

# ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE MODULE

## UNDERSTANDING SAFETY



### LEARNING OUTCOMES

Check-in/Check-out

Emergency Response Plan

Pack Essentials

Job Hazard Analysis

PPE

In case of accident...

An obligation to walk away from anything deemed unsafe.

We all share the responsibility for keeping ourselves and fellow crew members safe.

Bringing an awareness for safety and a mind for situational awareness to each work day allows volunteers to continually consider risk and how to mitigate it while focusing on the task at hand. When you, as a volunteer or leader, model safety, you convey the importance and value of this as the foundation to all that A.T. volunteers do.

### SAFETY IS...

Combined layers of planning, communication, practices, and shared attitudes that create an atmosphere where risks and harms are better understood and reduced.

Safety matters because you matter!

*Your Essential Trail Maintenance Workshop Leader will bring the ERP, JHAs, PPE, and VIP/VIF injury packet the workshop. The lists below are for your use going forward.*

#### Advanced Planning

- Advanced preparation and planning of an Emergency Response Plan (ERP).
- Download and review Job Hazard Analysis (JHAs) applicable to planned work activities.
- As the day of planned activity draws near, check weather forecasts, adjust plan according to if conditions are safe for driving and the work activity.

#### Day-of Preparation

- Follow your organization's protocols for check-in/check-out to convey your itinerary, planned return, and phone numbers for your point of contact to seek help if you don't return.
- Pack:
  - necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) for planned tasks, based on JHA
  - 10 Essentials for a day hike, and include a First Aid Kit for yourself and others in your group.
  - VIP/VIF injury packet, if working on your own. Otherwise your trip leader will have it.

### Volunteer Rights:

- Be treated with respect.
- A workplace free of harassment, discrimination, or hostile conditions.
- Receive a suitable assignment.
- Receive training and support.
- Have qualified supervision.
- Safe working conditions.
- Have their time used effectively.

### Volunteer Responsibilities:

- Make safety the highest priority.
- Act in a professional manner.
- Follow Trail policies and guidelines.
- Participate in and learn from training sessions and meetings.
- Do high quality, professional work.
- Care for Trail resources.
- Seek and accept guidance and support.

Safety resources found at [appalachiantrail.org/volunteer/safety](http://appalachiantrail.org/volunteer/safety). 1

# ESSENTIAL MAINTENANCE MODULE

## UNDERSTANDING SAFETY



### Tailgate Safety Briefing

#### Check for:

- Appropriate footwear, clothing, gloves
- Water, snacks, rain gear, sunscreen, insect repellent
- Personal protective equipment

#### Discuss:

- Project, purpose, outcomes, & length of hike
- Emergency action plan and communications

#### Explain:

- Known work hazards, reference JHA
- Today's hazards: e.g.: weather, hunting season, biological hazards like poison ivy and yellow jackets
- First Aid Kit location
- Protocols for hikers and volunteers passing through work area

#### Ask:

- Disclosure of existing health concerns
- Medical and First Aid Training among crew
- Assign alternate crew leader in event of an emergency

#### Demonstrate:

- Proper lifting technique
- Proper tool usage (see Tool Talk)
- Safe working distance with tools

## WORK-DAY KICK-OFF SAFETY BRIEFING

Whether working alone or with others, review the topics of a **tailgate safety session**. By taking stock of the day with this overview of safety, you're better prepared for likely risks, prepared for contingencies, and able to help yourself or others.

Leaders of other volunteers should be sure all participants are signed on to the **workday roster** and carry **emergency contact information** for participants.

### Tips for Tools

Use the right tool, the right way, for the job at hand.

#### Carrying tools:

- Always wear gloves
- Carry tools in hands with arms at sides
- Never carry tools propped on your shoulder
- Carry tools on the downhill side of the trail
- Carry the heaviest or most dangerous tool on the downhill side of the trail
- Maintain a safe distance between people

#### Using tools:

- Always use PPE
- Check tools for damage
- Use proper stance for good ergonomics
- Have secure footing before using tools
- Maintain a safe working distance between people
- Use tools in a motion parallel to your body
- Lift with your legs
- Think about the consequences of every move.

#### Storing tools in the field:

Store all tools on the uphill side of the work area  
Never sink tools into the ground or stumps

## SAFETY IS ALSO...

Creating a culture of care where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

## FOUNDATIONS OF SAFETY



Planning for safety begins well before the start of the work trip. Empower everyone on a work trip to act as a safety officer. It's okay to say "no" and walk away from anything deemed unsafe. ATC recommends volunteers do not work alone.