



New Zealand Fur Council

POSSUM FIBRE RECOVERY

Trapper Best Practice Guidelines

It is the expectation of the New Zealand Fur Council (NZFC) that possum trappers carry out their roles under the following Best Practice Guidelines.

Expectations of possum trappers.

Why:

While it is recognised that, in the New Zealand environment, the common brushtail possum introduced from Australia (possum) is a major pest, NZFC expects and requires trappers to capture and kill possums using acceptably humane methods.

The NZFC also expects:

- That the capture and killing of possums should be carried out with all due consideration to the broader environment and community.
- That, while reducing possum numbers has major flora, fauna and economic benefits, such control should only be done using methods that do not put non-target species at risk.
- Trappers also need to recognise that the capture and killing of animals is not always an accepted practice by all people in our communities.

How:

All possum trappers providing fibre (and other products) to New Zealand Fur Council members must follow Best Practice Guidelines stated in this document.

To be able to supply into the NZFC supply chain trappers must:

- Hold a relevant and current industry certificate.
- Carry out refresher courses at regular intervals.
- Understand and comply with possum/pest control relevant legislation and regulations including the Animal Welfare Act 1999.
- Abide by NPCA best practice guidelines.
- Maintain minimum fibre quality standards when collecting fibre.

Trappers should understand and recognize that they are the most visible part of the possum fibre supply chain. In this position possum trappers are a potential target for public and consumer complaint should they be seen as non-compliant to law and accepted best practice.

Legislation and regulation that possum Trappers are expected to comply.

What:

Possum trappers who supply to NZ Fibre Council members must operate under several pieces of legislation and regulation to ensure the pest is killed humanely. Trappers agree to comply with these laws.

The Animal Welfare Act 1999 lays out a broad consensus around the treatment of all animals, including pests such as possums.

<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1999/0142/latest/DLM49664.html>.

The use of traps is regulated by the Animal Welfare Act, and it also sets out offences for hunting and killing animals 'in a wild state'. Possum trappers are expected to follow generally accepted practice in New Zealand, as described in this Best Practice document.

Possum trappers can use a variety of methods to both trap and kill possums. These include:

- Kill traps
- Cage or box traps
- Leg-hold traps
- Poison
- Shooting

Note:

Under the Animal Welfare Act 1999, a leg-hold or restraining trap must be inspected within 12 hours after sunrise on the day after on which the trap was set. Leg-hold traps must not be set within 250m of a dwelling unless permission to do so has been given by the dwelling occupier. Trapped animals must be killed without delay when traps are cleared, and animals despatched humanely.

National Pest Control Agencies (NPCA) guidelines set out expectations for killing trapped animals.

http://www.npca.org.nz/images/stories/NPCA/PDF/a4.1_leghold%20traps_2015-nov_lr_opt.pdf

Possums must be confirmed dead before plucking or skinning occurs.

As well as operating under the Animal Welfare Act 1999, possum trappers may also be required to comply with one or all the following pieces of legislation and regulation.

- Current first aid certificate.
- Approved Handler Test Certificate & Controlled Substance Licence (poison).
- Permission from Medical Officer of Health.
- Firearms licence and a hunting permit (shooting).
- Resource consents.
- Public liability cover (insurance).
- Landowners permission.
- DOC permit.

Note: Regional councils can set their own rules under Regional Pest Management Plans, and that DOC employees are expected to follow DOC's own established codes of practice relating to trapping and the dispatch of trapped animals.

Links to resources:

DOC permits

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/Documents/conservation/threats-and-impacts/pest-control/SOPs/processing-applications/doc-possum-trapping-permit.pdf>

NPCA best practice guidelines:

http://www.npca.org.nz/images/stories/NPCA/PDF/a4.1_leghold%20traps_2015-nov_lr_opt.pdf

http://www.npca.org.nz/images/stories/NPCA/PDF/b1_legislation%20guide_2015-nov_lr.pdf

http://www.npca.org.nz/images/stories/NPCA/PDF/c6_cyanide_2015-nov_lr.pdf