WASP AND BEE STING POLICY
Reviewed 9/16/2008

A. Introduction:
The Western Yellowjacket (*Vespula pensylvanica*) was introduced to the Hawaiian Islands in the 1980's. Since its introduction, it has become well established and is posing a serious threat to the Hawaiian ecosystem. In order to control this pest, PIERC has been studying the ecology of the wasp, which involves having personnel working in and around wasp nests, thus increasing their chance of single and/or multiple wasp stings. In addition, most of the field personnel at PIERC are working in remote areas of the islands and are subject to bee and wasp sting year around. In an event of a generalized allergic reaction to a bee or wasp sting, PIERC personnel felt it necessary to develop a response plan to reduce the possibility of a life-threatening situation.

B. Purpose:
The purpose of the PIERC Bee and Wasp Sting Policy is to define a protocol to be followed by all employees in the event of a bee or wasp sting so as to prevent the possibility of creating a life-threatening situation.

C. Responsibility:
The PIERC Safety Officer is responsible for developing, implementing, monitoring and training employees on this policy. Supervisors are responsible for seeing that all employees have the required materials and supplies. All employees are responsible for understanding this policy and adhering strictly to its guidelines.

D. Administration:
1. All technicians and project leaders shall carry with then whenever in the field where bees or wasps could pose a problem the following:
   - A chewable antihistamine
   - An orally administered antihistamine.
2. The cost of the epinephrine or antihistamine kit is to be paid through project funds.
3. Store all the medications between 36 degrees F. and 86 degrees F. and out of the sun. Replace all medications when the labels indicate that they have expired.
4. Technicians, interns or volunteers hired to work in areas where there may be a bee and/or wasp problem shall be notified of this condition before they accept the position.
5. If a technician, intern or volunteer has a known history to generalize allergic reactions to bee or wasp stings, they shall obtain from their personal physician an
epinephrine or antihistamine injection kit and be familiar with its used prior to arriving at the field station. They should wear a medical alert type of bracelet or pendant warning of the allergy and they also must notify their supervisor of this condition.

6. Whenever stung by a bee or a wasp, a Bee and Wasp Sting Injury report must be filed and turned in to your supervisor or to the Safety Officer.

E. Prevention:
1. Avoid fast, abrupt movements, such as waving your arms when wasps are in the vicinity.

2. Do not wear perfume or aftershave or perfumed cosmetics or lotions when outdoors. Wasps are attracted to sweet smells.

3. When eating outdoors, keep food enclosed. Wasps are attracted to proteins and to sweets.

4. Check soda cans and the rims of drinking glasses before raising them to your mouth.

5. Grey, white or red clothing should be worn to reduce attractiveness.

6. Long sleeve shirts and long pants should be worn to minimize exposed areas.

7. If a bee or wasp becomes trapped in a vehicle, the driver should stop and remove the insect from the vehicle.

F. Response
1. If stung, immediately notify supervisor or co-worker. If you have a known history of a generalized allergic response or if you start having signs and symptoms of a generalized allergic response, begin self-medication. If in the field, proceed back to the office or field camp.

2. If stung while working alone in the field, notify your supervisor or co-worker by radio or cell phone and report your location. After 5 minutes, notify the same person with your condition. If you have a known history of generalized allergic response, or if you feel the signs and symptoms of a generalized allergic response, self-treat immediately and then notify your supervisor or co-worker of your location. DO NOT TRY TO RETURN ON YOUR OWN.

3. If stung by a honeybee, remove the stinger carefully to prevent any more venom from being injected into the body. If stung by a wasp, check for stinger and if present remove carefully.
G. Anaphylaxis:
   1. Description:
      Anaphylaxis (allergic shock) is a life threatening allergic response to medications, bee or wasp sting and many other allergy-causing substances. Reactions that occur almost immediately tend to be the most severe. Without prompt treatment, anaphylaxis can cause shock, cardiac arrest and death.

   2. Frequent Signs and Symptoms:
      - Tingling or numbness around the mouth.
      - Sneezing
      - Coughing or wheezing.
      - Swelling around face or hands.
      - Feeling of anxiety.
      - Weak, rapid pulse.
      - Stomach cramps, vomiting and diarrhea.
      - Itching all over, often accompanied by hives.
      - Watery eyes.
      - Tightness in the chest; difficult breathing.
      - Swelling or itching in the mouth or throat.
      - Pounding of the heart (palpitations)
      - Faintness
      - Loss of consciousness
      - **Not all symptoms occur. Seek immediate help for any symptom.**

   3. Emergency Medications and Treatment:
      a. If the person has a known history of generalized allergic reaction, call 911 and have person self-administer an injection of epinephrine or antihistamine to himself or herself.

      b. If no known history of generalized allergic reaction and signs or symptoms of anaphylaxis begin to occur, call 911 and then administer immediately chewable Benadryl (12.5 mg) by mouth if able to swallow safely. This is an antihistamine that begins working in 15 to 30 minutes and its duration effect is 1 to 4 hours.

      c. If signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis occur and the person is unable to swallow or administer an injectable epinephrine or antihistamine to himself or herself, call 911 to seek medical assistance.

      d. If person cannot breathe, call 911 and start rescue breathing. If no pulse, start CPR.

      e. If available, give Claritin-D (10 mg) once every 24 hours as soon as the person can swallow safely. This is a longer acting antihistamine (24 hours) that helps to prevent the return of acute symptoms.
f. If available and if person can swallow, give 150 mg or ranitidine. This will help to inhibit the allergic reaction.

g. Any personnel who have any signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis must be taken immediately to a hospital.