Animal Decontamination Certification

Student Training Manual

Standardized Instruction for Safe, Structured Animal Decontamination Operations



Prepared for Students, Educators, and Training Programs. Aligned with emergency response principles, animal welfare considerations, and career and technical education pathways.

Author: Ashley Lown NBCT, CVT, MAT

Published by: Institute for Security Preparedness

This manual provides foundational instruction in animal decontamination concepts, procedures, safety awareness, and decision-making. It does not certify professional licensure, veterinary authority, or wildlife handling qualifications.

Version 1.0

Publication & Scope Information

This manual is published by Institute for Security Preparedness (ISP) to support structured education and skills-based training in animal decontamination operations. The content is intended for instructional use within supervised training environments aligned to Career and Technical Education (CTE), emergency preparedness, and responder safety programs.

This manual provides standardized guidance on contamination awareness, personal protective equipment (PPE), decontamination procedures, animal handling principles, documentation, and incident coordination. Training content emphasizes safety, accountability, and operational boundaries consistent with accepted emergency management frameworks.

This publication does not authorize independent field operations, emergency response deployment, veterinary diagnosis, or wildlife handling. All activities described in this manual must occur under instructor supervision and within applicable organizational policies, laws, and regulations.

Authorship and instructional development reflect subject-matter expertise supported by structured AI-assisted drafting tools. Final content selection, review, and instructional intent are the responsibility of the author and publisher.

Publication Information

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ANIMAL DECONTAMINATION CERTIFICATION

Student Training Manual

Rescue 🐾 Respond 🐾 Restore

Prepared for education, training, and professional development in animal decontamination operations.

Author:
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Arizona Department of Education CTE – Law, Public Safety & Security, Veterinary, and Agriculture Pathways

Emergency Management & Incident Command System (ICS) Principles

Intended Audience:
Secondary and postsecondary students, educators, and trainees participating in supervised animal decontamination instruction.

Student Acknowledgement & Scope

Purpose of This Training

The Animal Decontamination Certification program provides students with foundational knowledge and supervised skill development related to animal decontamination operations. This training emphasizes safety, contamination control, proper procedures, and professional boundaries within emergency response environments. ADC training is educational and preparatory in nature and does not authorize students to independently perform animal decontamination or emergency response activities outside of supervised training environments.

Scope of Student Training

By participating in this program, students acknowledge and understand that:

- ADC training is designed for classroom instruction, supervised simulations, and controlled training scenarios only
- Students are not certified emergency responders, veterinarians, wildlife rehabilitators, or hazardous materials technicians
- Skills practiced in this course are not intended for independent field deployment
- All activities must occur under direct instructor supervision and within approved school or training settings

Professional Boundaries & Limitations

Students acknowledge the following boundaries:

- Wildlife Handling Prohibited
    - Under no circumstances are students authorized to capture, restrain, handle, or decontaminate wildlife. Wildlife incidents must be immediately referred to trained wildlife professionals & licensed veterinary personnel.
    - ADC trained students support wildlife protection indirectly by preventing contamination spread from domesticated animals, not through direct wildlife intervention.
- Responder Safety First
    - Students must stop participation immediately if conditions become unsafe or exceed the scope of instruction.
- Transfer Required
    - Situations involving aggressive animals, severe injury, hazardous exposure, or unfamiliar conditions must be transferred to the Incident Commander.
- Use of Artificial Intelligence Assistance

    - Portions of this training manual were developed with the assistance of artificial intelligence (AI) tools to support content organization, clarity, and instructional design. All instructional content has been reviewed, curated, and approved by the author/instructor. The author retains full responsibility for the accuracy, applicability, and implementation of the material presented.
    - AI tools were used as a drafting and editing aid only and do not replace professional judgment, subject-matter expertise, regulatory guidance, or hands-on training requirements.

Standards Alignment Statement

This training aligns with:

- Arizona Department of Education (ADE)
    - Career and Technical Education (CTE) - Law, Public Safety, and Veterinary/Animal Science pathways
- ISO-Aligned Training Principles
    - Including defined scope, documented procedures, competency-based instruction, and risk mitigation
- Emergency Management Best Practices
    - Including Incident Command System (ICS) structure, accountability, documentation, and safety controls

This program is instructionally compliant, not operationally certifying beyond its defined scope.

Liability & Responsibility Disclaimer

Participation in ADC training does not create employment status, responder authority, or professional credentialing.

The training provider, school district, instructors, and affiliated organizations are not responsible for injuries, damages, or outcomes resulting from misuse, misapplication, or unauthorized use of skills outside approved training environments.

Students are responsible for:

- Following instructor directions
- Using equipment correctly
- Respecting operational limits
- Reporting unsafe conditions immediately

Failure to follow safety protocols may result in removal from training activities.

Animal Decontamination Certification (ADC)

Respond 🐾 Rescue 🐾 Restore

The Animal Decontamination Certification (ADC) program prepares students to respond safely and effectively to incidents involving animals exposed to hazardous materials or contaminated environments. By completing this certification, students will understand the principles of animal safety, responder protection, and contamination control.“Prepared Responders. Rescued Animals. Restored Communities.”

