

New Nova Scotia Occupational Diving Regulations

Diving can be a dangerous job if the proper safety precautions are not taken. In fact, three divers have died in Nova Scotia in the last two years.

In an effort to improve safety and establish an even playing field in the diving industry, Nova Scotia has created Occupational Diving Regulations that will take effect May 1, 2006. These regulations reflect modern industry practices aimed at meeting the health and safety challenges of underwater workplaces.

Occupational diving in Nova Scotia includes commercial, industrial, seafood harvesting, and scientific activity and takes place in a changing and challenging environment.

Everyone's goal is to increase the safety of occupational diving.

WHO DO THESE REGULATIONS APPLY TO?

The regulations apply to all occupational diving. This includes:

- commercial/industrial diving
- seafood harvesting diving (sea urchin and aquaculture operations)
- scientific diving
- diving instructors

The regulations do not apply to recreational divers or a dive using only a snorkel

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE NEW REGULATIONS?

Dive Planning

Before any diving can take place, a written dive plan must be developed in consultation with the dive team for the dive. Examples of items to be included in the dive plan are:

- a description of the work
- time of the dive
- emergency procedures
- dive tables to be used
- instructions for getting medical assistance

Diver Competency

Each diving supervisor, diver and diver's tender must meet the competency requirements set out in CSA Standard Z275.4-02, "Competency Standard for Diving Operations". In addition, all members of a dive team must hold a valid standard first aid certificate before a dive is conducted. If oxygen therapy equipment is provided at a dive site, divers must be trained in how to use it.

Photo ID

All members of a dive team must have photo identification, such as a driver's license, available at a dive site.

Diver Certificate of Fitness to Dive

All divers must be certified as medically fit to dive by a physician at least every two years. Physicians must consider the factors listed in CSA standard Z275.2-04 "*Occupational Safety Code for Diving Operations*" when carrying out the medical exam. The factors to be considered are available from the OH&S Division, NS Department of Environment and Labour. Divers may go to their family physician for a medical exam.

Dive Crew Size

A minimum crew of three must be present at each diving operation and must include at least two divers and one team member who acts as both a supervisor and a diver's tender. The minimum crew requirement changes according to depth, equipment usage, and degree of hazard and other conditions.

SCUBA Prohibitions

SCUBA equipment cannot be used for dives more than 40m in depth. In addition, the use of SCUBA is completely prohibited at construction or industrial underwater work sites for some activities (ie. welding). Other activities (ie. working near underwater intakes, high pressure jetting at aquaculture sites) may be carried out using SCUBA if the employer has obtained an approved code of practice from the OH&S Division, NS Department of Environment and Labour. The procedures for obtaining a code of practice can be found on the website at www.gov.ns.ca/enla/healthandsafety, or contact the OH&S Division.

Equipment Examination, Testing, Maintenance & Repair

Diving equipment must be examined by a competent person each day it is used and it must be tested, repaired and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications. Generally, records of tests and repairs must be kept for 2 years.

Diver Logbook and Supervisor's Record

All divers must keep a log book containing the information specified in the regulations. Entries into the logbook must be signed by the diver, and countersigned by the diving supervisor. Diving supervisors must keep a supervisor's record and file a signed copy of the record with the employer within 7 days of the end of the dive. The Employer must keep the supervisor's record for at least 2 years.

The *Occupational Diving Regulations* are available from the Department of Environment and Labour

For copies of the regulations or any of the supporting documents, please contact:

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