

FIRE FIGHTERS GUIDANCE NOTE # 6-2

ISSUE: FIRE FIGHTING NEAR WATER

Where a firefighter is exposed to the hazard of falling into water (e.g. fire fighting activities around wharfs and boats) the following precautions should be taken:

- Training in the unique aspects of combating these fires (e.g. boat or wharf fires) including vessel type and construction, stability, entry into confined spaces, extrication, dewatering strategy, command, suppression, ventilation, hypothermia, hot steel surfaces, additional personal protective and other equipment and resources required;
- Wearing of personal flotation devices by firefighters performing tasks such as line handling, particularly where the shoreline is slippery or steep, or where the firefighter is engaged in work where he or she may be pulled into the water;
- Personal flotation devices must not be worn at the expense of wearing full protective clothing and self contained breathing apparatus. Rather, safe working perimeters should be established to protect personnel from the hazards of working close to the water without having the required personal flotation equipment;
- Provision for adequate access and egress for emergency personnel by providing additional gangways, ladders, or other devices; and
- Provision for locating and rescuing firefighters who may fall into the water.

Note: **A life jacket or personal flotation device stamped or labelled and approved by Transport Canada or the Canadian Coast Guard, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, meet with the intent of this Guidance Note.**