Career Pathway Integration

Career Area	Role During Decontamination
Veterinary	Assess animal health, identify contaminants, monitor stress.
Agriculture	Manage livestock, support large-animal movement, ensure food safety.
Public Safety	Secure zones, manage documentation, enforce PPE protocols.

Student Learning Goals

- Explain the purpose of animal decontamination.
- Identify PPE levels and appropriate zones.
- Collaborate across Veterinary, Agriculture, and Public Safety pathways.
- Document procedures accurately using manual and digital tools.
- Reflect on the role of responder safety and animal welfare.

Training Breakdown

Module	Focus Area	Activity Summary
Part 1	Foundations of Animal Decontamination	Disaster overview & Zone Mapping
Part 2	PPE: Selection & Safety	PPE identification, Selecting PPE for the zone, Donning and Doffing
Part 3	Decontamination Procedures	Gear identification, and Hands-on decontamination line simulation
Part 4	Animal Handling, Triage, & Documentation	Triage sorting, and Documentation practice
Final Assessment	Written Exam Preparation	Comprehensive review

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Part 1 - Foundations of Animal Decontamination

1.0 Overview

Animals exposed to disasters may come into contact with hazardous substances such as chemicals, floodwater, ash, soot, or debris. Animal decontamination prevents contaminants from spreading to responders, shelters, vehicles, and communities. This section introduces foundational concepts used throughout the ADC training program, including key terminology, disaster types, contamination zones, the Incident Command structure, and safety roles.

The concepts introduced in this section will be used throughout PPE selection, decontamination procedures, and animal handling activities later in this training.

1.1 Learning Objectives

After completing Part 1, you will be able to:

- Explain why animal decontamination is important during disasters.
- Describe common types of natural and man-made disasters that affect pets and livestock.
- Define what “contamination zones” are and why they are used.
- Identify the four decontamination zones and describe what happens in each.
- Explain the three main goals of decontamination.
- Identify the role of the Incident Commander (IC)
- Explain why responders must check in before beginning work
- Identify how Veterinary, Agriculture, and Public Safety careers work together in disasters.

1.2 Key Terms

Word Bank:

Natural Disaster 🐾 Human-Caused Disaster 🐾 Hot Zone 🐾 Warm Zone 🐾 Cold Zone 🐾 Safe Zone 🐾 Contamination 🐾 Cross-Contamination

Term	Definition
	Contact with harmful or unwanted substances such as chemicals, debris, ash, or floodwater.
	A disaster caused by natural forces such as storms, floods, wildfires, or extreme weather.
	A disaster caused by human activity such as chemical spills, industrial accidents, or transportation-related releases.
	The most hazardous contamination zone where contaminated animals originate; hazards may still be present.
	The decontamination zone where pre-wash, wash, and rinse occur; PPE required.
	A clean area for triage, documentation, and observation after washing is complete.
	A fully clean area used for staging, leadership roles, and responder check-in with the Incident Commander.
	The unintentional transfer of contaminants from one person, surface, or zone to another.

1.3 Why Animal Decontamination Matters

During disasters, animals may come into contact with harmful or unknown substances. Decontamination protects responders, animals, and the community. Without decontamination:

- Animals may become sick or injured
- Responders may be exposed to hazards
- Contamination may spread to clean areas, and expose wildlife
- Shelters, veterinary clinics, and equipment may become unsafe

Decontamination protects responders, animals, and the community. Proper zone control helps prevent these risks by keeping contamination contained.

1.4 Types of Disasters

Natural Disasters

Events caused by natural forces:

- Floods
- Wildfires
- Severe storms
- Extreme weather

Human-Caused Disasters

Events caused by human activity:

- Industrial accidents
- Chemical spills
- Transportation releases
- Hazardous material failure

1.5 Activity: USA Disaster Reference Table

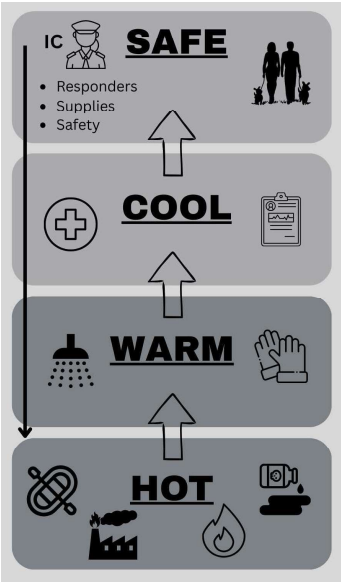
Year	Disaster	Type	Animal Impact	Decontamination Response
1999	Salt River Flood	Natural	Livestock coated in sediment	Wash stations deployed
2006	Pesticide Warehouse Fire	Human - Caused	Pets exposed to toxic smoke	HazMat support, Level B PPE
2013	Yarnell Hill Fire	Natural	Livestock/wildlife ash exposure	Animal wash stations
2017	Chemical Plant Spill (TX)	Human - Caused	Pets exposed to runoff	Multi-agency decon
2020	CA Wildfires	Natural	Pets inhaling ash/soot	State rescue decon units
2024	Maricopa Flooding	Natural	Pets coated in floodwater	Mobile wash trailers

Disaster Analysis Worksheet: Choose one event from the table and complete the analysis chart.

