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Personal Protection for Caretakers

- Wash hands with soap and water:
 - Before and after handling each animal
 - After coming into contact with animal urine, feces, or blood
 - After cleaning cages
 - Before eating meals, taking breaks, smoking, or leaving the shelter
 - Before and after using the restroom
- Use anti-bacterial cleanser after washing.
- Wear heavy protective gloves when handling prairie dogs.
- Wear surgical gloves when handling sick or wounded animals.
- Wear surgical and protective gloves when cleaning cages.
- Consider use of goggles or face protection if splashes from contaminated surfaces may occur.
- Do not allow rescued animals to bite or scratch you.
- Do not eat in animal care areas.
- Pregnant women and immunocompromised persons should not volunteer for positions involving direct animal contact.

Optional

- Bring a change of clothes to wear home at the end of the day.
- Bag and thoroughly clean clothes worn at the shelter.
- Whenever possible, caretakers should have completed a 3-dose prophylactic vaccination series for rabies.
- Whenever possible, caretakers should have a tetanus shot to protect against infections from accidental scratches or bites.

Required

- In the event that a person is bitten by a prairie dog that appears to be ill or acting strangely, the animal will be surrendered for rabies testing and the person be given prophylactic vaccination as a precaution. In addition, the testing should include plague/tularemia screening in case the sick animal represents the first stage of a plague epizootic.