

Emergency Drills Requirement

Documented fishing vessels of any crew size beyond the Boundary Line, or vessels with more than sixteen people on board within the Line, are required to conduct monthly emergency drills. Drills must be conducted by a trained Drill Instructor.

What to cover in monthly drills:

1. Abandoning vessel.
2. Fighting a fire.
3. Retrieving person overboard.
4. Minimizing flooding.
5. Launching/recovering lifeboats/rescue craft.
6. Donning immersion suits/PFDs.
7. Donning SCBAs (if so equipped).
8. Giving a mayday and using visual distress signals.
9. Activating the general alarm.
10. Reporting inoperative alarms.

For Drill Instructor training in your port contact AMSEA at (907) 747-3287 or check out AMSEA's website at www.amsea.org.

Credits:
Alaska Marine Safety Education Association (AMSEA); National Institute of Occupational Safety & Health (NIOSH); U.S. Coast Guard.

Injury data is from the Alaska Trauma Registry 1991–1998. Data from the Alaska Fishermen's Fund is from 1994–1998.

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Seven Ways to Get Hurt (or Killed) While Commercial Fishing in Alaska



Photo: Art French, M.D., USCG

... and ideas from fishermen on how to prevent them

- Commercial fishing can be rewarding and satisfying but it also has hazards. From 1994 to 1998, Fishermen's Fund reported 4,264 injuries and 70 lives lost in Alaska.
- Enclosed are some ways injuries and fatalities can be prevented.
- Review with your crew before and during the season.

1. Strains/Sprains

STATISTIC

Strains and sprains accounted for 47% of all Fishermen's Fund reported injuries.

PREVENTION TIPS

- Use tools to reach and rake in fish. (Petersburg seiner)
- Do stretching exercises in off season and while on watch or off duty.
- Work with fish as much as possible at a level where bending over is not necessary.
- Try to get in shape before the season.
- Use mats or grates to boost you to the right height at cleaning tables so your arms work in a neutral position. (F/V Capt. Cook)
- Get help with items too heavy to lift or move by yourself, especially when underway. Work together. (F/V Ocean Cape)



2. Machinery

STATISTIC

The largest single cause of injuries was machinery (43%).

PREVENTION TIPS

- Shut off engine/motors when working on them to prevent getting snagged.
- Run a line to a kill switch (Henderson line) where it is accessible but out of the way, so anyone on deck can reach it to shut off hydraulics. (F/V Commander)

- Limit hydraulics to safe working loads by installing relief valves. (F/V Commander)
- Don't impulsively grab at lines going out until you're aware of any hazards. (F/V Commander)
- Never use picking hooks in engine control box as they can jam boat in gear and cause collisions. (F/V Amber J)
- Wear no buckles or buttons to catch on gear. (Bristol Bay fisherman)
- Instead of wearing a net-mending knife on a piece of twine around your neck, tie it off to a belt loop. Better to tear your pants than get lynched by the seine block. (F/V Capt. Cook)

3. Falls

STATISTIC

The second leading cause of injuries was falls (34%).

PREVENTION TIPS

- Use abrasive cleanser on slick engine room surfaces. (F/V Capt. Cook)
- Good housekeeping! Keep kelp and slime off decks.
- Use rock grit or coarse sand for hydraulic leaks on deck. (Maine fisherman)
- Use absorbent pads under hydraulic leaks until fixed. (F/V Ocean Cape)
- Hang lines with monkey fists from overheads to hold onto in rough weather. (F/V Coral Lee)
- Renew worn nonskid paint on decks and in skiffs. (Bristol Bay fisherman)
- Put nonskid surface on ladder rungs and steep stairs. Use nonskid grates or mats in high risk areas.