Disaster	Cause	Effect on Animals	What Decontamination Prevents

1.6 Contamination Zones

Disaster responses use four standardized zones to control contamination and keep responders safe.



Hot Zone (Red)

- Highest risk
- Hazards may still be present
- Contaminated animals originate here

Warm Zone (Yellow)

- Decontamination line
- Pre-wash, wash, rinse
- PPE required

Cold Zone (Blue)

- Clean area
- Triage, documentation

Safe Zone (Green)

- Cleanest area
- Staging, supplies, leadership roles

1.7 The Incident Command System

The Incident Command System (ICS) is a standardized way to manage emergencies so everyone works together safely and efficiently. It provides a clear command structure to ensure safety, accountability, and accurate communication during incidents. Every animal decontamination scene has an Incident Commander (IC) who ensures safety, accountability, and efficient operations. The ICr does not perform decontamination tasks but oversees safety and operations from the Safe Zone.

Incident Command Roles

Incident Commander (IC): in charge of the entire response.

- Checks in ALL responders before they can enter any zone
- Assigns jobs and tracks staffing
    - May assign additional command staff
- Coordinates communication between zones
- Oversees all operations and logistics
- Makes final decisions
- Ensures responder and animal safety

Public Information Officer: prevents misinformation and protects integrity of the response

- Sharing information with the public and media
- Ensuring only true, verified, and approved information is released

Safety Officer: Safety is the top priority during an animal decontamination response.

- Monitors conditions that could be dangerous
- Has authority to stop or shut down any operation they believe is unsafe for people or animals

Administration & Check-In

Creates accountability and helps maintain control during fast-moving and stressful situations.

All responders, volunteers, and support staff must:

- Report who they are
- Identify their role
- Record when they arrive on scene

To reduce confusion:

- Plain language is used so instructions are clearly understood
- Military time is used to avoid confusion about schedules, treatments, and shift changes

Accurate documentation is critical and includes:

- Who is on scene
- What tasks are assigned
- When actions take place

Operations Section

The Operations Section is responsible for the hands-on work of animal decontamination.

Operations duties include:

- Setting up wash stations
- Handling animals safely
- Performing rinse and scrub procedures
- Monitoring animal health
- Documenting animal condition, treatment, and movement

Operations staff:

- Follow instructions from the Incident Commander
- Communicate using plain language to reduce mistakes

Animal handling teams, decontamination teams, and safety monitors all fall under Operations. Their main goal is to remove contaminants effectively while keeping animals and responders safe.

Logistics & Planning Sections

The Logistics Section:

- Provides supplies, equipment, and operational support

The Planning Section:

- Tracks information
- Documents actions
- Prepares future plans

Animal decontamination incidents often require collaboration between:

- County agencies
- City agencies
- State agencies
- Federal agencies
- Private sector partners

All groups work together under ICS to ensure an organized, safe, and effective response.

1.8 Zone Comparison Table

Zone	Color	Description	PPE	Key Activities
Hot Zone	Red	Highest risk area with contamination	Level A-B	Entry, rescue, removal
Warm Zone	Yellow	Decontamination work area	Level C	Washing, scrubbing, rinsing
Cold Zone	Blue	Clean zone for triage and exams	Level D	Medical checks, documentation
Safe Zone	Green	Clean release/reunification area	Level D	IC Check in, Record review, owner pickup

1.9 Activity: Zone Mapping

Which zone does each action belong in?

Activity	Zone	Notes
Rinsing debris off a dog		
Recording animal information		
Moving contaminated livestock		
Setting up clean crates		

1.10 Career Connections

Career	What They Do	Why Teamwork Matters
Veterinary	Assist setting up decon stations and holding areas for companion animals	
Agriculture	Assist setting up decon stations and holding areas for livestock animals	
Public Safety	Assist in preparing response areas as directed by Incident Command	

1.11 Community Health Connection

Question	People	Environment	Community
What happens if animals aren't cleaned?			
Who else might be affected?			

1.11 Reflection Questions

- Why is zone control important for animal safety?
- Why is it important for responder safety?
- What happens to the wildlife population if decontamination doesn't occur?

Part 2 - PPE: Selection & Safety

2.0 Overview

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) protects responders from hazards such as chemicals, contaminated floodwater, ash, soot, and debris. PPE also prevents cross-contamination between zones & keeps animals safe during washing and handling.

This section introduces PPE levels (A-D), how PPE is selected based on the zone, and the correct order for putting on (donning) and taking off (doffing) PPE. Proper PPE use protects responders and prevents contaminants from spreading to animals, equipment, and clean areas.

