

Protecting your dog from 1080

1080 in the Greater Wellington Region

1080 is one of the most effective tools we have in protecting our native ecosystems and agriculture sector from mammalian predators and associated diseases such as bovine tuberculosis.

Dogs are extremely vulnerable to 1080 poisoning. We strongly recommend all dog owners read this fact sheet for advice on keeping their dogs safe during, and following, any 1080 operations in the Greater Wellington Region.

Prevention of 1080 poisoning is more effective than any treatment, as there is no specific antidote to 1080. However treatment can be successful if a dog is immediately induced to vomit and then swiftly delivered to the nearest veterinary clinic.



Be alert to poisoning

The best thing you can do to ensure your dog's safety is to stay informed about any operations that are happening, and ensuring you follow the guidelines in place.

All Greater Wellington 1080 operations will be made public on our website www.gw.govt.nz/1080ops.

Warning signs and information boards will be put up in all normal points of entry, before the operation starts, and will remain in place until poison residues are no longer present. We will also issue statements and updates to the media, including local newspapers.

Communications and notifications of the heightened risk that 1080 poses to dogs will be made with all affected parties, including key agencies, user groups, occupiers and neighbours.

All dogs are at risk

1080 is carefully targeted to possums and rats, but dogs are extremely vulnerable to poisoning for both behavioural and biological reasons. Dogs tend to roam and scavenge, which makes the possibility of them ingesting 1080 higher than for other animals.

Most reported dog deaths are not from ingesting 1080 bait, but the carcasses of poisoned possums. This is because:

- 1080 can persist in possum carcasses until they have fully decomposed, which can take three to four months dependant on weather conditions.
- Poisoned possums may have travelled outside of the operational area before dying.

Prevention is more effective than treatment

As a dog owner it is important to be aware of the risks, and the ways which 1080 poisoning can be prevented.

Despite warning signs and public communications, some dogs have died unnecessarily from 1080 poisoning. We can't be there to ensure dogs are kept safe, so we need your help to reduce accidental poisoning. To do this you should:

- **Keep your dog away from operational areas** – Stay informed about 1080 operations, and avoid the area with your dog following the operation.
- **Always supervise your dog or keep it on a leash** – Keep your dog in sight and don't allow them to roam.
- **Use a muzzle** – A muzzle can stop your dog from eating 1080 baits, or poisoned animal carcasses.
- **Don't allow your dog to scavenge** – Most reported deaths occur after a dog has eaten a poisoned carcass, rather than bait.
- Keep your dog well fed and hydrated.



Know the signs of 1080 poisoning – act immediately

It is important to be able to recognise the signs of 1080 poisoning, so that you can react quickly if you suspect that your dog may have ingested bait.

Your dog may start displaying signs of poisoning as quickly as half an hour after ingesting the poison, or it may take several hours. Reacting immediately to any of the signs is crucial to your dog's safety.

- **Changes in Behaviour** – Your dog may seem disorientated, restless or hyperactive. Sudden aggression or sensitivity to touch is common, as well as running in circles and barking/howling without reason.
- **Changes in bodily function** – Your dog may start to drool, vomit, defecate or urinate. They may experience tremors, followed by convulsions.

Act immediately if you see these signs. Death can occur within two to 12 hours after ingestion of the poison, but a dog may be saved if immediate action is taken.

Action plan for accidental poisoning

The first defence for 1080 poisoning is always prevention. If you know there is a possibility that 1080, or poisoned animal carcasses (such as possums and rats) may be present in an area, do not take your dog there.

If you do take your dog into an area where 1080 poison has been used, you need to be prepared.

- **Carry washing soda crystals to induce vomiting** - The first stage of treatment is to make your dog vomit, expelling as much of the poison as possible. Mixing a paste from washing soda crystals (Sodium carbonate) and water, then placing it on the back of your dog's tongue and washing it down with some water will induce vomiting. Washing soda crystals are available from your supermarket.
- **Know where the closest vet is** – Treatment is possible if you can get your dog to a vet quickly. Call the vet to let them know you are on your way, and advise them that you suspect your dog has 1080 poisoning. .

Advice for you and your dog

All dogs – Dog owners are advised to stay clear of the area until all baits have become nontoxic and possum carcasses have decomposed. Decomposition is expected to take three to four months following the 1080 application.

Hunting dogs - Permits will not be issued in Greater Wellington Regional Parks for deer, goat or pig hunting for four months following the 1080 application. Unauthorised hunting is prohibited in Greater Wellington Regional Parks at all times.

Working dogs - Adjoining landowners should take the following precautions:

- Consider whether your stock can be managed without dogs until all baits have become nontoxic and possum carcasses have decomposed.
- Keep your dogs well fed. Feeding them meat during and after a 1080 operation will make them less likely to scavenge on dead possums.
- Keep your dogs chained or in a kennel when they are not working.
- Consider using a muzzle if suitable. This should be introduced gradually, as this may cause stress to your dog if it isn't used to wearing it. A muzzle may also cause dogs to become overheated during work, particularly in hot weather.

Further Information

For more information on how to protect your dog from 1080 poisoning, head to:
<http://www.1080facts.co.nz/1080-and-dogs.html>

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