

Hazard Alert: Best Practices for Working Near Water

The hazardous outcomes of working near water are clear – entrapment and drowning.

There are several risk factors that are intensified when water is involved:

- Weight equipment and vibration
- Undercut banks
- Sloughing ground
- Varied water depth
- Swift currents
- Inadequate berms
- Narrow roadways
- Electrocutation

Follow Best Practices to Prevent Accidents

- Conduct daily workplace examinations.
- Know the water depth and subsurface conditions and ground conditions before you begin work.
- Keep equipment a safe distance back from the water's edge.
- Avoid traveling over ice covered water.
- Provide handrails around docks and work boats.
- Properly berm roadways near water hazards.
- Always wear a Coast Guard approved Type I or Type V personal flotation device (PFD) when working around water, even when inside mobile equipment. Auto-inflatable, if possible.
- Keep water rescue equipment easily accessible.
- Know where extra PFDs and rescue rings are stowed.
- Practice good housekeeping and keep all travel ways clear around water hazards.