

safety matters

Construction

From your safety partners at Peabody Insurance Agency

Working Near Water Safely

Working on a construction site that is located over or near water comes with a set of very serious dangers. Even if you are a good swimmer, working around water means you are exposed the risk of:

- Slipping and falling
- Drowning
- Being trapped
- Being hurt on impact when falling into the water
- Hypothermia
- Infections transferred through water
- Check that access ladders, guardrails and toe boards are firmly fixed in position.
- Wear a safety helmet at all times. If something hits you on the head and you fall into the water, you are at a high risk of injury or death.
- Wear a life jacket, and ensure it is properly fastened.
- Use any safety nets or safety harnesses provided.
- Check that lifebuoys fitted with lifelines are close at hand for immediate use in the event of an emergency.

Everyday Precautions

To keep yourself safe, follow these guidelines regarding working near water:

- Make sure your working platform is secure and free of any tripping hazards, such as tools, wire, timber or bricks.
- Ensure that surfaces do not become slippery by cleaning, gritting them or applying industrial salt or sand.
- Ensure that there is a skiff or safety boat and that it is manned while you work above water.
- If you are above tidal water or a fast-flowing river, safety boats must have a motor with a self-starting device.
- Notify your supervisor if there are not one or more ring buoys located at 150 foot intervals across the work area.

Even if you are a good swimmer, working around water means you are exposed to several serious risks.



- Know how the alarm system works and how to sound it for an emergency or a rescue drill.

Life Jackets

No matter what happens, it is crucial for your safety that you wear a functional, U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket whenever there is danger of you falling in the water. For your safety:

- Before and after each use, inspect your life preserver for defects that might weaken it or prevent it from floating.
- Fasten all latches on your life jacket.

Looking Out for Each Other

Whenever you are working on a job near water, do not work alone. It is very important that you and your co-workers keep a constant eye on each other.

- Pick a buddy and periodically check in with each other.
- Count the number of workers on site, and check that everyone is present on a regular basis.

Barges and Work Platforms

If you are working on a floating work platform without railings (not in a cab or equipment compartment), be sure that you are wearing a life jacket.

If you have any doubt about your safety on site, ask your supervisor.