

**DRAFT RECLAMATION SAFETY AND HEALTH STANDARDS
RELEASE**

Comments on this draft release must be submitted to acrysts@usbr.gov by [03/26/21].

Background and Purpose of the Following Draft Reclamation Safety and Health Standards (RSHS)

The RSHS are being updated by the Bureau of Reclamation Safety and Occupational Health Office to reflect new guidance from Reclamation, the Department of the Interior, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. This public release is intended to provide the public an opportunity to comment on each updated section in draft form. This process will enhance transparency and eliminate potential confusion about Reclamation's safety standards.

The RSHS are incorporated into the Reclamation Manual through SAF 01-01, *Occupational Safety and Health Directive – General*. The Reclamation Manual is used to clarify program responsibility and authority and to document Reclamation-wide methods of doing business. All requirements in the Reclamation Manual are mandatory for Reclamation employees.

See the following pages for the draft RSHS.

Section 43

Lone Worker and Remote Worker Safety

43.1 Scope

This section sets forth requirements for the lone and remote worker safety program. This section is used for all Reclamation employees who will be working alone or traveling alone on remote roads or waterways that are not frequently traveled, and employees who will be in remote locations where communications are limited or non-existent or where emergency responders are not able to reach the work site(s) within 15 minutes.

43.2 Responsibilities

43.2.1 Reclamation Chief, Safety and Occupational Health Office

43.2.1.1 Shall periodically update this section.

43.2.1.2 Shall respond to policy and programmatic discrepancies in a timely manner.

43.2.2 Regional Safety Managers

43.2.2.1 Shall assist first-line supervisors and area or field office managers in the establishment, use, and maintenance of a localized lone worker and remote worker safety program.

43.2.3 Area Office Manager

43.2.3.1 Shall develop and implement a lone worker and remote worker safety program in their office.

43.2.3.2 Shall provide all needed equipment, systems, check-in protocols, and any other necessities for their employees and first-line supervisors.

43.2.3.3 Shall ensure that first-line supervisors are performing the minimum requirements of this section.

43.2.4 First-Line Supervisors

43.2.4.1 Shall account for all lone and remote workers when in the field or at remote sites.

43.2.4.2 Shall maintain a daily check-in process for lone and remote workers to ensure they have returned from the field.

43.2.4.3 Shall develop a contact plan and emergency services response plan should employees not check-in at the designated time.

43.2.4.4 Shall notify the field office manager or area office manager immediately of any employee who has missed their check-in time and is not able to be contacted by the contact plan.

43.2.4.5 Shall ensure all employees they supervise, who are lone or remote workers, follow the localized lone and remote worker safety program.

43.2.5 Local Safety Professional/Collateral Duty Safety Representative

43.2.5.1 Shall assist employees with conducting risk assessments, hazard analysis, and planning for lone and remote work.

43.2.6 Employees

43.2.6.1 Shall follow the requirements of this section and their localized lone and remote worker safety program.

43.2.6.2 Shall plan their work in collaboration with their local safety professional/collateral duty safety representative and their first-line supervisor to assess the risks and hazards of the work they will perform.

43.2.6.3 Shall make all check-ins with their first-line supervisor.

43.2.6.4 Shall notify their first-line supervisor of any variation or change to their lone or remote work situation as soon as possible.

43.2.6.5 Shall prepare for the lone or remote work and mitigate known hazards based upon the mitigation actions identified in the lone and remote worker safety program.

43.3 Training Requirements

Supervisors will provide field going employees with training to ensure they can recognize the known hazards associated with working alone or in remote areas. At a minimum, field going employees should be familiar with the many fall and trip hazards associated with working in the field, how to properly pack and carry their supplies and equipment, how to toss their equipment when falling, and most importantly, how to fall in a safe and controlled manner. Supervisors will provide employees who work in remote locations with first aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation training.

43.4 Hazard Identification, Assessment, and Safety Measures

In addition to the job hazard analysis process, supervisors must conduct a risk assessment and hazard identification for all lone and remote work. The supervisor will document any identified risks

and hazards in the risk assessments. Additionally, the supervisor will document any mitigating and/or elimination measures.

