



Guides & Scouts of Europe - Ireland

International union of Guides & Scouts of Europe

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

FOREWARD

Guides and Scouts of Europe- Ireland uses the traditional method of scouting created by Lord Baden Powel and enriched by Fr. Jacques Sevin. The scouting method implemented by GSE- Ireland is based on the pedagogy of UIGSE- FSE (*Union Internationale des Guides et Scouts d'Europe – Fédération du Scoutisme*).

“Guides and Scouts of Europe- Ireland aims to educate children in body, mind and soul within a safe environment to become adults who are responsible catholic citizens, committed and always ready to serve”.

Guides and Scouts of Europe - Ireland aims to ensure the health, safety and welfare of everyone engaged in its activities and takes the maintenance of health and safety extremely seriously as a matter of both legal and moral importance.

All members and volunteers within the organisation will be familiarised with the provisions contained within this policy as part of their induction process and be expected to act in accordance with them at all times.

Guides and Scouts of Europe- Ireland aims to:

- Create an environment that is safe for scouting activities and without risk to health.
- Prevent cases of activity-related ill health.
- Use, maintain and store equipment safely.
- Ensure that all scout leaders are competent to undertake the work in which they are engaged.
- Conduct risk assessments of all the locations and activities.

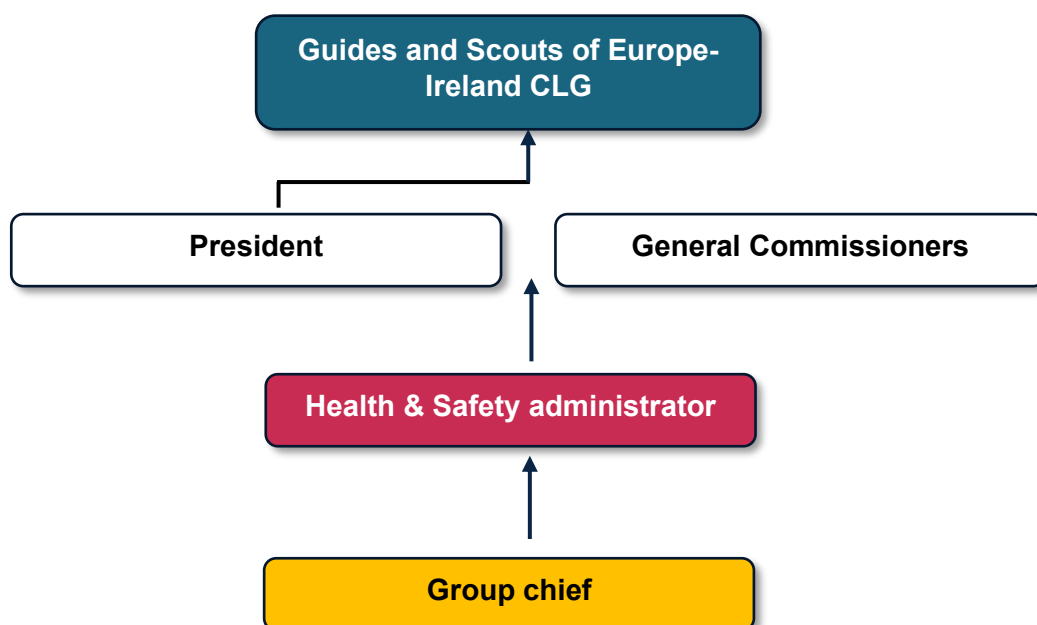
The identification, assessment and control of hazards associated with the activities undertaken under the auspices of Guides and Scouts of Europe - Ireland is vital in reducing accidents and incidents. Its senior members are responsible for assessing risks to health and safety arising out of these activities and introducing suitable steps to eliminate or control any such risk identified.

It is vital to ensure that health and safety matters are taken seriously by all members of the organisation. Anyone who is found to have disregarded safety instructions or recognised safe practices will be subject to disciplinary procedures.

The leaders of the organisation are responsible for ensuring that subordinates understand and accept their responsibilities in relation to health and safety procedures.

SAFETY MANAGEMENT

The president along with the general commissioners and health and safety administrator is responsible for maintaining, reviewing and updating this policy. Any updates to the policy will be communicated the board of Guides and Scouts of Europe- Ireland CLG by the president of the association.