2.1 Learning Objectives

After completing Part 2, you will be able to:

- Identify basic types of personal protective equipment used in animal decontamination in each zone.
- Choose which PPE is needed based on the type of hazard or zone presented.
- Explain how PPE protects both responders and animals.
- Demonstrate proper donning and doffing of common PPE used in animal decontamination.

2.2 Key Terms

Word Bank:

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) 🐾 Donning 🐾 Doffing 🐾 Gloves 🐾 Goggles 🐾 Apron 🐾 Mask/Respirator 🐾 Tape

Term	Definition
	Equipment worn to protect responders from exposure to contaminants or hazards.
	The process of safely putting on PPE in the correct order.
	The process of safely removing PPE in the correct order to prevent contamination.
	Protective wear for the hands; the most frequently contaminated PPE item.

Term	Definition
	Protective gear worn to shield the eyes from splash or debris.
	A protective covering worn over clothing to prevent contamination.
	A mask or respirator worn to protect the respiratory system from irritants, droplets, or harmful particles.
	A substance used to seal glove cuffs to sleeves or reinforce protective barriers during high-splash operations.

2.3 PPE Levels (A-D)

Responders use different levels of PPE depending on the hazard and zone.

PPE Level	Description of Risk	Typical Zone	Example PPE Items
A	Highest risk area, total body protection. Hazards may still be present + Chemical Unknowns	Hot Zone	Fully encapsulated chemical suit, chemical boots, SCBA air tank,
B	High risk, Splash Protection	Hot Zone	Hooded suit, gloves, air respirator. High splash protection with air supply(Used when air is unsafe but skin absorption risk is lower).
Students will not enter the Hot Zone, but must understand the hazards associated with it.			
C	Moderate Protection	Warm Zone	Tyvek suit, goggles, face shield, splash protection with filter mask.
D	Basic Protection	Cold or Safe	Basic work uniform or coveralls. Gloves, safety glasses, boots.

2.4 Activity: PPE Identification

Word Bank	PPE Item	Purpose
• Goggles or face shields • Masks or respirators • Gloves • Boots or boot covers • Gowns or coveralls		protect hands, reduce spread of germs
		protect skin and clothing
		prevent tracking contamination
		protect lungs from smoke or chemicals
		protect eyes

2.5 Why PPE Matters

PPE protects both responders and animals by lowering your risk of exposure.

PPE Safety:

- Replace PPE immediately if it's damaged or contaminated
- Do not touch your face while wearing PPE
- Follow directions at all times
- Never enter cleaner zones in contaminated PPE

Without PPE:

- Responders can inhale or touch harmful contaminants
- Contamination may be tracked into clean zones
- Animals may become more stressed or injured
- Cross-contamination can occur between animals or responders

2.6 Donning & Doffing Procedure

Step	Not Compliant If Step is Skipped OR…	☑ or 🚫
Donning: CLEAN → CONTAMINATED		
Check PPE for damage	Does not check or uses damaged PPE	
Put on inner gloves (1 or 2 layers)	Gloves are too loose or wrong Number of layers	
Put on respirator or mask	Put on upside down or not tightened	
Put on goggles or face shield	Not tightened	
Put on suit/coveralls	Suit is too loose or too tight	
Put on boots/boot covers	Does not cover entire foot and ankle	
Put on outer gloves as needed		
Tape gaps if needed		
Partner checks PPE for exposed skin		
Doffing: CONTAMINATED → CLEAN		
Remove tape if needed		
Remove outer gloves carefully	Contaminated hands, feet, and all PPE cannot touch non contaminated skin or clothing	
Remove boots/boot covers		
Remove outer suit without touching contaminated surfaces		
Remove goggles/face shield		
Remove respirator last		
Wash hands when complete		
Report exposures to incident command		

2.7 Activity: Selecting PPE for the Zone

Scenario	Zone	PPE Level
Washing animals after rescue		
Recording data in clean Area		
Rescue from debris with unknown chemical smell		
Setting up crates in safe area		

2.8 Hazard Type Quick Reference

Hazard Type	Example Event	Zone	Required PPE
Floodwater	Flooding, storms	Warm	Level C
Wildfire Ash	Fires	Warm	Level C
Chemical Spill	Industrial accident	Hot/Warm	Level A or B
Shelter Cleanup	Post-fire debris	Cold	Level D

2.9 Career Connections

Career	**What They Do**	**Why Teamwork Matters**
Veterinary	Uses gloves, gowns, masks to prevent spreading illness between animals.	
Agriculture	Uses coveralls and boots to avoid tracking contamination to livestock.	
Public Safety	Firefighters and hazmat responders use advanced PPE in Hot Zones.	

2.10 Reflection Questions

- Why is PPE different in each zone?
- Which PPE item do you think is most important, and why?

