Safety Briefing

BNSF HAZMAT

Selecting the Proper Personal Flotation Device (PFD)

BNSF System General Order requires all employees/contractors to wear a personal flotation device (PFD) when working within 6 feet of an edge where the potential to fall into:

- Standing water that is greater than 4 feet deep or
- Flowing water that is swift enough to affect balance or
- Water where the danger of drowning exists.

When life jackets or buoyant work vest are required, they must be worn as the outermost garment. Life jackets and buoyant work vest must be properly worn/fastened and be appropriately sized for the employee/ contractor.

Exception

Employees/Contractors utilizing fall protection (work procedures, conventional, arrest/restraint) that protects against the risk of falling into water are not required to wear life jackets or buoyant work vest.

USCG Personal Flotation Device (PFD) Guidance

Note: The United States Coast Guard (USCG) is working with the PFD community to revise the classification and labeling of PFDs. This information will be updated in accordance with the USCG recommended PFD classification and labeling.

Spending a few minutes to understand the types of PFDs and determining which type you should wear could be the difference between life and death. https://www.dco.uscg.mil/CG-ENG-4/PFD/.

General Rules

1. USCG approved PFDs must be worn at all times when on the water, on a dock, or when working within 6 feet of water where there is a chance of slipping or falling in.

2. US Standards – USCG Approved
   a. Type I: Offshore Life Jackets:
   b. Type II: Near-shore Vests:
   c. Type III: Flotation Aids:
   d. Type IV: Throwable Devices:
   e. Type V: Special-use Devices:

3. **Commercial TYPE I PFDS / OFF-SHORE LIFE JACKETS:** Best for all waters, open ocean, rough seas, or remote water, where rescue may be slow coming. Abandon-ship lifejacket for commercial vessels and all vessels carrying passengers for hire:
   a. Inherently Buoyant Type I PFDs - SOLAS Service (not recommended for swift water)
   b. Inherently Buoyant Type I PFDs - U.S. Service (not recommended for swift water)
   c. Inflatable Type I PFDs - SOLAS and Domestic (not recommended for swift water)
   d. Hybrid Type I PFDs - US Services (not recommended for swift water)

Selecting the Proper PFD (Continued)

4. **Commercial TYPE V PFDS / SPECIAL USE DEVICES:** Only for special uses or conditions (oil spill and fast water). See label in-side of PFD for limits of use:
   a. Hybrid Inflatable PFDs (not recommended for swift water)
   b. Deck Jacket/Suits (not recommended for swift water)
   c. Work Vests for Commercial Vessels (recommended)

   d. Commercial Whitewater/Rescue Vests (recommended)


   d. Man-Overboard Rescue Devices (recommended)


Working near non-moving water (ponds/lakes)

A USCG Type I or V PFD is required for employees/contractors working within 6 feet of an edge where there is potential to fall into water. The PFD should be the outermost garment and must be properly worn and fastened and be appropriately sized. Inflatable Type I or V work vests or "float coats' may be worn under this category.

Working near moving water (streams/<1 knot rivers and tides)

The guidelines above apply. Additionally, a river safety helmet should be worn. A river safety helmet is designed for multiple impacts and has a chin strap. Inflatable Type I or V work vests or "float coats" should not be used in moving water.


Selecting the Proper PFD (Continued)

Working near swift water with entrapment/downstream hazards (>1 knot and > 2 feet deep)

The guidelines above apply. Additionally, downstream safety should be established. Downstream safety could be a shore-based team with throw bags or a rescue boat with a qualified captain and rescue swimmer on board. If water temperature is <70 degrees F or the combined air and water temperature <100 degrees F, personnel should consider thermal protection, such as drysuit or wetsuit. If unavailable or unrealistic for work being conducted, then rescue boat/ downstream safety should be have this gear and a rewarming station should be established in close proximity. Lastly, an upstream spotter with communications should be sent far enough upstream to notify team of any hazards floating into the worksite.

Inflatable Type I or V work vests or “float coats” <u>should not</u> be used in moving or swift water.