehicle that they are in open vehicles with adequate ventilation, coverage and water. The safety officer should be familiar with local laws regarding dogs in cars and be prepared to follow local policies and call 911 as well as break windows if not able to get in otherwise for dog safety. (In some states, this is now law). Committees must provide a window breaking tool.

For any dog being kept in a vehicle, the doors or hatchback must be open, and the safety officer should be informed of any vehicles with dogs left inside, even if open. Safety officers should remind the entrants, stewards and spectators that the safety of their dogs is their responsibility and people should check them often to keep them safe. Spectators' dogs should also be considered.

- The safety officer should also be familiar with the following guidelines from the National Weather Service for continuing a test or waiting for a storm to pass.  
[https://www.weather.gov/media/owlie/lightning3\\_050714.pdf](https://www.weather.gov/media/owlie/lightning3_050714.pdf)
- It would be ideal to have or identify someone on site that has CPR training and General Dog and Human First Aid training.
- American Red Cross Pet First Aid Iphone App may also prove helpful.

**Safety Kit and safety site preparations at test must include:**

Cell phone (with service)

Emergency folder with:

Nearest hospital for people with map and driving directions

Nearest vet hospital - confirmed the week before - map and driving directions, less than 10 miles from test site preferred.

Print and post these directions for all entrants and spectators to be able to access if needed.

**PRINT OUT** This info on overheating in dogs with associated supplies:

[Dog Overheating](#)

Dog thermometer

Buckets to use if dog needs dousing with lukewarm water

Battery operated fan with fully charged batteries for moving air as needed

Slip over head leash (in case of a loose dog)

Human and Pet General First Aide Kit with supplies such as: [supplies](#)

[Some kind of tool to break window glass](#)

Backboard preferred

Large empty vehicle and driver lined up (ideally not the safety officer) to either drive to hospital or act as a “chase vehicle” as needed

Some type of stretcher or something that can be used as a stretcher

Designated first aid area with space in shade to lay out a dog or human in distress

Committees, thank you for your diligence and attention to these safety items. We are also asking judges to be mindful of these heightened safety procedures and committees should be prepared for judges to follow these protocols below in the future.

**Judges, please implement the safety processes below (Committees should be expecting these things to happen at their tests as well.)**

During your judges briefings and your stewards meetings, please remind people that the safety of their dogs depends on them. Encourage entrants and stewards to have safe, breezy, shady places for their dogs, lots of fresh water in their crates, and to check on them often.

Please add frequent reminders during the test day to entrants, stewards and spectators to keep dogs cool and safe. Have brief “dog check” breaks hourly if possible to encourage entrants, stewards and spectators to walk their dogs, check on temps, get wet as needed (either with a hose, buckets of water, breaks to get dogs wet in the lake outside test area, baby pool, etc).

Check committee preparations for safety when checking site the night before. Included in these preparations, and checked by the judges should be:

- Is there a veterinarian on site? If not, how far away is the nearest vet?
- Who is the safety officer? Are they aware of the protocols for safety?
- Do any committee members know CPR in the event of an emergency?
- Does the cell phone on site have service?
- Are there printed copies of the directions and maps to the nearest human hospital and dog hospital?
- Is there an identified travel car and driver should that be required?
- Is there shade for all participants (including bitches in season area)?
- Is the safety officer ready to check cars in the area for dogs who may be contained there?
- Did the committee review the process for dog overheating, are they prepared with the proper supplies (thermometer, water transport or lots of buckets or small pool, fan, etc) to cool off dogs who may be overheating?)
- Is the first-aid kit accessible?
- Is there a slip leash ready in case a loose dog needs to be restrained?
- What other safety preparations have the committee made that are not specifically listed here?

Please be familiar with the **dog overheating signs and symptoms**, the **locations of help**, and be willing to jump in when needed. Here are some links for judges to review prior to test weekends:

FIRST AID for pets:

<https://www.avma.org/public/EmergencyCare/Pages/Basic-Pet-First-Aid-Procedures.aspx>

Specifically Dog Overheating: [Dog Overheating](#)

FIRST AID for people: <http://www.mayoclinic.org/first-aid>

Guidelines from the National Weather Service for continuing a test or waiting for a storm to pass. [https://www.weather.gov/media/owlie/lightning3\\_050714.pdf](https://www.weather.gov/media/owlie/lightning3_050714.pdf)

Please include a write-up of the safety work at tests where you judge in your judges evaluation. Safety of our dogs and our humans involved in NCA events is of the highest importance.

Again, Thanks so much for your attention to this important issue! Please contact any member of the working dog committee with questions or concerns.