President:

- Primarily responsible to organise the review of the policy.
- Updates the required sections of the policy.
- Reports and presents the current version of the policy to the members of Guides and Scouts of Europe- Ireland CLG.

General commissioners:

- Implement the health and safety policy through the pedagogical structure throughout all the units.
- Works with the president to update the policy when required.

Health and Safety Administrator:

- Supports group chiefs in completing the risk assessment for all the locations and activities.
- Maintains the risk assessment documents of all the locations.
- Maintains a register of accidents that occurred during scouting activities.
- Maintains a list of all the locations which are suitable for scouting activities along with the necessary documents.

Group Chief:

- Conducts risk assessment of the locations used for scouting activities and send the report to the health and safety administrator.
- Informs health and safety administrator of any accidents caused during the scouting activities.
- Keeps an inventory and stores the equipment used by the scouters within the group.

The Safety management structure is designed to ensure that adequate arrangements exist for the following:

- Monitoring the effectiveness of the Health and Safety policy and authorising any necessary revisions to its provisions.
- Providing adequate resources, including financial, as necessary to meet the organisation's health and safety responsibilities.
- Providing adequate health and safety training for all members of the organisation.
- Ensuring that all accidents, incidents, and dangerous occurrences are adequately reported and recorded.
- Reviewing all such reported accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences, and the relevant response, to enable corrective measures to be implemented.
- Ensuring that all adult members have appropriate and up-to-date child safeguarding training and be Garda Vetted.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCOUTERS/VOLUNTEERS/MEMBERS:

The Scouters (adult members) are responsible for ensuring that the provisions of the Health and Safety policy are always adhered to. As such, they are required to:

- Have regard for the Health and Safety policy and their responsibilities under it.
- Have regard for any health and safety guidelines issued by a senior member of the hierarchy within the organisation.
- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety as well as of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work or during activities.
- Take all reasonable care to see that the equipment and premises that are used by children and young people carried out under the auspices of the organisation are safe.
- Take all reasonable care to see that the activities are conducted in a safe.
- Report any accidents, incidents or dangerous occurrences that have led to, or may in the future be likely to lead to, injury or damage to health to the group chief or the relevant person within the organisation.
- Undergo relevant health and safety training as directed by chiefs within the organisation.

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITMENTS

- All electrical equipment at indoor venues used by the organisation shall be validated as safe by a qualified person.
- All chemicals, hazardous substances, and tools will be kept stored appropriately.
- Fire evacuation procedures and fire exit signs shall be clearly displayed at indoor venues used by the organisation. Fire drills shall be carried out. All fire and smoke alarms and fire extinguishers shall be verified to be in working order at the beginning of the year. All fire exits shall be kept clear and free of obstacles.
- The heads of the organisation should ensure that at least one member has a current 'first aid at work' certificate. First aid boxes should be easily accessible and should be available during both indoor and outdoor activities. Adults should be told where the first aid boxes are kept. It is the responsibility of the heads of the organisation to ensure that first aid equipment is re-stocked when necessary.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Procedures and measures will be put in place and maintained in a situation of an emergency or serious and imminent danger during an activity. Risk assessments will be completed so that the following emergency situations which are likely to occur during scouting activities will be identified and controls will be implemented and maintained:

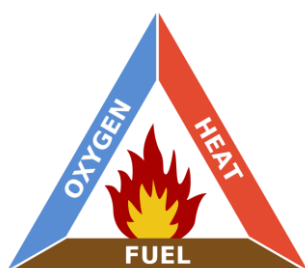
1. Fire on the campsite or meeting place.
2. Exploration and hikes.
3. Scouting activities and injuries.
4. First Aid.
5. Bullying harassment and orderly development of activities.
6. Narcotic substances, consumption of alcohol and use of smart devices.

APPENDIX 1: GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Fire on the campsite or meeting place:

Practising scouting as per F.S.E. pedagogy requires all Scouters, volunteers, members, and children to learn the techniques of making a controlled fire during the activities. Hence, it is important that all the scouters adhere to the scouting techniques strictly. The following points are guidelines, and the chiefs must take proper precautions and consult appropriate authorities if there are any doubts regarding the fire safety procedures.

