

APPENDIX I – FLOTATION DEVICES

The wearing of a flotation device is a legal requirement and mandatory for all workers/students who are boating/canoeing; work over water; working in confined spaces with shallow water; or any other situation where there is a risk of drowning. Manitoba Regulation 217/06, Part 6, Section 6.17

A sudden fall into cold water can seriously affect breathing, nerves, and muscle strength. A lifejacket gives you thermal protection as well as keeping you buoyant and is your best defense against cold-water shock. Unexpected immersion in cold water is a serious risk to life if you are not wearing a flotation device. This is true despite the person's experience, closeness to shore, and even swimming ability.

SIZE & RATING:

Your life jacket or personal flotation device (PFD) must provide a minimum buoyancy of 15.5lbs. If you are working alone, you must wear a self-righting PFD or lifejacket with a minimum of 21lbs of buoyancy because these devices are designed to provide enough support for the head, neck and chest to turn an unconscious person face up in the water (self-righting). Working alone means you are not in eyesight or earshot of another worker who is in a position to immediately come to your aid if you fall in the water or if you become unconscious while working in the water.

Your life jacket or (PDF) must be the right size for you. If it is too large, it could slide off when you enter the water. Both chest size and weight will determine what size is right. For the best fit:

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for putting on and tightening the straps or other fastenings. Should be snug.
- Have someone pull on the shoulders. If the device moves up past your nose or head, tighten the straps further. If it still moves up its too large.
- To get the best feel and fit, wear the cloths you would normally wear while working when fitting a PFD or lifejacket.
- Test your PFD or lifejacket in a pool or shallow water to see how it works. If you are familiar with how it works you are less likely to panic in an emergency.

CARE AND USE:

Treat your flotation device as an investment and take good care of it. Devices that are ripped or in poor condition are not considered approved. Lifesaving equipment should never be kneeled on, sat on, or used as a fender for your tools or other equipment. Check for the following:

- Check its buoyancy regularly by wading out to waist-deep water and bending your knees to see how well you float.
- Ensure that straps, buckles, and zippers are clean and in good working order. They should not be broken deformed or weakened by corrosion.
- Tug on straps to ensure they are well attached with no sign of wear. Webbing straps that are ripped, torn or have become separated from an attachment point are considered broken.
- Check for any rotted or deteriorated material that fails when tugged on.
- Look for rips, tears or open seams in fabric or coating that are large enough to allow the loss of buoyant material.
- Buoyant material that has become hardened, non-resilient, permanently compressed, waterlogged, oil soaked, or that shows evidence of fungus or mildew; or loss of buoyant material or buoyant material that is not securely held in position.
- Dry your device in open air and avoid direct heat sources.
- Store it in a dry, well-ventilated, easily accessible place.
- Do not dry clean. Use mild soap and running water to clean. Never use dry cleaning, strong detergents, gasoline, or solvents to remove a stain.



Adult PFD



Child PFD



Inflatable PFD