

PURPOSE/APPLICATION

At times employees may be required to work adjacent to bodies of water such as rivers, ponds, reservoirs and tanks. This safe work practice has been developed to provide guidance for the safe completion of work near water.

PPE

- CPES Minimum Requirements
- Personal Flotation Device (PFD)

TRAINING

- Strike New Worker Orientation
- Fall Protection (where required)

HAZARDS & CONCERNS

- Drowning
- Hypothermia
- Slips, trips or falls on wet or uneven surfaces



PRECAUTIONS

- Conduct a hazard assessment prior to undertaking tasks adjacent to water. Consider the type of work, depth of the water, slope leading to the water, and ground conditions when putting controls in place. If possible, eliminate the hazard of workers working in or near water by using equipment to place pumps, etc.
- Familiarize yourself with the proper use of PFDs and Fall Protection/Restraint systems prior to use.
- Ensure a rescue plan is in place, considering how a worker will be retrieved if they do fall into the water.
- Ensure proper flotation/rescue equipment is stored in an appropriate container in the area.
- The use of hard barriers, such as railing or barricades, is recommended to keep workers away from the hazard of falling into water when practical.

GENERAL PRECAUTION DOS/DON'TS

THE DOs

- DO** Establish safe zones or areas to access the water.
- DO** Mark or barricade unsafe areas such as unstable banks or slippery slopes.
- DO** Schedule the work to take place during daylight hours when possible.
- DO** Provide lighting if work is to take place during dark or low-light hours.
- DO** Ensure a buddy system is in place to ensure workers working in or near water are being monitored constantly.
- DO** Inspect PFDs and rescue equipment daily before use.
- DO** Wear waterproof boots with good traction.
- DO** Establish a communication system, such as radios or air horns, to alert workers if verbal communication cannot be used.
- DO** Keep rescue equipment readily accessible near the work area.
- DO** Maintain constant situational awareness while working near water.

THE DON'Ts

DON'T Conduct work near water if feeling fatigued or not fit for duty.

DON'T Work near water during severe weather such as storms or excessively high winds.

DON'T Work alone near water, ensure there are other workers available to monitor and conduct rescue if needed.

DETAILS TO CONSIDER IN EMERGENCY PROCEDURE PLANNING

In case of an emergency on the ice that threatens your own or someone else's safety use the following procedure:

- Stop all work in the area
- Call for help
- Rescue the victim if safe to do so
- Provide first-aid and CPR, as needed
- Protect against hypothermia (dry clothing, sleeping bag/blankets, sweetened hot liquids)
- If necessary, transport to nearest medical facility
- Clear area to provide access for rescue vehicles
- Mark and close incident site and area to warn others of the potential danger

Reference the working over ice for winter work

REFERENCES / ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

AB OHS Code

Part 9 Section 157 – Water Danger

British Columbia OHS Code

Section 1.12.8 Risk of Drowning

Saskatchewan OHS Regulation

Part 3-23 Work or travel on ice over water, etc.

Manitoba OHS Code

Part 26.9- Water hazards

Developed by: 1. Ryan Obleman Date: September 24, 2025

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