

Work Hard, Work Smart, Work Safely

By *Tilda Mims*

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Are you planning to work on your farm this weekend? If so, it doesn't matter if you travel across the pasture or across the state, you should be prepared to stay in touch, stay comfortable and stay safe.

COMMUNICATION Tell family or friends where you are going and stick with your plan so that someone will know where you are and when to expect you home. Keep a walkie-talkie or cellular phone with you at all times.

HYDRATION Drink plenty of fluid. **WATER!** If your body is one to two quarts low – an amount you can easily sweat out in only one hour of exercise – you will reduce your performance as much as 25%. Experts recommend drinking about 1/4 quart of water every 15-20 minutes, instead of chugging the quart at one sitting.

CLOTHING Choose comfortable, sturdy clothes that will protect you from the elements.

- Make sure your socks fit. Baggy socks encourage blisters and tight socks reduce healthy circulation.
- Make sure you wear boots that are in good shape and provide good support.
- Always wear blaze orange clothing during fall and winter.
- When riding an ATV, wear boots, helmet, gloves and eye protection.
- Dress in light-colored clothing to spot ticks more easily. Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants with cuffs for maximum protection. Tuck your shirt into your pants and your pants into your boots.

FOOD Frequent munching is more important than big meals. A snack every two hours, especially a high carbohydrate snack, keeps your muscle glycogen high. Glycogen is converted into sugar in order to fuel muscular work and to liberate heat for inner body warmth on a cold day.

SUNSCREEN Skin cancer is by far the most common cancer in the U.S. To protect yourself, apply sunscreen to all exposed areas, including your ears and

behind your ears where skin problems may develop in later years. Sunscreens work best if applied on warm, dry skin and allowed to soak in for 15-30 minutes prior to sun exposure. A sunscreen of SPF 15 will do the job for most skin types, but many dermatologists recommend SPF 30 for safer protection. A baseball cap will not provide the protection you need. Consider a wide-brimmed hat with a brim at least 4" wide all the way around the hat. A floppy brim breaks up scattered UV rays better than a rigid rim.

SUNGLASSES Make sure your sunglasses protect against ultraviolet light. If they don't, you may run the short-term risk of sunburned eyes and the long-term risk of cataracts.

FIRST AID KIT Buy a commercially prepared outdoor medical kit and check it regularly for expired, damaged or missing items. Keep a small supply of pain relievers for headaches and other minor aches. Be certain that your kit includes directions on how to properly clean and bandage all wounds, how to secure fractures with a splint, how to treat sprains, and how to remove splinters.

INSECT REPELLENT Use insect repellent safely and regularly. Mosquitoes and other biting insects are more than a minor annoyance. According to the Centers for Disease Control,

mosquitoes, ticks, biting flies, fleas, gnats, etc., are growing into major public health problems. Use an EPA-registered insect repellent that contains DEET.

POISONOUS PLANTS About two-thirds of the U.S. population is sensitive to poison ivy, poison oak and poison sumac. The allergic reaction can begin in as little as 10 minutes after exposure and subsequent blisters and itching can last up to ten days. The best approach is recognition and avoidance. There are non-prescription, pre-exposure lotions on the market that are applied like sunscreen to all exposed skin. Research has proven them to guard against allergic reaction for several hours.

HIKING STAFF Using a hiking staff – a "third leg" – will often prevent injuries and maintain balance.

STAY IN SHAPE Be in sufficient physical shape to take all the punishments of a hard day's work. Be prepared to walk out in case of a vehicle breakdown.

TICK REMOVAL Do a tick check twice daily during tick season especially around the scalp, nape of neck, behind the ears and knees, and under the armpits. Immediately remove all ticks. Remove attached ticks with fine tweezers by gently, repeatedly, and patiently tugging at the point where their mouth-

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A Simple Retreat *(Continued from page 10)*

Tour stops included pine and hardwood management, a southern pine beetle demonstration, and recreation opportunities.

Tony is an active member of the Macon County Forestry Planning Committee. He received his Tree Farm Certification in 1985 and became certified as a TREASURE Forest landowner

in 1999. He is also a member of the newly established Outreach Advisory Council for minority landowners created by State Forester Timothy C. Boyce.

Whether they go to there to camp, hunt, fish, walk in the hardwood bottoms, or just to relax, this TREASURE Forest remains what it has always been for Tony and his family. . . a simple retreat. 🌲

Preventing Timber Theft *(Continued from page 15)*

- Logs removed from the site that are not delivered promptly.
- Complaints or tips from landowners, neighbors, other loggers, foresters, consultants.

•Use a written timber sale contract.

Entering a timber sale without a written contract to protect your interests is asking for trouble. A good timber sale contract that demonstrates good wood flow accountability measures and outlines termination date, prices, volumes, products, markets, sales area, cleanup, and penalties for contract violations will reduce temptation, thus eliminating most potential theft opportunities.

Harvesting and marketing timber products can be very complex. If you don't know the timber business, you better know the people with whom you are dealing. Most producers are hard working, honest business people. Treat the sale as a business deal; they will understand

and not be offended. Keeping the sale on a business level will act as a deterrent and aid in resolving any disputes. Good background checks and the bidding process are two key elements to protect the landowner.

An article in *Forest Landowner* magazine, written by Tom Kazee of Woodland Security, Inc., quotes three numbers that, based on my experience, all landowners should remember. The three important numbers are: 80-19-1.

Eighty percent of us are honest and would not cheat another person even if given a golden opportunity. Nineteen percent are opportunistic and if an unhindered opportunity presents itself will succumb to temptation and take full advantage. Less than one percent are determined crooks that look for every opportunity to steal or cheat. Keeping the timber sale on a business level will deter most opportunities for theft. 🌲

Work Hard, Work Smart . . .

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parts enter your skin. Do not twist when tugging and avoid squeezing the tick's abdomen. Wash the site with soap and water. Save the tick in a sealed jar of alcohol for future reference.

ANIMAL BITES or SCRATCHES

Immediately wash a wound or scratch caused by an animal with soap and water, and visit a physician as quickly as possible. If the bite is from a wild animal, try to capture the animal so it may be tested for rabies. The animal's brain must be intact to conduct rabies testing, so avoid injury to the animal's head and neck area.

BE WEATHER SMART Know the proper responses to weather emergencies.

- Tornadoes – A tornado may spring up quickly any time of year. Seek the lowest level by lying flat in the nearest ditch with your hands shielding your head.
- Lightning – Avoid a lightning strike by taking precautions before the storm reaches you. Most lightning strikes hit people from one to seven miles in front of clouds and rain. Remember, five seconds between the flash and the thunder means the storm is only one mile away. 1) Seek shelter in a low area under a thick growth of small trees, never under a single tree. In an open area, seek a low spot, such as a ravine or a ditch. 2) Stay away from tractors, wire fences or rails. 3) Drop to your knees and bend forward putting your hands on your knees. DO NOT place hands on the ground or lie flat on the ground - wet ground can carry electricity. 4) If you are in a group of people in an open area, spread out, keeping people several yards apart.

Experts in wilderness travel, camping and out door safety agree that "common sense" is always your best companion when you work outdoors, but it does not hurt to be prepared. You can work hard and be able to work another day if you will attend to the basic essentials. 🌲

Resources

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