

Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Safety
Safety Standard Operating Procedure Number: SP 10-14
Date: March 11, 2013

STATUS: FINAL

Title: Electrofishing Safety Program

Purpose:

The purpose of this Safety Standard Operating Procedure (SSOP) is to outline procedures necessary to ensure the safety of all employees involved in Electrofishing activities. This SSOP is primarily for the Division of Surface Water (DSW); however these requirements apply to any employee who will be performing any electrofishing activities. Information is also included for non-agency staff that may accompany Ohio EPA staff during electrofishing projects.

Safety Management System (SMS) Requirements:

1. In order to be considered “qualified” to perform any electrofishing:
 - a. The employee must be entered into the Agency Safety Management System (SMS) and assigned the “Technical-Field” or “Technical-Field-Supervisor” worker category. Employees who are also required to be on the respirator program should be coded “Respirator User”.
 - b. The employee’s SMS Assessment worksheet must specify that “electrofishing” is part of the employee’s current duties.
 - c. The employee’s Safety Report on the SMS must show the date of the last “**Electrofishing**” training and the due date.
 - d. The SMS should also reflect the “**Boating Safety**” requirement for any employee who will be operating any type of watercraft during electrofishing activities. The SMS should show completion and due dates for the boating safety training requirement.

Electrofishing Safety Training Requirements:

1. All employees who will be performing any electrofishing activities are required to receive initial training prior to performing any electrofishing.

2. Electrofishing Safety Refresher training is required annually for all employees who will be performing any electrofishing in order to remain qualified.
3. Documentation of all Electrofishing Safety Training (initial and annual refresher) should be provided to the Agency Safety Coordinator as soon as possible after completion. Upon receipt, the SMS Safety Reports will be updated with the new completion and due dates.
4. Electrofishing Safety Training can be informal training provided on-the-job as part of other job training.
5. The training requirements in this SSOP apply to any Agency employee who will be involved in the electrofishing program. This includes employees who may participate in these activities on an intermittent or temporary basis.
6. **The initial and annual refresher training must include the following topics as a minimum:**
 - a. An overview of the equipment used in the program.
 - b. A review of any Standard Operating procedures (SOP's) that may be in place for these operations.
 - c. A review of all safety hazards associated with the equipment and operations.
 - d. A review of all required personal protective equipment.
 - e. A review of safety concerns with water craft operations.

Supervisor Responsibilities:

Supervisors of Employees Involved in Any Electrofishing Activities Must:

1. Ensure that all staff who will be conducting and electrofishing activities are identified in the Safety Management System.
2. Ensure that only employees who have been properly trained on the procedures and equipment used for electrofishing are permitted to perform these activities. This requirement applies to all staff that will perform or assist with electrofishing, including those who may perform these duties on an infrequent basis.
3. Ensure that only employees who have completed the required "electrofishing" safety training are permitted to perform these tasks. The employee's SMS Safety Report must show the "electrofishing safety training" assessment and a corresponding completion and due date. Supervisors should check the SMS or ask for a copy of the employee's SMS Safety Report to verify that the required training has been completed.

4. Document the initial training for all employees involved in the program. A record of the training must be forwarded to the Agency Safety Coordinator upon completion of the training.
5. Ensure that annual refresher training is provided. This annual training should take place prior to the beginning of each field season. A record of the annual refresher training must also be sent to the Agency Safety Coordinator.
6. Ensure that all employees involved in the program are current in CPR and First Aid training. This requirement can be verified by checking the SMS or an employee's SMS Safety Report.
7. Ensure that the requirements found in the Boating Safety Standard Safety Operating Procedure (SP 1-12, March 2013) are met for any employee who will be operating any type of watercraft during the performance of electrofishing activities.
8. Report any accidents or near-miss accidents to the Safety Coordinator for follow-up and investigation as needed.

DSW Summer Intern Requirements:

1. All DSW summer interns who will be participating in any electrofishing activities must be provided initial safety training as outlined above. This training should be completed prior to the commencement of any electrofishing activities.
2. Interns are not entered into the Safety Management System (SMS). Supervisors overseeing electrofishing activities that involve interns should maintain documentation of all initial training.
3. Interns involved in electrofishing activities should be current in CPR and First Aid Training or be accompanied by a crew member who is certified in CPR and First Aid.
4. Interns who will be operating any type of watercraft as part of electrofishing activities must also comply with the requirements in the Safe Boating SSOP (SP 10-12, March 2013)

Requirements for Non-Agency Staff Who Accompany or Assist with Electrofishing Activities:

1. The supervisor and/or crew leader that will be taking non-Agency staff on electrofishing projects must ensure that these individual's have been briefed on the items listed above prior to the commencement of any electrofishing activities.

2. The training of non-Agency staff may be conducted in the form of an on-the-job safety briefing at the project location.
3. The on-the-job safety briefings should be documented by the crew leader/supervisor at the time it was provided. This must include a list of names of all individual's that were trained.
4. All non-Agency staff who accompany must sign the Liability Release Form that is included in this SSOP. The signed forms should be maintained by the supervisor.
5. It is highly recommended that non-Agency staff activities be primarily limited to observation. Actual electrofishing should be limited for non-Agency employees.

**Ohio Environmental Protection Agency
Liability Release Form**

Name: _____

Employer: _____

Date: _____

I _____ intending to be legally bound, and in consideration for being allowed to accompany Ohio EPA staff in electrofishing and stream survey activities, hereby agree to release and to hold harmless the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, its employees, officers or agents for any and all liability for personal injuries, including death, and property losses or damage occasioned by or in connection with electrofishing and stream survey activities being conducted on this ___day of _____, 20__

The undersigned further agrees to abide by all of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency rules and regulations in place covering this event and the training provided in conjunction with these activities.

The undersigned hereby acknowledges the inherent risks associated with electrofishing and stream survey activities that were discussed in training and hereby declares that he or she is a voluntary participant in these activities. This waiver is valid for the duration of the current project. A new waiver form must be signed for each subsequent event.

Signature

Date Signed