



Working in Floodwater

Environmental Health and Safety Guideline

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DEP Office of Environmental, Health and Safety Compliance Authorization

I, a duly authorized representative of the DEP Office of Environmental, Health and Safety, have reviewed this document, have found it to be acceptable and authorize its use for all DEP operations.

Revision / Action

Signature

Revision 1 /Authorization _____ On file _____ Date: 09/02/2016

Amendment 1.1 /Authorization _____  _____ Date: 04/14/2022

History and Updates

Date/short description of an action/update

- 04/14/22 – Updated format, minor corrections.

PURPOSE

Standing floodwaters pose various risks, including biological, chemical, electrical, and physical hazards that could cause injuries and illnesses. This document provides recommended safe work practices and general personal protective equipment (PPE) for DEP employees who are performing tasks in areas with standing floodwater.

PROCEDURE

When performing tasks in areas where there is standing floodwater, DEP employees should wear the following general PPE:

- Foot protection (impervious boots or hip boots with puncture and slip resistant soles);
- Hand protection (impervious gloves. Employees should don gloves, to the extent possible, to prevent water from coming into contact with hands and forearms);
- Full skin coverage (clothing or Tyvek); and
- Eye and mouth protection from splash (when working with or near equipment that can create a splash hazard) (full face shield, safety glasses, goggles, N-95 or other surgical type mask).

Note that depending on the site and the task, additional PPE (such as head or respiratory protection) may be needed.

Other recommendations:

- Fully cover wounds or scratches with bandages and clean wounds regularly.
- Avoid going near all downed lines and treat them as if energized. Only trained and authorized electricians should approach or handle electrical lines.

Personal Hygiene:

- Manage contaminated clothing to minimize potential cross contamination and launder as soon as possible.
- Shower at the end of a work shift.
- Wash or sanitize hands during breaks.
- Decontaminate any equipment that might be re-used (e.g. face shields, gloves, or boots) by rinsing thoroughly or washing with a mild detergent.

Consult the following link for additional useful information on hazards and controls for working in flood conditions.

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/emres/pre-workers.html>