1. Chiefs and Patrol chiefs must familiarise themselves with the fire triangle and take proactive steps to know the elements that can be used to extinguish the fire. Removing any one element from the fire triangle can help in extinguishing the fire.



2. Keep cooking oil, fire lighter, wood and any other flammable materials away from the fire.
3. Always note the direction of the wind before making a fire in an open area.
4. If making a fire in a forest, obtain the authorisation of the forest manager. Where possible fire must be raised from the ground. It is strongly recommended to inform the local fire brigade/department and the Gardai.
5. A fire extinguisher and a fire blanket must be available at all locations when making a fire.
6. Chiefs must supervise the fire for all the activities conducted by the yellow and the blue branches.
7. During the camps, the fire evacuation procedure must be explained to the children. A designated assembly area must be determined in advance, which must be noted in the campfire. If possible, a fire evacuation drill may be conducted.
8. Fires must never be unattended. At the end of the campfire, the fires/embers must be fully extinguished.
9. In case the fire gets out of control, follow the evacuation procedures, and inform the relevant authorities. Chiefs or children must never approach a fire when they are not trained to use the fire extinguisher, or the fire is too difficult to control.
10. Follow the met Eireann and public notices for fire warnings, particularly during summertime.

Exploration and hikes

Exploration and hikes are core to the F.S.E pedagogy. When going on exploration or hikes, it is important that all Scouters, children, and members adhere to the rules of the road. Any chief using vehicles must have a valid licence. The following guidelines must be followed for your safety while using the road.

1. If there is a footpath, you **must** use it.
2. If there is no footpath, you **must** walk as near as possible to the right-hand side of the road, facing oncoming traffic.
3. If the road is narrow or carries heavy traffic, you **should** walk in a single file and never more than two abreast.
4. You **should** wear bright, high-visibility clothing when walking during the day and reflective clothing when walking at night.
5. You **should** always carry a torch when walking at night.
6. Be aware of other road users.
7. If you are walking as a group of more than 20 people, you **should** walk on the left-hand side of the road, in the direction of traffic flow.
8. Exploration/hiking activity on roads during night-time should be avoided.
9. All exploration routes of the patrols must be validated by chiefs in advance.
10. The chiefs, children and Scouters must familiarise themselves with the rules of the road from the Road safety authority before going on hikes or explorations.

Dos and Don'ts when crossing the road:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ➤ Do look for a safe place to cross | ➤ Don't cross at a corner or bend in the road |
| ➤ Do stop and wait near the edge of the path, or the edge of the road if there is no path | ➤ Don't cross near the brow of a hill |
| ➤ Do look right and left and listen for traffic | ➤ Don't cross near parked vehicles |
| ➤ Do let any traffic coming in either direction pass, then look right and left again | ➤ Don't cross where there are guard rails along a footpath |
| ➤ Do walk briskly straight across the road when it is clear | ➤ Don't hold or climb onto moving vehicles |
| ➤ Do continue to watch and listen for traffic while you cross. | ➤ Don't run across the road. |

Scouting activities and injuries

Scouting outdoors in a natural environment brings its own challenges. It is not possible to eliminate all the risks completely. When outdoors all members must use common knowledge and exercise caution. It is important that all members respect the natural environment and take steps to leave the location of activities without any trace. The following points are guidelines, and the chiefs must take proper precautions and consult appropriate authorities if there are any doubts regarding the safety procedures during scouting activities.

1. Risk assessment must be conducted to identify the hazards and reduce the level of risk. Do not use a location for which a risk assessment is not completed.
2. All members using equipment like chisels, saws, axes, hatchets, augers etc must exercise extreme caution. It is always good practice to use work gloves that can withstand.
3. Tools and equipment must never be left unattended on the ground.
4. Equipment must be stored properly by keeping away sharp edges or covering them appropriately.
5. Equipment and tools that are rusted should not be used.
6. During installations in the camp, a plan of all installations that are required must be made in advance.
7. During hot summer days, appropriate sun protection must be used, and the children must be reminded to remain hydrated.
8. While cooking food, proper gloves must be used to remove pots and pans from the fire.
9. Use of blunt knives should be avoided.
10. While cooking meat, do not mix raw/uncooked food. Ensure that the meat is thoroughly cooked as per the labels/instructions on the packets.
11. Do not use any expired food and dispose of it properly.
12. During camps waste must be segregated and disposed of accordingly.