Part 3 - Decontamination Procedures

3.0 Overview

Animals exposed to disasters may carry harmful materials on their fur, skin, hooves, feathers, or equipment. Decontamination reduces health risks, prevents the spread of hazardous substances, and prepares animals for medical evaluation. This section explains the step-by-step decontamination sequence, common equipment, safe handling practices, and how animals move through the Warm Zone before entering the Cold Zone for evaluation and documentation. This process takes place primarily in the Warm Zone and flows from contaminated areas toward clean areas

3.1 Learning Objectives

After completing Part 3, you will be able to:

- Identify equipment and supplies commonly used in decontamination.
- Describe step-by-step procedures for animal decontamination.
- Move safely and correctly through the Warm Zone
- Demonstrate safe handling and restraint of animals during the decon process.
- Transition animals into the Cold Zone without re-contaminating clean areas
- Relate hands-on procedures to Veterinary, Agriculture, and Public Safety careers.

3.2 Key Terms

Word Bank:

Intake🐾Rinse🐾Scrub🐾Restraint🐾Triage🐾Record Keeping🐾Contaminant 🐾 Runoff 🐾 Transition Zone 🐾 Splash Control

Terms	Definition
	Process of receiving & preparing an animal for decontamination.
	The use of water to remove soap and remaining contaminants.
	The use of friction to remove bonded contaminants.
	Safely controlling an animal to prevent injury or escape.
	Assessing an animal for stress or injury after washing.
	Recording information about the animal and process.
	A harmful substance present on the animal or equipment.

Terms	Definition
	Contaminated water that flows away from the wash area.
	The area used to move animals from Warm Zone to Cold Zone.
	Preventing water or contaminants from striking others.

3.3 Decontamination Flow: Hot → Warm → Cold → Safe

Animal decontamination is performed using a structured sequence known as the decontamination line. Each stage serves a specific purpose and must be completed in order. Animals and Responders follow a controlled, one-direction path through the zones to avoid spreading contamination backward.

3.4 Equipment Used in Decontamination

Equipment	Purpose
Hoses or spray bottles	
Buckets & soap	
Brushes and sponges	
Towels or drying equipment	
Muzzles, leash, halters, carriers	
PPE for responders	

3.5 The 5 A's for Safe Animal Handling & Restraint

A	Meaning	Key Actions
Area	Know the zone rules	Animals ***arrive*** already restrained from Red Zone. Only ***handle*** animals you're cleared to work with.
Assess	Check behavior first	Watch before ***touching.*** Ask for help if behavior seems unusual
Approach	Stay calm and quiet	***Move*** slow, minimize ***noise*** & sudden movements
Apply	Use restraint correctly	Use soft ***restraints*** if instructed. Restrain before washing.
Avoid	Prevent stress	No harsh handling. ***Stress*** increases risk & slows decon

3.6 Step-by-Step Decontamination Table

		Icon Reminder	Steps	Why It's Important	Description of Actions	Equipment Needed
Pre Wash	1		**Intake & Identification**	"Know who they are."	Record animal, owner, condition	**Identification tags, clipboards, markers**
	2		**PPE Check for Responders**	"Keep yourself safe."	Make sure PPE is in good condition and on properly	**PPE for responders**
Wash	3		**Rinse #1**	"Remove bulk contamination."	Remove gross contamination	**Muzzles, leashes, carriers Buckets, hoses, sprayers Brushes, sponges**
	4		**Soap Scrub**	"Break the bond."	Remove oils, chemicals, debris	**Soap or detergent**
	5		**Rinse #2 (Repeat as needed)**	"Remove residue."	Rinse & repeat if needed	**Muzzles, leashes, carriers Buckets, hoses, sprayers Brushes, sponges**
Post Wash	6		**Drying**	"Prevent hypothermia."	Drying & calming the animal	**Towels or dryers**
	7		**Transfer to Cold Zone**	"Move them forward."	Transfer to Cold Zone for medical checks	**Muzzles, leashes, carriers**

3.7 Activity: Decontamination Line Practice

Students will rotate through each stage of the decontamination line:

1. Pre-wash
2. Wash
3. Post-wash

This activity is for practice and learning. ***Accuracy and safety are more important than speed.***

3.8 Career Connections

Career	What They Do	Why Teamwork Matters
Veterinary	Assist Veterinarian in Performing assessments in the Cold Zone and identifies injuries or stress.	
Agriculture	Moves livestock safely, maintains identification records, protects the food supply.	
Public Safety	Controls zone access, manages animal flow, ensures responder PPE compliance.	

3.9 Reflection Questions

1. Why must animals move in only one direction through decontamination?
2. Why is thorough rinsing important?
3. How does proper decontamination protect clean areas

Part 4 - Animal Handling, Triage & Documentation

4.0 Overview

After animals move from the Warm Zone to the Cold Zone, responders must evaluate their condition, check for stress or injury, and properly document all findings. This phase focuses on animal welfare, responder safety, and accurate record keeping.