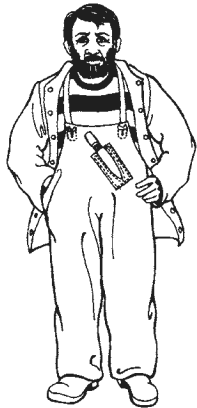
4. Cuts and Punctures

STATISTIC

Cuts and punctures accounted for 26% of all Fishermen's Fund reported injuries.

PREVENTION TIPS

- Wear protective gloves and gear.
- Tape those sharp little Victorinox® knives horizontally to belt, instead of vertically, to prevent leg punctures. (Kodiak fisherman)
- To minimize infections, do dishes and/or soak in hot soapy water several times a day to clean out puncture wounds from fish or shrimp. (F/V Capt. Cook)
- If wound looks infected, wash with Betadine™, soak half hour in hot soapy water as soon as possible, then dry and bandage. Monitor closely for spreading infection.
- Replace any wire rope that develops "fish hooks". (F/V Capt. Cook)
- If you keep getting poked by your net-mending knife, round off the tip. (F/V Capt. Cook)
- Always wear safety glasses when grinding and using power tools. (F/V Predator)



5. Falling Overboard

STATISTIC

About 25% of fatalities are due to falls overboard.

PREVENTION TIPS

- Wear inflatable suspenders or vest when working on deck. Some inflatables have automatic inflation devices.
- Do not go on deck alone at night or in rough weather. If need arises, have a spotter. Wear a PFD and Man Over-board alarm. (Petersburg fisherman)
- When fishing alone, drag a line behind the boat attached to a kill switch. (F/V Troubadour - S.E. Alaska troller)
- On seiners, leave purse line in net, not on deck where it will run across deck when the net is going out. (F/V Commander)
- Install rear-view mirrors on deck to see people in stern. (S.E. Alaska longliner/gillnetter)
- Rig up man overboard rescue devices ahead of time, using the boat's hydraulics to do heavy lifting. (F/V Amber J)
- Wear an accessible knife to cut yourself from lines/webbing and to cut bottom of waders to empty water when climbing back onboard. (F/V Laconnu)
- Always carry a serrated knife you can access and use with one hand. (F/V Capt. Cook)

6. Struck by Objects

STATISTIC

23% of injuries are due to being struck by objects.

PREVENTION TIPS

- Rig extra safety chains or stays on boom, side stays and power block as preventors.
- Keep a sharp knife on a pole to cut hung up lines that are under tension to keep you out of the line of tension. (F/V Trident)
- Avoid pinched toes by painting bright yellow stripes around pot launchers and rigging "preventors" so launchers don't go all the way to the deck. (F/V Ocean Cape)

7. Bruises/Contusions

STATISTIC

Bruises and contusions account for 13% of all Fishermen's Fund reported injuries.

PREVENTION TIPS

- When crabbing, traditional Type III USCG approved lifevests will provide some protection from pots. (Dutch Harbor fisherman)
- Wear hard hats when working with overhead gear.
- Paint hazard areas bright yellow.
- Use duct tape and foam rubber to soften tight quarters or places that cannot be avoided by tall people.

Other Good Practices

- Safety orientations covering emergency gear and procedures should be given to all new crew before leaving harbor.
- Seiners: develop ways to get fish out of net without having to lift entire net. Use wedges, straps, etc., to roll part of the net in to minimize stress on rigging and reduce center of gravity from block to increase stability. (F/V Commander)
- Use double hose clamps on all plumbing, including the deck hose outlet. (F/V Greta)
- Train crew in basic vessel operations such as navigation and anchoring. (F/V Greta)
- Have a sea anchor.
- In a rough anchorage use a fifty pound weight near anchor (a kellet or sentinel) and a surge buoy fifteen fathoms from bow. (Ketchikan fisherman)
- Keep all work areas well illuminated at night.
- Develop safety procedures and be open to ways to minimize risks.

Got deck safety ideas you'd like to share?
Submit them to AMSEA!

Alaska Marine Safety Education Association

www.amsea.org

