

Safety Alert OF THE MONTH

PLEASE PASS THIS ON TO PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS IN BC'S FOREST INDUSTRY

February 2017

Slips, Trips and Drowning

Bob and Phil were just getting the floating camp back into shape after a couple of months of being unoccupied. One of the first things to do was to get the dock repaired and ready for the crew boats and floatplanes that would be arriving soon. Non-slip grating was needed on the ramps and a lot of the handrails were rotten and needed to be replaced.

Bob had reminded Phil about wearing his PFD when working on the dock. This used to be a hassle but the company had purchased self-inflating PFDs that were not too bulky and didn't slow them down. They didn't plan on ending up in the water but were prepared just in case.



- Water operations are very common on the coast but also occur in the BC interior. Assess all water operations to identify what can be improved to prevent drowning incidents. Examples of operations that need assessment: crew transportation by boat or floatplane, booming and towing operations, and floating camps.
- Personal floatation devices (PFDs) or other acceptable safety measures are required when there is a risk of drowning at the workplace. Part 8 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHSR) has more information on Personal Protective Equipment including PFD requirements.
- There are specific requirements for worksites over water. Check out the link below to Section 32.9 of the OHSR which outlines the requirements. For example: if guardrails or other means of fall protection are not in place, rescue equipment including boat, life ring with buoyant rope and workers trained in water rescue need to be on site.
- If there are drowning risks at your site, train your workers on the procedures and equipment that will keep them safe. Assess your crew before the work begins. Find out who can and cannot swim. Assign people to tasks that make sense based on their abilities.



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- Watch out for hidden drowning hazards. For example:
 - Bridge work over large streams or rivers.
 - Field work around fast moving streams.
 - Working on thin or unsafe ice. If this is applicable to your work, have the tools and knowledge to test ice thickness and know how thick ice needs to be to hold a person or vehicle safely.



Resources:

- 1) News Story – Man Escapes Pickup That Rolled Into Lake

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/i-m-not-dying-this-way-kelowna-father-describes-swimming-to-safety-after-truck-slides-into-icy-lake-1.3994647>

- 2) Link to Red Cross's Research on Drowning Trends

<http://www.redcross.ca/training-and-certification/swimming-and-water-safety-tips-and-resources/drowning-research>

- 3) Occupational Health and Safety Regulation – Part 8 Personal Protective Clothing and Equipment

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/law-policy/occupational-health-safety/searchable-ohs-regulation/ohs-regulation/part-08-personal-protective-clothing-and-equipment>

- 4) Occupational Health and Safety Regulation – 32.9 Work Areas Over Water

<https://www.worksafebc.com/en/law-policy/occupational-health-safety/searchable-ohs-regulation/ohs-regulation/part-32-evacuation-and-rescue>

