



AMERICAN WATER

From: Stephen Curtis

To: American Water Contractors

Re: American Water Pipe Cutting Requirements

American Water recently reviewed its practice of using cut off saws while making repairs to our distribution system. A work group comprised of American Water health and safety professionals and operations personnel reviewed our current practices and looked at new pipe cutting options to lower exposures and improve employee safety in our construction and repair efforts.

Based on the work group's recommendations, American Water approved the following requirements:

- The use of diamond tipped metal blades is prohibited in any cut off saw application. Only abrasive blades will be used with cut off saws.
- The use of cut off saws and ring saws is banned in any pipe cutting.
- Cut off saws may be used for pavement cutting if equipped with approved abrasive blades and the saw is properly mounted in a cart approved by the manufacturer, and designed specifically for the saw model in use. Free hand use of cut off saws for pavement cutting will not be permitted on American Water work sites. Cut off saws will also be allowed for cutting concrete block (Concrete Masonry Units [CMUs]) using an abrasive blade.

American Water evaluated a number of different viable alternatives for the use of cutting pipe which eliminate the rotational kick back hazard, the following methodology's are acceptable:

- Abrasive chain saws (e.g. ICS Power Grit Saws) specifically approved and equipped with the appropriate cutting chain for the pipe material,
- Diamond wire Guillotine saws,
- Manual, pneumatic, and hydraulic powered wheel and snap cutters,
- Reciprocating saws, and
- Hand saws

Appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), must be worn for protection from the hazards associated with the cutting tool and process. PPE includes, as a minimum with all pipe cutting tools: safety glasses or goggles, gloves, safety shoes, hardhat, and Class II or III reflective garment (when in the road right-of-way). Additional PPE including face shield and hearing protection is required when using reciprocating, cut off, chain, ring, or guillotine saws.

In addition to the above, all manufacturer requirements and safety warning must be followed.

American Water requires that all Contractors who perform pipe cutting tasks as part of their services rendered for American Water to follow, at minimum the requirements described above. These requirements also apply to any subcontractor engaged by an American Water contractor. Contractors who do not comply with these guidelines will not be permitted to work on American Water projects.

It remains the contractor/subcontractor's responsibility to train their respective employees on the proper use and application of all equipment, to follow manufacturer recommendations and to comply with all applicable Federal, State and local health and safety regulations. Contractors/subcontractors should not undertake any activity on behalf of American Water in unsafe situations and should contact the American Water Project manager if they have any concerns.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at the phone number or email address noted below.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Curtis". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a period at the end.

Stephen Curtis  
Vice President  
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