Weather:

The following table may be used as a guideline for all activities during weather warnings

	Day activities	Camps	Hikes/Exploration
Yellow	<p>Rain: Activities can go ahead with necessary precautions.</p> <p>Wind: Activities can be conducted in open areas. Activities in the forest must be avoided.</p>	<p>Rain: Activities can go ahead with necessary precautions.</p> <p>Wind: Activities can be conducted in open areas. Activities in the forest must be avoided.</p>	<p>Rain: Activities can go ahead with necessary precautions.</p> <p>Wind: Activities can be conducted in open areas. Activities in the forest must be avoided.</p>
Orange	<p>Rain: Activities can go ahead with necessary precautions.</p> <p>Wind: Activities can be conducted in open areas. Activities in the forest are prohibited.</p>	<p>Rain: Activities can go ahead with necessary precautions.</p> <p>Wind: Activities can be conducted in open areas. Activities in the forest are prohibited.</p>	<p>Rain: Activities can go ahead with necessary precautions.</p> <p>Wind: Activities can be conducted in open areas. Activities in the forest are prohibited.</p>
Red	<p>Rain: Activities must be cancelled.</p> <p>Wind: Activities must be cancelled.</p>	<p>Rain: Activities must be cancelled.</p> <p>Wind: Activities must be cancelled.</p>	<p>Rain: Activities must be cancelled.</p> <p>Wind: Activities must be cancelled.</p>

First Aid

Administering first aid during an emergency must be done only by trained members. All members must rely on trained personnel in case of an emergency. The following points are guidelines, and all members must take proper precautions and consult appropriate authorities if there are any doubts regarding the safety procedures during scouting activities.

1. During all the activities the chiefs must carry a basic first aid kit particularly to administer care in case of small cuts, wounds, and burns.
2. At least one chief during camp must have basic first aid training for the blue and the yellow branch.
3. At the camps the chiefs must have a first aid kit. For the green branch, the patrols may have their own first aid kits. The chiefs must ensure that all the elements contained in the first aid kit/box are within date.
4. It is advised that the first aider in the green branch must go through a first aid course before the start of his/her service.
5. The chiefs must keep a note of children with allergies. Care must be taken to not cross-contaminate the food with food allergens. The chiefs must have all the contact details with the family GP, emergency contact details and any other medical condition.
6. Parents are responsible for notifying the chiefs of any medical condition of their children. Any child required to take medication must be notified to the chiefs. It is best practice to give all the medication to the chiefs. The chiefs must then ensure that the children take the correct medication at the prescribed time.
7. The group chief must ensure that all the chiefs receive the necessary training/courses for administering first aid, share the information in a confidential manner with the chiefs and ensure that the chiefs put the safety of the children first.

Bullying, harassment & orderly development during activities

The child protection policy outlines the procedure for bullying, harassment and safeguarding of children. During activities, the children are under the supervision and responsibility of the scout leaders in charge of the group, from the moment the children are physically left with the leaders.

1. An outing starts at the beginning of the first gathering and ends after the last gathering is finished. Parents are informed of those times and of any variation to them.
2. Before and after these first and final gatherings, the children are under the responsibility of their parents.
3. It is imperative that parents, therefore, arrive on time, both to drop off their children and to collect them.
4. It is also necessary that parents impress upon their children that they must always obey the instructions of the leaders during outings.
5. If a child is disruptive and causes during activities, the chiefs must carefully consider the possible options to alleviate the matter.
6. If warnings are given and the child does not heed the instructions of the chiefs, the chiefs may do run around, push-ups etc along with the child. This should be in rare cases as the pedagogy in case of disruptive or unruly behaviour should focus on the consequences of the behaviour.
7. During an activity, if a child does not respond to instructions given by a leader, the following actions can be taken:
 - The child is given 2 verbal warnings. In the case of the green branch, this may be done through the court of honour and give the opportunity to the child to improve their behaviour.
 - If after verbal warnings the child still does not follow the leaders' instructions, parents can be called to collect their child. The chiefs must consult and take pedagogical advice from the hierarchy.
 - All efforts and pedagogical tools must be taken to help the child improve their behaviour. At all times, communication with parents and children is considered paramount.
 - The Council of Guides and Scouts of Europe- Ireland may decide to suspend temporarily or permanently the membership of a child if his/her behaviour becomes so unruly that the good development of activities is threatened.
 - This decision can be taken after the leaders of the relevant unit report to the Council about such unruly behaviour.

