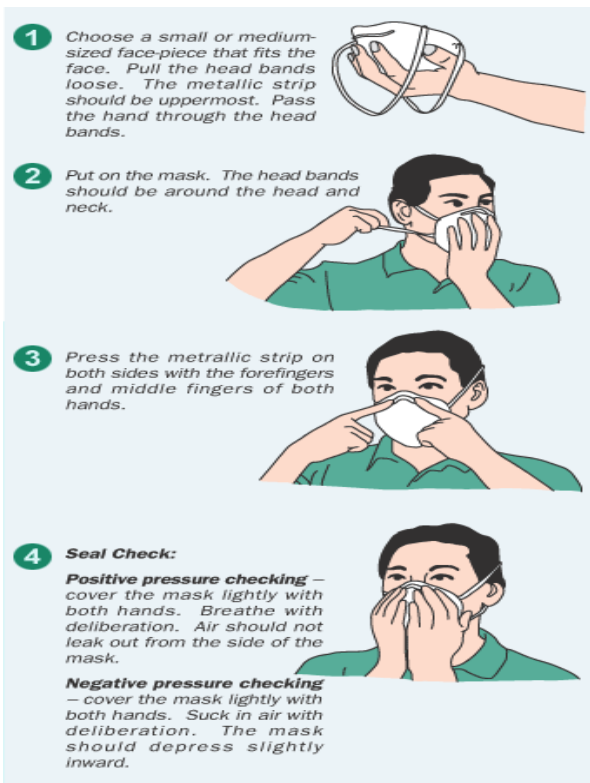


## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Properly fitted Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) can reduce the chances of getting sick.

**Respirator & Goggles:** Place an N95 respirator (mask) over your nose, mouth and chin, and secure it with the elastic bands. See instructions below, or on your mask's packaging. Put goggles on. If you wear eyeglasses, you can put goggles on over the glasses.



*Please follow the manufacturer's directions when using the N95 masks.*

**Gloves, boots & coveralls** can protect you from contamination. Wear these in and around the chicken farm, remove them after work is complete but before leaving the farm. Wash your hands with soap and water after removing any PPE.

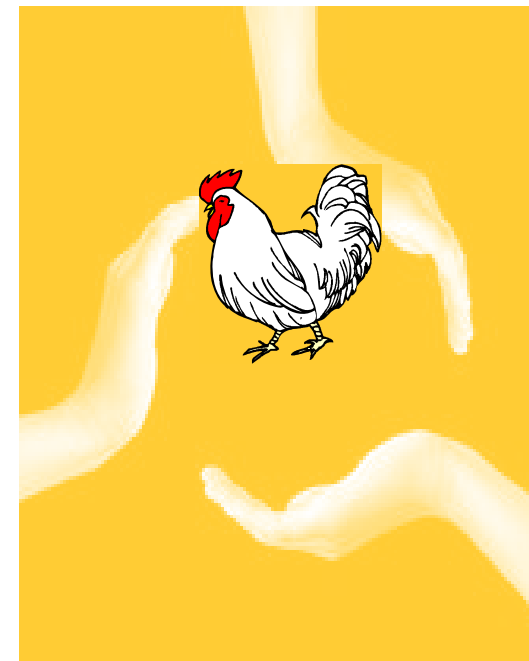
## STAY HEALTHY! Preventive Measures for Poultry Workers

- **Wash your hands** often and thoroughly, especially before and after leaving the chicken house and after handling machinery that comes in contact with poultry. Wash with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds. Dry hands with disposable towels.
- **Keep it clean** by wearing clean clothes. Disinfect boots and shoes before and after visiting chicken houses.
- **Keep equipment and vehicles clean.** Insist that all machinery and vehicles be cleaned before entering your property.
- **Wear PPE** whenever working in or around the chicken house. Use respirators, gloves, boots and coveralls to protect yourself.
- **Use ventilation to reduce heat and gases** in the chicken house. Make sure fans are operating properly before entering.
- **Drink plenty of fluids** to prevent dehydration.
- **Use biosecurity.** Don't haul diseases home with you. Always change your clothes or remove outer work wear and wash your hands before returning to your home.
- **If you or your family get sick** please see your doctor.