43.5 Pre-job Briefing and Planning Requirements

Before departing their local office or beginning daily work activities, the employee(s) will review the lone or remote worker plan for any changes that need to be communicated to their first-line supervisor and to ensure they have all safety equipment necessary for their lone or remote field work. The employee and first-line supervisor must establish and communicate a contact plan and an emergency services response plan prior to starting the work.

43.6 Hazardous Environmental Conditions (Weather/Other)

The standard Job Hazard Analysis (JHA) for the work to be performed should include information about potentially hazardous weather or environmental conditions. If hazardous conditions are expected to pose additional risks, consider delaying the work or implementing adequate mitigation measures.

43.7 Safe Practices

43.7.1 Emergency Equipment

Employees shall take emergency locators, transmitter devices, or Satellite Emergency Notification Devices (SENDs) to the field as identified by the JHA or risk assessment, particularly when other forms of communication, such as radios or cell phones, are limited or non-existent. If warranted and when available, check out a satellite phone to provide another means of contact.

43.7.2 Contact Plan

As part of safety measures for lone or remote workers, the first-line supervisor will create a contact plan. The contact plan will clearly state the date, time, and method of check-in communications between the employee(s) and their first-line supervisor. The plan will include procedures regarding missed employee(s) check in and the steps for an alternative means of contact. The plan will also state the steps to alert first responders and/or emergency services to search for the employee(s) when communication cannot be made with the employee(s). The plan will clearly state at what point the first-line supervisor will notify the area office or field office manager.

43.7.2.1 Minimum Requirements. The contact plan shall include the following information, at a minimum:

- name and cell phone number of employee(s) conducting lone or remote work,
- name and phone number(s) of first-line supervisor,
- daily check-in dates and times for employee(s) to contact the first-line supervisor, and
- time to wait before activating the emergency services response plan and notifying the area office or field office manager.

43.7.2.2 Additional Information. In some cases, the following information may not apply, but when it is available the contact plan shall include the following information:

- contact info for persons or entities close to work area/site, as a matter of secondary method for contacting lone or remote workers,
- satellite phone number, and
- SEND contact number.

43.7.3 Emergency Services Response Plan

An Emergency Services Response Plan shall be in place if a lone or remote worker has missed a check-in and the first-line supervisor cannot establish contact. At a minimum, the plan shall include:

- the scheduled location of the lone or remote worker,
- contact info of the emergency services or first responders for the area(s) the employee is located,
- any medical or pertinent information about the employee(s) that first responders would need to know, and
- the make, model, color, and license plate of the vehicle(s) being used by employee(s).

43.8 Definitions

Contact Plan

A simple, written plan that includes contact information for the lone or remote worker and their supervisor. The plan establishes date and times for check-ins. Both the worker and the supervisor must have a copy of the plan. The written plan can include electronic written copy, if it is easily accessible by all parties, even if one party does not have access to cellular signal or the internet.

Emergency Services Response Plan

A written plan that clearly states the time frame at which the first-line supervisor will call emergency services if no contact has been made with a lone or remote worker after a missed check-in. The Emergency Services Response Plan will list the emergency services or first responder entities that cover the area(s) the worker is to be and the contact numbers for those entities. It will also have the contact information for the area or field office manager.

Job Hazard Analysis	A documentation technique that focuses on job tasks to identify hazards before they occur. JHAs focus on the relationship between the worker, the task, the tools, and the work environment.
Lone Worker	An employee working alone in any location, other than a teleworking site, travel status utilizing commercial transportation, detail status, or while in continuity of operations status. Lone workers include employees traveling alone by government vehicle or personal vehicle, unless their office has a separate travel plan that meets the requirements set forth in this section.
Remote Location	Any location more than 15 minutes from emergency services or first responders.
Remote Worker	One or more employee working in an area with limited cellular coverage and is more than 15 minutes from emergency services or first responders.
Risk Assessment	A thorough review of the potential risks of lone or remote work. The Risk Assessment includes measures to mitigate identified risks associated with the planned lone or remote work.
Satellite Emergency Notification Device	A device that utilizes satellite communications coverage and can send and receive emergency message and transmit an emergency locator signal.