Animal decontamination personnel are responsible for maintaining clean conditions, observing animal behavior, documenting condition and treatment, and preparing animals for reunification or transfer. Proper handling and decision-making at this stage help prevent injury, stress, and secondary contamination.

4.1 Learning Objectives

After completing Part 4, you will be able to:

- Explain how animals are sorted during triage and after decontamination.
- Recognize signs of stress, fear, aggression, and injury in animals.
- Relate triage & handling procedures to Veterinary, Agriculture, & Public Safety.
- Use safe restraint and calming techniques
- Identify when to stop handling and transfer concerns
- Accurately complete intake and documentation forms
- Describe why accurate recordkeeping is essential
- Explain why wildlife must only be handled by trained professionals
- Describe how ICS supports safe animal and wildlife management

4.2 Key Terms

Word Bank:

Behavioral Observation 🐾 Triage 🐾 Intake Form 🐾 Stress Indicators 🐾 Aggression Indicators 🐾 Safe Approach 🐾 Control Tool 🐾 Reunification

Term	Definition
	Observing an animal for signs of stress or behavior changes.
	Determining an animal's condition after washing.
	A form used to record animal information.
	Behaviors showing fear or anxiety.
	Behaviors indicating potential danger.

Term	Definition
	Calm and controlled method of approaching an animal.
	A leash or device used to guide an animal safely.
	Returning an animal to its owner or transferring for care.

4.3 The Cold Zone (Blue): Handling Priorities

The Cold Zone is clean and safe. Animals have already completed the washing process before entering this area. All animal handling must be calm, deliberate, and focused on safety. Animals may be stressed, frightened, or disoriented after decontamination. Slow movements and clear communication help reduce risk.

Responders in this zone:

- Assist with medical checks under the direction of a Veterinarian
- Observe behavior before making contact
- Use appropriate control tools, and avoid unnecessary restraint
- Document animal condition
- Assign triage category
- Prepare animals for reunification

No contaminated equipment or PPE should enter this zone.

4.4 Step 1: Intake and Safe Approach

The first step in Cold Zone handling is intake and approach. A safe approach allows the animal to see and sense you without feeling threatened. Never rush or force contact. Before touching the animal:

- Pause and observe behavior
- Note posture, movement, breathing, and vocalization
- Approach from the side rather than head-on
- Speak calmly and avoid sudden movements

4.5 Step 2: Restraint & Control Tools

Only used when necessary to maintain safety. Improper restraint increases stress and risk of injury. If the animal resists or shows escalating behavior, stop and reassess. Acceptable control tools may include:

- Leashes, leads, halters
- Crates or carriers, and chutes (when appropriate)

Restraint should be:

- Minimal and Calm
- Appropriate to the animal's species, size, and behavior

4.6 Recognizing Stress and Aggression in Animals

Behavioral observation begins immediately and continues throughout Cold Zone handling. Observations must be documented and may affect handling decisions. Animals exposed to disasters, decontamination, noise, unfamiliar handling, or restraint may show signs of stress or aggression. Recognizing these signs early helps protect responders and animals.

These signs do not guarantee an animal will bite, kick, or charge, but they signal that handling should slow, stop, or be reassessed.

Table 4.6A - General Stress & Aggression: What it looks like in all species

Observation	What It May Indicate
Trembling or shaking	Fear, stress, shock
Avoiding eye contact	Fear or uncertainty
Stiff or frozen posture	Heightened alertness or fear
Rapid breathing or panting	Stress, overheating, anxiety
Vocalization (barking, hissing, neighing, bellowing)	Distress or agitation
Attempting to flee or pull away	Fear or lack of control
Sudden stillness after movement	Escalating stress response

These signs are early warnings. Responders should slow down, reassess control, and notify supervision if stress increases.

Table 4.6B - Species-Specific Stress & Aggression Indicators

The signs below are common indicators. Not all animals will show the same behaviors.

If you observe signs of aggression or feel unsafe:

- Stop what you are doing
- Increase distance
- Notify your instructor or supervisor immediately



Scope of Practice Reminder

ADC-certified students do not diagnose, treat injuries, or restrain aggressive animals



Species	Common Signs of Stress	Common Signs of Aggression / Danger
Dog	Panting, drooling, rapid breathing, shaking, tail tucked, lip licking, avoiding eye contact	Growling, ears pulled back, stiff body posture, fixed stare, bared teeth, snapping
Cat	Hiding, crouching, panting, drooling, rapid breathing, tail wrapped tightly	Hissing, growling, ears flattened back, swatting, biting
Horse	Tail held low, wide eyes (showing whites), ears turned sideways (“airplane ears”), head tossing	Tail swishing forcefully, pawing or stamping, ears pinned flat, teeth exposed, turning hindquarters toward people
Livestock	Loud or repeated vocalization, pacing, restlessness, wide eyes, bunching with herd	Charging, head lowering, kicking, ramming, sudden directional changes

Any animal showing signs of aggression, extreme stress, or injury must be referred to qualified animal control, veterinary, or wildlife professionals under the Incident Command System (ICS).

