

# FISHING

Fishing is a popular sport and can provide additional income for land which may otherwise be unusable. The facilities available at fishing lakes can vary and may be simply a lake with banks to fish from to the provision of leisure facilities such as log cabins for accommodation. The main risks from the use of fishing lakes are detailed below and consideration must be given to people visiting the areas for recreational purposes and those at work.

## LOCATION

When planning to establish a fishing lake, try to make sure that it is in an area accessible by emergency vehicles. Provide a parking area for users of the lake to avoid encouraging people to park near to the water's edge. It is important to identify the presence of any overhead power lines around the lake and ideally arrange for these to be relocated or buried. Use of fishing rods near to overhead power lines must not be permitted.

## SITE RULES

A list of site rules should be established and made available to all users of the lake; this could be on a board at the site in addition to being available on a website or at the time of booking. The types of things to consider in the rules include; where camping is permitted, if bonfires are permitted, times of opening, if night fishing is allowed, site hazards including overhead powerlines and that entry to the water is strictly prohibited.

## EMERGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

The nature of fishing means that those involved are often in isolated places without immediate access to assistance. In addition, because of the presence of water and potentially deep water it is necessary to have plans in place to assist persons should an emergency situation occur.

## The following should be considered:

- Life-saving equipment should be available including lifebuoys or long poles
- Emergency plans should be displayed in or around the site and be accessible to everyone
- Emergency plans should have the contact details of site operators, the location of the nearest telephone, the name, address and map co-ordinates of the site, the locations of the lifebuoys, the location of minor injuries units and A&E departments nearby, details of any access roads to the site (to pass on to the emergency services)
- Arrangements should include procedures if night fishing is allowed
- Sand should be available to put out fires which may occur around the site (or alternatively provide buckets so that water from the lake can be utilised).

## WEATHER

During times of inclement weather, decisions should be made as to the suitability of opening the lake(s) to members of the public. This should be done on a case by case basis however conditions such as icy banks and snow may indicate that the risk of slipping into the lake is high and therefore fishing should be prohibited. No maintenance works should be carried out when the banks are wet or icy unless suitable footwear is worn and suitable controls are in place to prevent slipping. Only maintenance away from the water's edge should be undertaken in wet and icy conditions.



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## WORKING NEAR WATER

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Maintenance near or on the water is likely to be necessary at some point and this must only be done by trained and competent people. This may include dredging, pitch maintenance, mowing banks etc. Work should be carried out at times when the fishing lake is quiet and in times of good light i.e. when no members of the public are in the area or works are organised away from the areas where members of the public are positioned / fishing.

## PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

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Personal buoyancy equipment needs to be provided and worn by employees working near water. Different types of buoyancy aids are available and a full assessment should be made to determine the aids needed for the site. The type of equipment selected depends on; frequency of use, size and weight of individual, ability to swim, protective clothing being worn, use of tool belts being worn, weather conditions and availability of help.

## USEFUL LINKS

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Health and Safety Executive – Working Near Water: [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ais1.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ais1.htm)

Lif jackets and buoyancy aids should be stored in suitable dry conditions. When wet, unpack the lifejacket and leave it to dry out on a hanger. Do not store lifejackets close to or directly above heat sources and ensure that there is enough space around the lifejacket, when stored, to allow the air to circulate. Carry out regular visual checks to ensure the integrity of the outer cover, buoyancy material and fastenings. Where there is manual or automatic gas inflation, then the inspection must be more detailed and users should have training and carry out pre-wear checks in addition to following the manufacturer's instructions for use and storage.

### Other things to consider when working near water include:

- Using suitable non-slip footwear or rubber waders if working in shallow water
- PVC / rubber gloves. Multi-layer warm clothing to minimise cold stress
- Use of sunscreen for UV protection
- Only battery powered tools should be used to minimise the risk of electrocution.

### The Next Step

The information provided in this guidance is a brief overview of a diverse work activity. This activity may require further assessment and consultancy work completing to ensure statutory compliance.

NFU Mutual Risk Management Services (RMS) can provide additional support in this area using one of its specialist in-house consultants who are based around the UK.

Please contact RMS on 0800 132 029, where we can discuss your requirements further.

Alternatively please contact your local NFU Mutual office to discuss any requirements or visit the NFU Mutual website to view our RMS services [www.nfumutual.co.uk](http://www.nfumutual.co.uk)



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