

# Toolbox Talk

## Lone Working



Lone working should be avoided where possible. IWA recognises that some staff and volunteers are required to work by themselves in the community without close or direct supervision, sometimes in isolated areas or out of office hours.

Under the Health & Safety at Work Act IWA has a duty of care to advise and assess risks for staff and volunteers when they work by themselves in these circumstances. However, employees and volunteers have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work.

### Safety Considerations:

There are a number of general safety considerations to follow when considering lone working:

- Assess the risks involved and reduce hazards before carrying out the activity. Always think about your personal safety, and if a situation has too many potential hazards discuss your concerns with your line-manager or working party organiser.
- During work hours, all staff and volunteers leaving the workplace or home should leave written details of where they are going and their estimated time of return. **At IWA Head Office all staff must use the shared calendar to record all meetings.**
- Consider the conditions; weather/visibility/seasons/ assess situation/familiarity with location whilst planning lone working.
- Plan the route to and from the location.
- Be aware of emergency procedures, including contact numbers and location of nearest A&E.
- Ensure you have your mobile phone with you; **it is switched on, charged and you can get a signal!**
- **Personal Protective Equipment;** Ensure you have the correct PPE for your visit; whether that be appropriate shoes, gloves, eye protection or hard hat on site.

### “Buddy” System:

Telephone contact between the lone worker and an appropriate person is advised. A ‘buddy’ system is a simple way of tracking your location and your expected return time.

**A buddy may be a colleague, friend or a partner at home.**



**Lone Worker not reporting to their ‘buddy’;** After the agreed reporting-in time, the ‘buddy’ should call the lone worker a number of times (at 15 minute intervals) for up to one hour. If there is still no response then the Buddy should exhaust all other options before contacting the emergency services.

### Emergency Procedures:

If in immediate danger or requiring urgent medical assistance, **call 112 or 999.**

Where possible remove yourself from the source of danger and head to a **safe place.**

**Report and record** any incidents to your line manager/working party organiser.

### Don’t forget:

- ✓ Let your buddy know who you are meeting, when & where.
- ✓ Don’t take any unnecessary risks that could result in an accident, follow safe systems of work.
- ✓ Carry out a risk assessment before lone working.
- ✓ Make sure you have access to adequate first aid supplies for treating minor injuries.
- ✓ Remember your MOBILE (charged and switched on)
- ✓ **BUT** do not carry unnecessary valuables.
- ✓ Remember to call your buddy when you get back safely.