Narcotic substance use, consumption of alcohol and use of smart devices

Guides and scouts of Europe- Ireland recognises the real danger to the health of its members, caused by the use of narcotic substances and excessive consumption of alcohol. Overuse of smart devices like phones, tablets, music players watches, etc can also have a serious impact on the mental health of young children. With access to the internet on smart devices there is a real danger of accessing explicit content. Moreover, improper use of smart devices can lead to various other incidents such as phishing, data breach, identity theft etc. The following points are guidelines. All members must take proper precautions and consult appropriate authorities if there are any doubts regarding these safety procedures.

1. The chiefs should ensure that the children do not carry any narcotic substance, alcohol or smart devices. This may be done at the beginning or during an activity by a simple inspection of the bags.
2. Consumption of alcohol or usage of narcotic substances is prohibited for all members during scouting activities. Smart devices like phones, tablets, watches, music players etc are not allowed for children at any scouting activities.
3. The chiefs may use their personal phones during scouting activities for emergencies. These devices must have a lock and keep in person or at a secure location, particularly during camps.
4. During exploration, the chiefs can and should provide a simple phone to the Patrol chief/second, which has basic functionality such as the ability to call/text or send an SOS.
5. During non-scouting activities such as meetings of the adult (Over 18) members involving dinner, social even consumption of alcohol is not prohibited, however, care should be taken that all the members observe the scout/guide law, maintaining dignity and self-respect. It is strongly discouraged to consume alcohol as a sign of respect when in uniform.

APPENDIX 2: RISK ASSESSMENT FOR ACTIVITIES AND LOCATIONS

Process of risk assessment for activities and locations

1. Look for the hazards, i.e., what could cause harm- Risks.
2. Consider who might be injured and how.
3. Decide how the risk is controlled and what further action needs to be taken.
4. Record and effectively communicate your findings so that others are aware of the precautions to be taken.
5. Remember to review and revise them (dynamically if conditions or circumstance change mid-activity), especially when you consider they are no longer effective.



Risk Matrix: The risk matrix is a guideline to be used while filling the risk assessment form

Likelihood		Highly unlikely	Unlikely	Likely	Very Likely
Consequence	Negligible	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
	Minor	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	Major	Medium	Medium	High	High
	Fatality	Medium	High	High	High

APPENDIX 3: RISK ASSESSMENTS

Potential Risks (What hazards have you identified?)	Who is at Risk?	Risk Matrix	Risk Mitigation Action/Measure	Comments & Risk Matrix post mitigation action
Fire during cooking	All members	Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keeping flammable materials away from the fire. 2. Supply a fire blanket and/or extinguisher. 3. Chiefs to be trained on fire safety measures. 4. Raise fire from the ground. 5. Learn about the fire triangle 	Low
Fire during activities	All members	High	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Put out embers/fire after the activity. 2. Inform the fire brigade / local fire department. 3. Avoid fire in the forest during dry summers. 4. Keeping flammable materials away from the fire. 5. Supply a fire blanket and/or extinguisher. 6. Chiefs to be trained on fire safety measures. 	Low
Accident during exploration	All members	Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wear high viz clothing during exploration. 2. No exploration activities during the night 3. Chiefs verify the exploration plan of the patrols. 4. Familiarising the route. 5. Walking in a single file as per the rules of the road. 6. Being aware of other road users. 	Low

