Fishing Industry Safety Meeting Kit



Workers in the commercial fishing industry face wind, water, and temperature extremes along with boating, mechanical, and ergonomic hazards while doing their jobs.

FISHING SAFETY HAZARDS

- Working on or near water, including cold-water shock and immersion.
- Drowning.
- Injuries from fish spine/bones or bacteria.
- Working outdoors:
    - Weather (including lightning)
    - Cold Environments – General, Working in the Cold, Health effects and First Aid, Temperature Conditions – Cold
    - Hot Environments – Health effects and First Aid, Control Measures, Temperature Conditions – Hot
    - Humidex Rating and Work
    - Ultraviolent radiation (sunlight)
    - Working Safely around Stinging Insects
    - Diseases transmitted by insect bites, including Lyme Disease and West Nile Virus
- Working at heights, including the use of body belts, harnesses and lanyards.
- Working near machinery, including using safeguards.
- Working with hand tools and powered hand tools.
- Chemical hazards, including following WHMIS – the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System:
    - Noise
    - Slips, trips, falls
    - Working on ladders
    - Work related musculoskeletal disorders
    - Lifting and materials handling
    - Pulling and pushing
    - Fatigue from long hours of work or shiftwork
    - Food and kitchen hygiene
    - Cooking safely
    - Working with sharp blades or edges
    - Working alone
    - Damage to the boat, including fire collision, grounding, capsizing,

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROCEDURES

All crew members show know how respond to a person overboard, fire on board, and flooding of the boat. Crew must also know how to abandon ship, and to call for help using any radios, phones, flares, or distress flag. All crew should also know the location and use of safety equipment, engine room components and controls, deck equipment and rigging, navigation equipment and electronic devices, safe use of fishing equipment, how to anchor the boat, and escape routes specific to that boat. Everyone on board the vessel should know where this equipment is stored, and how to use it. Learn exactly what specific requirements and regulations apply to your vessel.

Drills should be done at the beginning of the season, and anytime when new crew is on board. Drills can include how to abandon ship, deal with a situation (flood, fire, collision, etc.), how to put on the immersion suit, and how to rescue a person who fell overboard. Use of life jackets or personal flotation devices (PFDs) is required by law. Immersion suits are also recommended when working over cold water.

BEST FISHING INDUSTRY PRACTICES

- Before leaving port, inspect and test equipment including the hull of the boat, watertight doors and hatches, all alarm systems, and rescue equipment. Keep doors and hatches closed to avoid flooding.
- Keep all machinery in good repair, and make sure all guards and emergency stop devices are installed and working correctly. Regularly inspect all rescue equipment and report any damage to the vessel master. Do not wear loose-fitting clothing or dangling jewellery or rings as they may get caught in nets, lines, or machinery. Tie back long hair.
- When boarding or leaving the vessel, use the gangway or ladder. Don’t jump.
- Decks should have non-slip surfaces (except where a smooth surface is required to handle fish). Keep decks clear and uncluttered.
- Stow all ropes in coils. Tie down or stow loose equipment. Clean up spills and manage any water or ice issues to avoid slips and falls.
- Vessels with galleys and crew quarters will need to manage food and kitchen cleanliness to prevent food borne diseases, as well as knowing how to work safely with sharp blades or knives. In addition, cooking must be managed in a small space that moves with the motion of the vessel. Store utensils in racks and drawers, and use a guardrail on the stove to help stop pots and pans from moving.
- Make sure that cabins and living quarters are well ventilated, and use alarms to alert the crew (e.g., carbon monoxide detectors).
- Never stand in or around loose rope or wire to avoid getting entangled, especially when wires, ropes or nets are moving.
- Wear heavy gloves or mitts when handling wire rope and never guide wire with your hands or feet.
- Do not stand under a load or in areas where overhead equipment may swing.

FINAL WORD

It has been chronicled many times- the worst day fishing beats the best day at work!!! But this only is true if fisherman adhere strictly and consistently to all the safety details and regimen to ensure the much chronicled truism.