

Working Near Water & Personal Flotation Devices

TRADE: MARINE & WATERFRONT CONSTRUCTION

LEADER GUIDE: 8-12 MINUTES

USE WHAT FITS TODAY

LEADER NOTE

Do not read this sheet word-for-word. Pick the sections that match today's task, point to the actual equipment/work area, and get the crew to answer the questions out loud.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Today's topic is Working Near Water & Personal Flotation Devices. Focus on falls into water, drowning and difficult rescue, then walk the crew through the actual setup, work area and stop-work conditions. Near-water work adds consequences that land-based work does not: a simple slip can become a drowning or delayed-rescue event, and tides/current can change access and equipment position. Rescue capability must be practical for the actual location.

A SCENARIO TO DISCUSS

During Working Near Water & Personal Flotation Devices, tide, current, vessel movement, wet surfaces, or access angle changes from the morning condition. The work area is still reachable. What access, PFD, rescue, or movement controls must be rechecked before continuing?

BEFORE WORK STARTS

- Inspect PFDs, ladders/gangways, walking surfaces and rescue equipment before beginning work.
- Review tide/current/weather and vessel/equipment movement expected during the task.
- Identify the rescue route and who will initiate/retrieve/rescue if someone enters the water.
- Use required personal flotation devices and maintain rescue equipment where workers can reach it quickly.
- Keep walking surfaces, ladders and access routes secure as tides, wakes and weather change conditions.

SAFE WORK SEQUENCE / CONTROLS

- Use required personal flotation devices and maintain rescue equipment where workers can reach it quickly.
- Keep walking surfaces, ladders and access routes secure as tides, wakes and weather change conditions.
- Protect openings and edges and keep workers from being trapped between vessels, docks or equipment.
- Plan how a worker would be recovered from the water before beginning the task.
- When the planned control for falls into water, drowning and difficult rescue is not in place or stops working, stop the task and correct it before the crew continues.

QUESTIONS THAT SHOULD CHANGE THE JOB

1. Where could a fall into the water become a difficult rescue at this exact work position?
2. What PFD, ladder, life ring, skiff, or other rescue equipment is available, and can the crew reach/use it immediately?
3. How can tide, current, weather, wet access, or vessel/barge movement change the exposure during this task?

COMMON FAILURE POINTS

- Treating a fall to the water as "just a fall" without a realistic retrieval plan.
- Allowing wet/slippy access or tide/current changes to degrade the route.
- Working without rescue equipment/PFDs immediately available for the actual location.

STOP AND RESET IF...

- Required PFDs, rescue equipment, lighting or access are not available/usable.
- Tide, current, weather, vessel movement or walking surfaces change beyond the planned condition.
- The crew loses a safe route to/from the work or a workable rescue path.

4. What is the actual recovery route if a worker cannot climb back onto the platform or vessel without assistance?
5. What access, PFD, rescue, or movement controls must be rechecked before continuing?

MAKE IT REAL ON THE JOB

Point out PFDs, rescue equipment, access route and the exact retrieval path from the water.

BEFORE YOU RELEASE THE CREW

Before the crew starts, everyone should be able to explain the hazard, point to the control being used today, and name the condition that would make the work stop.

ATTENDANCE & SIGN-OFF

Working Near Water & Personal Flotation Devices

Project / Job:		Date:	
Talk leader:		Location:	

CREW ACKNOWLEDGMENT

By signing, attendees confirm they participated in this toolbox talk and had the opportunity to raise job-specific questions. Signatures do not replace required training, qualifications, permits or certifications.

#	Name	Company / Trade	Signature
1			
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QUESTIONS / CONDITIONS / CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

END-OF-TALK CHECK

☐ Crew can point to the main hazard.	☐ Critical control is in place and usable.
☐ The responsible person/check is clear.	☐ Stop/re-brief conditions were discussed.