4.7 When to Stop & Transfer

Handling must stop when safety is at risk. Always notify your supervisor when these situations occur.

Observation	Action
Animal becomes aggressive	Stop handling; notify supervisor
Animal shows signs of severe stress	Pause handling; reduce stimulation
Visible injury or bleeding	Transfer to veterinary personnel
Animal cannot be safely restrained	Discontinue handling
Suspected wildlife involvement	Secure area; notify Incident Command
Untrained personnel present	Halt operation until corrected

4.8 Triage in the Cold Zone

Triage means sorting animals based on urgency of care. Triage helps responders prioritize which animals need care first. This is ***not*** a veterinary diagnosis. It is an operational assessment to determine next steps. Any concerns are documented and reported for further evaluation by a veterinarian.

Category	Meaning	Example
Immediate	Needs help right away	Difficulty breathing, bleeding, major burns, unable to move
Delayed	Needs help soon	Minor cuts, coughing, limping
Minimal	Mild or no injury	No visible harm, calm, stable
Deceased	No signs of life	Handle animal as directed by trained personnel

Activity: Triage Sorting

Scenario	Category
Dog coughing and shivering after smoke exposure	
Cat with minor scrapes, alert and calm	
Goat unable to stand after flooding	
Dog breathing normally, tail wagging	

4.9 Documentation & Intake Forms

Accurate documentation prevents mix-ups and ensures animals are safely returned to their owners. Documentation must remain clean and legible. Forms should never enter contaminated areas.

Responders complete:

- Intake form
- Photo documentation
- Condition notes
- GPS/time-stamped digital record
- Triage classification
- Identification number

Manual Intake Form (Fill-In Worksheet)

Field	Information
Responder ID	
Date and time	
Behavioral observations	
Animal ID/Microchip	
Type/Description	
Condition after Decon-visible injuries or concerns	
Destination (reunification, holding, veterinary care)	
Owner Name	
Contact Info	
Notes	

4.10 Digital Documentation

Digital tools automatically record:

- Photo
- Time
- Date
- GPS Coordinates
- Notes: Use this space to add all other details from the intake form

4.11 Activity: Documentation Practice

4.11A. Manual Record

Fill in the intake form above using your assigned animal.

4.11B. Digital Record

Take a photo using an app on your device and add:

- Animal ID / Microchip
- Type / Description
- Condition after Decon-visible injuries or concerns
- Behavioral observations
- Your initials
- Destination (reunification, holding, veterinary care)

4.12 Reunification and Transfer

After documentation is complete, animals may be reunited with owners or transferred for further care. Proper transfer ensures animals remain safe and accounted for.

During reunification or transfer:

- Maintain calm control of the animal
- Ensure documentation travels with the animal
- Follow instructor or Incident Commander direction

4.13 Wildlife Protection & Operational Boundaries

Animal decontamination operations prioritize wildlife protection by preventing secondary contamination, not by directly handling wildlife.

Under no circumstances should untrained personnel attempt to capture, restrain, or decontaminate wildlife. Wildlife decontamination requires specialized training and veterinary oversight.

Any suspected wildlife contamination must result in:

- Scene control
- Exposure mitigation
- Immediate notification of appropriate authorities

Animal decontamination personnel are responsible for recognizing their operational limits and ensuring wildlife issues are transferred to qualified professionals operating under the Incident Command System or Unified Command.

4.14 Professional Oversight & Incident Command Alignment

All wildlife decontamination activities must be conducted exclusively by trained wildlife professionals and performed under the direct supervision of qualified wildlife experts and licensed veterinary personnel. These operations are coordinated within the Incident Command System (ICS) or Unified Command structure to ensure:

Animal decontamination personnel are responsible for recognizing their operational limits and ensuring wildlife issues are transferred to the appropriate subject-matter experts. ADC-certified personnel protect wildlife indirectly, by preventing contamination spread, not through direct wildlife handling.

This boundary supports:

- Responder safety
- Animal welfare
- Environmental protection
- Legal and professional compliance

4.15 Career Connections

Career	What They Do	Why Teamwork Matters
Veterinary	Assist Veterinarian in performing injury checks to determine medical needs.	
Agriculture	Assesses livestock health and protects food-chain safety.	
Public Safety	Ensures documentation accuracy and assists reunification.	

4.16 Reflection Questions

1. Why must documentation be completed immediately after decontamination?
2. How does stress affect an animal's behavior in the Cold Zone?
3. Why is accurate photo documentation important during reunification?
4. Why is wildlife handling restricted to trained professionals?
5. How does proper decontamination of pets and livestock protect wildlife?

