

Working over water

Prepare: Quiet location? No distractions? Talk aids ready?

Reason: 75% of all drowning occurs in inland waters.

Why: Male drowning is most common due to bravado, foolishness and lack of safety awareness.

Outline: This talk will cover prevention of drowning and rescue from the water.



Prevention Of Drowning

- Working platforms must be properly constructed including toe boards and guardrails. Secure boards to prevent being dislodged by rising water or high winds.
- Ladders should be lashed.
- Safety harnesses must be worn where appropriate.
- Lighting must be adequate for night work and must illuminate the immediate surrounding water surface.

Q: What should be available for emergencies?

- Check on your workmates at frequent intervals.
- Materials must be stacked in order to maintain clear access.
- Tools not in use must be stowed away.
- Ensure that pontoons are properly loaded, stable and securely moored.

Q: Where must tools and materials be stacked?

- Ensure deck access and egress are clean and do not become slippery.
- Deal quickly with hazards.
- If there is a risk of falling in wear a life jacket or buoyancy aid – a life jacket will automatically turn an unconscious person into a face up position in the water, a buoyancy aid will not.
- Ensure you only embark at suitable landing places.
- Do not remove guardrails – they are there for your safety.

Q: When should a life jacket or buoyancy aid be worn?

NOTES

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TOOLBOX TALK #29

Working over water

Rescue From The Water

- Ensure you do not work alone so that one of you can always raise the alarm.
- Ensure your life saving equipment is available and checked at the start of every shift.
- Where a safety boat is provided check the equipment at the start of every shift.

Q: What should be checked at the start of each shift?

- Rescue boats must be continuously manned by competent persons during night work and in tidal water.
- Powerful spotlights should also be available.
- Ensure you are familiar with emergency drills.
- Report defects to the person in charge immediately.
- Be aware of the dangers from Weil's disease.

Q: When should rescue boats be manned?

Note to supervisor: Now inform your workforce of the company policy regarding working over water.

Do you have any questions for me?

Remember: Foolishness and bravado over water lead to people drowning.

NOTES

Sources: [Prevention of drowning - HSE](#)

For more information

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