### **Pregnant women, elderly, and children are at a HIGHER RISK**

for complications from these health issues and need to pay close attention to preventive measures for good health. Talk with your doctor if you have concerns.

## Working Safely in Chicken Houses



Developed by  
The Delmarva Avian Influenza Joint Task Force  
5/2011

## Chicken Houses: Safety and Health Issues

Working as a poultry grower can be rewarding for many reasons. This brochure was created to make you aware of some of the possible safety and health issues on chicken farms. Following are a few preventive measures that can help keep you safe.

### On - the - Farm Health Concerns

Health concerns such as: heat related complications, gastrointestinal illnesses, and respiratory distress are all problems that could happen on a chicken farm.

Knowing what precautions to take and the types of personal protective equipment to use, while working on a chicken farm, can greatly reduce your risk of these illnesses.



## Heat Related Complications

Usually your body can cool itself by letting heat escape through the skin and by sweating. When these methods fail, you can become sick.

- Labor intensive jobs inside a chicken house can be hot and can add stress to your body, especially when working inside a hot chicken house.
- **Heat cramps** happen because your body loses water and salt from heavy sweating.
- **Heat exhaustion** can cause cool, clammy skin. You might be pale or flushed, weak or dizzy.
- **Heat stroke** is life threatening! GET HELP FAST! Symptoms may include dry (not sweaty) red skin, convulsions, nausea, headache, dizziness, confusion and coma. **Call 911 or your local emergency number. Try to reduce the person's body temperature with a cool bath, or wrap the body in wet sheets and place ice packs behind the neck and under the arms.**

## Prevention of Heat Related Illness

- **Dress for the HEAT** – Wear lightweight, light colored clothing. Wear a wide brim hat and sunscreen when outside in the sun.
- **Drink WATER** – Carry water with you and drink it often, even if you don't feel thirsty. Limit caffeine since it dehydrates you.
- **Eat SMALLER Meals** – Eat more often and limit foods that are high in protein.
- **Slow DOWN** – Try to limit strenuous activity during the hottest parts of the day, when heat alerts have been issued, and at times of high humidity.
- **Take regular BREAKS** – Give your body time to recover. Find a cooler location to take a break.
- **Be AWARE** of heat alerts or advisories when planning activities. Local radio, TV, or internet sites will provide this information.

## Gastrointestinal Illnesses

Use of contaminated equipment, clothing and footwear can spread gastrointestinal illnesses.

**Salmonella** may cause sudden onset of headache, stomach pain, diarrhea, nausea, and sometimes vomiting. Fever is almost always present.

**Campylobacter** may cause diarrhea (frequently with bloody stools), stomach pain, fever, nausea, and/or vomiting.

Dehydration is possible with both campylobacter and salmonella.

## Respiratory Illness

Respiratory irritants in a chicken house can include dust, feathers, ammonia, ammonia suppression products, and chemicals used between flocks. People with asthma, emphysema, or other chronic lung diseases could be vulnerable to respiratory problems when exposed to these irritants.

**Dust: suspended solid particles from poultry houses** carry bacteria, viruses, and other organic materials from feed, feces, feathers, etc.

**Ammonia: produced from the breakdown of the urine and excreta**, can irritate the eyes and lungs and increase the chance of breathing in airborne pathogens.

**Carbon Monoxide: caused by vehicles used in chicken houses**, is a colorless, odorless, and tasteless gas that is highly toxic to humans and animals.

**Some avian viruses, such as Avian Influenza (AI)** can be dangerous to poultry growers. Once a flock is diagnosed with AI, growers should not enter the chicken house without PPE until the sick birds are removed, the houses are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected, and tested for the absence of the virus.

**As a precaution, growers and their workers should have a yearly seasonal flu vaccination.**