Potential Risks (What hazards have you identified?)	Who is at Risk?	Risk Matrix	Risk Mitigation Action/Measure	Comments & Risk Matrix post mitigation action
Accident during hikes	All members	High	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wear high viz clothing during exploration. 2. Wear reflective clothing during the night. 3. Familiarising the route. 4. Walking in a single file as per the rules of the road. 5. Being aware of other road users. 	Low
Activities during weather warnings	All members	High	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Yellow warning: Day activities, camps and hikes to continue with precautions for rain. Forest areas are to be avoided during wind warnings. 2. Orange warning: Activities to go ahead with precaution in no flooding zones during rain warning. Forest activities are to be avoided during wind and activities in open areas may continue with extreme caution during wind warning. 3. Red warning: All activities are to be cancelled. 	Low
Injuries and accidents during scouting activities	All members	High	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All tools and equipment used for scouting activities are to be stored in a safe manner. 2. Use work gloves while using tools and equipment. 3. Replacing blunt tools and equipment 	Low
Food poisoning	All members	Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keeping raw and uncooked food separate. 2. Cooking meat and poultry products thoroughly. 3. Following instructions on the packet/label 4. Disposing expired food products. 5. Avoiding cross contamination of food 	Low

Potential Risks (What hazards have you identified?)	Who is at Risk?	Risk Matrix	Risk Mitigation Action/Measure	Comments & Risk Matrix post mitigation action
Cuts, burns and wounds	All members	Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Avoid the used of blunt knives. 2. Use proper hot gloves to remove pots, pans and hot utensils from the fire. 3. Use proper cooking equipment. 	Low
Allergic reactions	All members	High	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Responsible members to obtain relevant medical conditions of children to avoid food allergies. 2. Chiefs to ensure the scouters requiring medication take them at the prescribed period. 3. Avoid cross-contamination of food with food allergens. 4. Keep a record of all food allergens and children with food allergies. 5. Noting the emergency contact details and the contact number of GP, parents, and guardians. 	Low
Injuries during activities	All members	Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Carry a first aid kit during all the activities. 2. Ensure that all the items contained within the first aid box/kit are in date. 3. Training of chiefs and Scouters to understand basic first aid principles. 	Low
Bullying and Harassment	All members	Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training on child safeguarding policy to be given to all new chiefs, members, and volunteers. 2. Pedagogy of the council during the activities to give an opportunity to all members to speak freely. 	Low

Potential Risks (What hazards have you identified?)	Who is at Risk?	Risk Matrix	Risk Mitigation Action/Measure	Comments & Risk Matrix post mitigation action
Unruly behaviour	All members	Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pedagogical council or court of honour to address behavioural issues. 2. To clearly explain the consequences of the behaviour. 3. Explain the connection between action and consequences. 4. Verbal warnings and providing time to improve behaviour. 	Low
Use of narcotic substances	All members	Medium	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Train chiefs on the importance of setting up strong good examples as per the scout law. 2. Narcotic substances are prohibited at all scouting activities. 3. Inspection of bag packs before or during the activities. 	Low
Consumption of alcohol	Children (Young scouters)	High	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Train chiefs on the importance of setting up strong good examples as per the scout law. 2. Consumption of alcohol is prohibited at all scouting activities. 3. Inspection of bag packs before or during the activities. 	Low
Explicit content on smart devices	Children (Young scouters)	High	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Train chiefs in importance of setting up strong good examples as per the scout law. 2. Smart devices such as phone, watches, tables, music player etc are prohibited at scouting activities for children. 3. Inspection of bag packs before or during the activities. 	Low

APPENDIX 4: RISK ASSESSMENT FORM FOR ACTIVITIES AND LOCATIONS

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Name of the Location/ Eircode (if available)		Date of Assessment		Name of the Person doing the assessment	
Wood for Fire and Construction	To make Fire: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No For construction: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Fallen trees. <input type="checkbox"/> Marked trees. <input type="checkbox"/> Dead trees. <input type="checkbox"/> Other.....	Access to water	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Natural spring/Well <input type="checkbox"/> County supply <input type="checkbox"/> Other.....	Emergency Shelter	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Barn <input type="checkbox"/> Shed <input type="checkbox"/> House <input type="checkbox"/> Other.....
Owner/Representative of the property		Contact details (Email/Phone)			

Potential Risks / What hazards have you identified?	Who is at Risk?	Risk Matrix	Risk Mitigation action/Measure	Comments & Risk Matrix post mitigation action

The risk is the harm that may occur from the hazard.

Potential Risks (What hazards have you identified?)	Who is at Risk?	Risk Matrix	Risk Mitigation action/Measure	Comments & Risk Matrix post mitigation action

If needed print extra copies of this page.

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