

1080 AND DOGS

OSPRI's TBfree programme aims to control and eradicate bovine TB from New Zealand. Pest management plays a vital part in our success – including the use of sodium fluoroacetate (1080).



USING 1080 TO CONTROL POSSUMS

Bovine TB is an infectious disease caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium bovis* and is spread by close contact between animals. In New Zealand, possums are the main carrier and spreader of TB to livestock. We use a variety of methods to control possum numbers, including hand-laid 1080 in bait stations and aerially applied 1080.

Using 1080 allows us to have a big impact on the possums in an area in a short period of time – meaning TB is less likely to survive. 1080 is aerially applied using strict quality control and safety systems. GPS technology ensures accurate bait placement and audits are completed to make sure that OSPRI's high standards are met. Consent from landowners and local authorities is required prior to an operation. The public are also consulted before every operation.

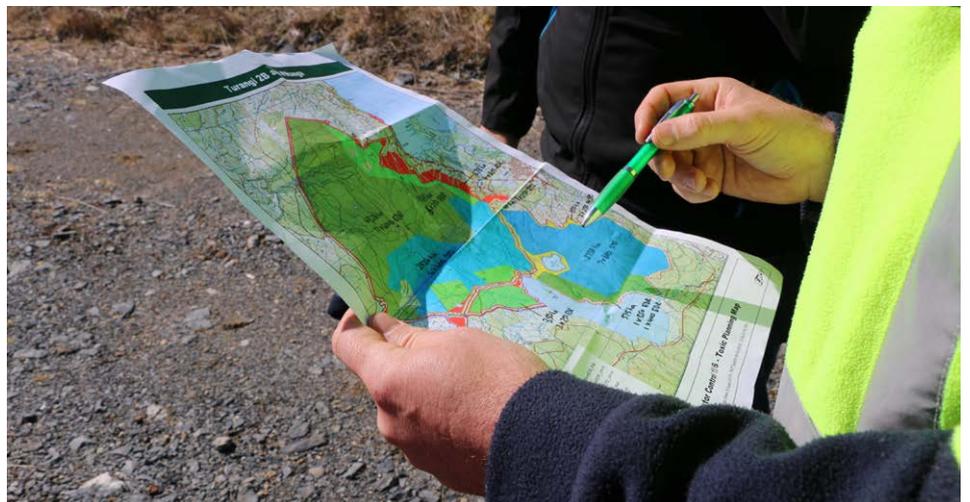
Despite following all the usage protocols to make our pest control operations as safe as possible, there remains a danger to dogs.

DOGS AND 1080 DON'T MIX

Dogs are particularly susceptible to poisoning by 1080. On the few occasions when dogs come into contact with toxic baits through ingesting baits or scavenging

poisoned carcasses, the outcome is usually fatal. While canine deaths are usually the result of unauthorised access to an area, fatalities are treated seriously and all our operational practices are reviewed.

Most reported dog deaths occur after eating poisoned carcasses, not bait. By nature, dogs tend to roam so they are at greater risk of 1080 poisoning than other domestic animals. Dogs don't recognise boundaries and are scavengers,





Pre-feed pellets (top) and toxic baits (bottom)

so any animal carcass lying around is a potential target.

Preventing dogs from exposure to 1080 poison is the most effective way of avoiding a problem. If dogs do ingest 1080 poison through roaming or scavenging, the symptoms of exposure may appear within 30 minutes or as much as several hours later. Dogs may display changes in behaviour – disorientation, restlessness or hyperactivity. A poisoned dog may run in circles, bark or howl without apparent reason, or be sensitive to touch. It may also become aggressive.

FIRST AID IN CASE OF ACCIDENTAL POISONING

If you suspect a dog has chewed or eaten part of a poisoned carcass, make the dog vomit immediately. The most reliable method is to put one or two crystals of washing soda (available from supermarkets) down the dog's throat. Alternatively you can use emetic pills, available from

poisoning contractors, or use half a teaspoon of salt thrown on the back of the dog's tongue.

It's crucial to get the animal to the nearest vet as soon as possible. Phone ahead to warn that you are on the way and advise the nature of the problem. Treatment is symptomatic, can be expensive and may not be successful. Death can occur within 2 to 12 hours after ingestion of the poison.

Dogs can be saved if early action is taken, but there is no antidote for 1080.

Further assistance can be sought from the National Poisons Centre 24-hour emergency service on 0800 764 766.

PROTECTING YOUR DOG

Avoiding the risk of your dog being exposed to 1080 is the best way to keep them safe.

- Make sure dogs are kept away from operational areas.
- Do not allow your dog to roam in or around poisoned areas.
- Read warning signs that indicate an area where pest control work is being undertaken and follow all instructions.
- If you enter a poisoned area, muzzle your dog to prevent it scavenging or keep it on a short leash at all times.
- Avoid waterways flowing out of operational areas and adjacent beaches as possum carcasses can often be washed downstream.
- Consider whether stock around the area of the 1080 drop can be managed without dogs.
- Keep your working dogs well fed. Feed dogs meat rather than biscuits during and after a 1080 operation so they are less inclined to scavenge on dead possums.
- Kennel or chain your dogs when they are not working.
- If necessary, dogs can be muzzled. A muzzle may annoy a dog if it's not used to wearing one, so they should be introduced gradually. A muzzle may also result in heat stress during work, so ensure the dog can still pant and drink water, particularly in hot weather.

