

# POND SAFETY

## Pond Maintenance and Repairs

Always report damaged electrical wires, grounds, boxes, equipment or other such items. Be especially careful not to snag or hit these items when cutting grass. Never try to drive or mow over an electric cord or line, unless it is protected in conduit and buried to a sufficient depth. Extension cords should only be used on a temporary basis; temporary is several hours, not days.

Before any equipment is serviced where the potential exists for unexpected energization, start-up of the equipment, or the release of stored energy the machine or equipment must be isolated from the energy source, rendered inoperative, and locked/tagged out.

- Render all hazardous energy sources isolated and tested for verifications. Stored energy (such as springs, elevated machine parts, rotating wheels, hydraulic systems, and air/gas/steam/water pressure) must be dissipated or restrained by methods such as repositioning, blocking, bleeding down, etc.
- Test: Operate the push button or other normal operating controls to make certain the machine/equipment will not operate. CAUTION: Always return operating controls back to the neutral or off position. For electrical work, verify the component and/or circuits in proximity are de-energized using an appropriate electrical test meter.

Beware of the specific dangers of ...

- Automated equipment. Automated buoys have potential to unexpectedly turn on paddle wheels while workers are within dangerous proximity. Equipment that is part of this system must also be locked/tagged out.
- Blocked overflow and drainpipes.
  - An intake screen or other design should be installed to help avoid excessive debris causing internal clogs.
  - Never enter the water to clear debris from a pipe or spillway area! If you do come to a point where you need to clean away debris, be extremely careful. Water is very powerful and can knock you down and easily suck you under. If you do enter the water near a drainpipe, always have a co-worker accompany you.
  - Never use your body parts (raking out with hand or kicking with foot) to loosen debris.

## Entering a Pond

1. Lockout-tagout all potential energy sources.
2. Have another person present (that can act immediately should an emergency occur).
3. Wear a certified personal flotation device (PDF) or inflatable PFD vest with rip cord.
4. Always wear shoes but never flip flops, hiking sandals, slides, or boots. Proper footwear will help protect feet from dangers on the pond bottom including jagged rocks and metal, glass shards, fish fins and bones, and other miscellaneous items.
5. If wearing waders, take precautions:
  - Ensure water depth is lower than wader height.
  - Always use a wading belt. Even if a person slips, this will prevent water from rushing in and the trapped air within the waders can assist with floating.
  - If waders fill with water, remain calm. Try to slowly walk toward the bank, or you may be able to float, with certain waders, if you lay back and get your feet up.
6. Whether entering water from the shore, pier or a boat, be slow and cautious to lower the risk of injury from unknown objects and hazards below the water's surface.

## Night Operations

To minimize diminished vision during night operations, ensure trucks, tractors, and other equipment used during these times have adequate front and rear lights, along with auxiliary lights as needed.

## Tractors

Rollover protection systems (ROPS) will not prevent rollover accidents. However, it will help protect you if a rollover accident occurs. When operating a tractor with ROPS always wear your seat belt. Seat belts are an integral part of helping the ROPS protect you from being crushed in a rollover accident.

Should a rollover occur:

- Never try to jump out.
- Firmly grip the steering wheel; keep arms inside; do not grab the ROP.
- Plant feet firmly against floorboard.
- Ride it out until tractor completely stops.
- If required, seek medical attention after a rollover.
- Always notify your manager after a rollover.

Take precautions when hitching and unhitching attachments and implements.

- Position the tractor into position slowly (idled down and low gear).
- Keep others out of the area between the tractor and the implement. They could be easily crushed or caught in the equipment's moving parts or between the tractor and the implement.
- Hitch towed loads to the drawbar only.
- Be sure that there is a pin clip in the drawbar pin; it will. Prevent the drawbar from coming loose from the tractor.
- See your supervisors for specific instructions on hitching variety of attachments or implements with hydraulics, a 3-point hitch or PTO shaft.
- Ensure all guards are in place and undamaged.

One of the most dangerous devices on a tractor is the power take off (PTO). Setting an aerator is the only time you should leave the tractor seat while the PTO is engaged. When you dismount, stay well clear of a powered aerator and all rotating shafts; walk around the front of a tractor, not the back. Never try to cross over a rotating PTO shaft!

Ensure brakes (and emergency brakes) work on all tractors. Always put the tractor in park, set emergency brake or lock both brakes, and if necessary, put chock blocks behind the rear wheels when setting aerators.

Operate all equipment or vehicles slow & easy while on pond banks; especially during wet, muddy, and night-time conditions.

### **Working Alone**

It is best to at least work in pairs, but if that is not possible ...

- Set limits for what is permissible during lone work.
- Be prepared. Have the correct tools needed, personal protective equipment, 1st aid kit, etc. on hand. Always take a charged cell phone with you and keep it in a place you can access quickly.
- Ensure regular contact with another person through periodic visits or via phone/ radio contact.
- Supervisors must have a plan/method to verify that lone workers have returned to fixed base or home after completing a task.