Final Assessment Practice - Animal Decontamination Certification (ADC)

Overview

This assessment measures your understanding of:

- Key terminology
- Zone control
- PPE selection
- Decontamination steps
- Animal handling and triage
- Documentation and reunification procedures

Section A - Matching

#	Term	Definition Letter
1	Decontamination	
2	Hot Zone	
3	PPE	
4	Triage	
5	NoteCam	
6	Warm Zone	
7	Cross-Contamination	
8	Intake	
9	Level C PPE	
10	Record Keeping	

Definitions:

a. Sorting animals by urgency of care
b. Area with highest contamination
c. The process of removing harmful substances
d. Preventing contaminants from spreading between areas
e. Digital tool for photos + GPS + timestamp
f. Clean triage area for exams (Blue Zone)
g. Equipment used to protect responders
h. Identifying and logging animal information
i. Moderate splash protection; used in Warm Zone
j. Area used for washing and rinsing animals

Section B - Fill in the Blank

11. The three goals of decontamination are: protect the _____, protect the _____, and prevent the _____ of contaminants.
12. The Yellow Zone is also known as the _____ zone.

13. PPE stands for _____.
14. Animals must move in one direction through the zones to prevent _____.
15. During documentation, GPS shows _____.
16. The final clean area where reunification occurs is the _____ Zone.
17. Level C PPE typically includes a _____ suit and _____ respirator.
18. The first step of decontamination is: _____.
19. Stress in animals can be seen through behaviors such as _____.
20. Documentation ensures animals are _____.

Section C - Multiple Choice

Circle the correct answer.

21. Which zone requires Level C PPE?
    A. Hot B. Warm C. Cold
22. Which PPE item protects your eyes?
    A. Gloves B. Boots C. Goggles
23. Which disaster is human-caused?
    A. Flood B. Chemical spill C. Tornado
24. Which step occurs after the soap scrub?
    A. Rinse #2 B. Intake C. Drying
25. A panting dog with tail tucked is showing:
    A. Calm behavior B. Stress signs C. No triage need
26. Which zone is for medical checks and documentation?
    A. Warm B. Cold C. Hot
27. Which PPE level is used in the Hot Zone?
    A. D B. C C. A/B
28. Why is drying important?
    A. To save time B. Prevent hypothermia C. Improve photos
29. NoteCam automatically records:
    A. Weather B. Filters C. Time/date/GPS
30. Which responder handles zone control and PPE compliance?
    A. Veterinary B. Agriculture C. Public Safety

Section D - Short Answer

31. Explain why zone control is important for both animal and responder safety.

32. Describe two signs of stress in an animal and how you would respond safely.

33. Why must documentation be completed before animals leave the Cold Zone?

34. What is the purpose of Triage in the decontamination process?

35. Describe the correct order of the three major washing steps.

Section E - Scenario Problem

Scenario:

A cat arrives from a wildfire area. It is covered in ash, breathing rapidly, and trying to hide. Responders have Level C PPE available.
In the space below, describe:

- Which zone the cat enters first
- The PPE responders will wear
- One safe handling technique
- The triage category the cat belongs in
- The documentation needed in the Cold Zone

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Scope of Training & Intended Use

This manual is designed as an educational and training resource for participants enrolled in the Animal Decontamination Certification (ADC) program. The content supports foundational learning, skills awareness, and supervised training activities related to animal decontamination operations.

This publication does not authorize independent response, professional practice, or unsupervised operational deployment. All practical skills must be performed only under appropriate supervision, within organizational policies, and in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and professional standards.

Operational Boundaries

This training is limited to domesticated animals, including companion animals and livestock. Under no circumstances does this manual authorize students or certificate holders to capture, restrain, handle, or decontaminate wildlife.

Wildlife handling and decontamination require specialized training, permits, and professional oversight by qualified wildlife and veterinary authorities.

Standards & Quality Alignment

This training program is developed and maintained in alignment with:

- **ISO 9001** (Quality Management Systems)
- **ISO 21001** (Educational Organizations Management Systems)
- Applicable CTE instructional frameworks
    - **Law, Public Safety & Security, Veterinary, Agriculture**
- Incident Command System (ICS) principles

Continuous review, revision, and instructional improvement are applied to maintain accuracy, relevance, and learner safety.

Limitation of Liability

The publisher and author assume no responsibility for misuse of this material, actions taken outside the defined scope of training, or activities conducted without proper supervision, authorization, or legal authority.

Use of this manual constitutes acknowledgment of these limitations.

Animal Decontamination Certification (ADC)

Student Training Manual

This manual provides structured instruction in the principles and practices of animal decontamination, including:

- Contamination zones and safety flow
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) awareness
- Decontamination procedures
- Animal handling, observation, and documentation
- Incident Command System (ICS) integration

The Animal Decontamination Certification program emphasizes **safety, accountability, and controlled operations** in accordance with recognized emergency management and educational standards.

This training is intended for **educational and supervised use only** and does not replace professional licensing, agency credentialing, or regulatory authority.

Who This Manual Is For

- Students in CTE, public safety, veterinary, or agriculture programs
- Training cohorts under instructor supervision
- Educational institutions and approved training organizations

What This Manual Is Not

- Not a professional license
- Not a deployment credential
- Not authorization to operate independently
- Not authorization to handle wildlife

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