

Safety Note #124

SAFE USE OF CONIBEAR TRAPS



Photographs Courtesy of Hopland REC

Conibear traps are used to trap small- to medium-sized animals such as beavers, muskrats, martens, fishers, raccoons, squirrels, skunks, woodchucks, opossums, gophers, and moles. Typically, Conibear traps are set at burrow or lodge entrances to catch animals as they enter or exit their living space whether on land or under the water.

Hazards associated with using Conibear traps include potential fractures, contusions, and lacerations to the fingers and hands.

CCR Title 8, Section 3203 (7) requires employees be trained on the equipment they use in the workplace.

Conibear Trap Safety Precautions

- Always wear gloves when handling Conibear traps.
- Provide adequate verbal and signage warnings if Conibear traps are to be used in areas where pets, children, or other adults may be present.
- It is a recommended safety practice to use a setting tool when setting a Conibear trap.
- Carefully compress the trap springs by hand or with a setting tool and engage the safety latch.
- Release the safety latch after placing the trap in its designated location.
- Keep your fingers and hands outside the trap jaws and away from the trigger once the trap is set.
- Secure the trap from being carried off by staking it to the ground or tying it to an immovable object.
- Inspect set traps daily and collect trapped animal carcasses.
- Use gloves to handle animal carcasses.
- Dispose of animal carcasses properly.
- Discharge the trap energy by releasing the trigger before picking the trap up and relocating it.
- At the completion of trapping, clean the trap(s) and store in the assigned location.

