

CHAPTER 131.

[S. B. 143.]

SAFETY REGULATIONS FOR PERSONS WORKING IN
COMPRESSED AIR CHAMBERS.

AN ACT relating to labor, providing for the health and safety of persons employed for work in compressed air, and providing penalties for violation thereof.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Washington:

SECTION 1. The term "pressure" means gauge air "Pressure." pressure in pounds per square inch.

SEC. 2. Every employer of persons for work in compressed air shall: Safety measures.

(1) Connect at least two air pipes with the working chamber and keep such pipes in perfect working condition;

(2) Attach to the working chamber in accessible positions all instruments necessary to show its pressure and keep such instruments in charge of competent persons, with a period of duty for each such person not exceeding six hours in any twenty-four;

(3) Place in each shaft a safe ladder extending its entire length;

(4) Light properly and keep clear such passageway;

(5) Provide independent lighting systems for the working chamber and shaft leading to it, when electricity is used for lighting;

(6) Guard lights other than electric lights;

(7) Protect workmen by a shield erected in the working chamber when such chamber is less than ten feet long and is suspended with more than nine feet space between its deck and the bottom of the excavation;

(8) Provide for and keep accessible to employees working in compressed air a dressing room heated, lighted and ventilated properly and supplied

with benches, lockers, sanitary waterclosets, bathing facilities and hot and cold water;

(9) Establish and maintain a medical lock properly heated, lighted, ventilated and supplied with medicines and surgical implements, when the maximum air pressure exceeds seventeen pounds.

SEC. 3. Every employer of persons for work in compressed air shall:

Medical officer.

(1) Keep at the place of work at all necessary times a duly qualified medical officer to care for cases of illness and to administer strictly and enforce sections 2 and 4 of this act;

Certified nurse.

(2) Keep at a medical lock required by subdivision 9 of section 2 of this act a certified nurse selected by the medical officer required by subdivision 1 of this section and qualified to give temporary relief in cases of illness.

Physical examination of workers.

SEC. 4. If an employee is a new employee, an absentee for ten or more successive days, an employee who has worked in compressed air continuously for three months or a beginner in compressed air who has worked but a single shaft as required by section 5, the officer required by subdivision 1 of section 3 shall examine him and declare him physically fit to work in compressed air before permitting him to enter or reenter the working chamber. Excessive users of intoxicants shall not be permitted to work in compressed air.

Working time divided into two shifts.

SEC. 5. The working time in any twenty-four hours shall be divided into two shifts under compressed air with an interval in open air. Persons who have not previously worked in compressed air shall work therein but one shift during the first twenty-four hours. No person shall be subjected to pressure exceeding fifty pounds except in an emergency. The maximum number of hours to each shift and minimum open air interval between the shifts during any twenty-four hours for any pressure, as

Pressure limit.

given in columns one and two of the following table, shall be as set opposite such pressure in columns three, four, five and six:

SHIFTS AND INTERVALS OF WORK FOR EACH TWENTY-FOUR HOUR PERIOD.

PRESSURE			HOURS		
Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5	Column 6
Minimum number of pounds	Maximum number of pounds	Maximum total	Maximum first shift in compressed air	Minimum rest interval in open air	Maximum second shift in compressed air
Normal	26	6	3	1	3
26	33	4	2	2	2
33	38	3	1½	3	1½
38	43	2	1	4	1
43	48	1½	¾	5	¾
48	50	1	½	6	½

Shifts and intervals table.

SEC. 6. The employer or person in charge shall not permit any person to pass from compressed air to normal pressure without passing through an intermediate lock or stage of decompression. For tunnels, the rate of such decompression shall be three pounds every two minutes when the pressure is thirty-six pounds or less and one pound every minute when the pressure exceeds thirty-six pounds. For caissons, the rate for any pressure, as given in columns one and two of the following table, shall be as set opposite such pressure in column three:

Intermediate lock.

DECOMPRESSION.

PRESSURE		
Minimum number of pounds	Maximum number of pounds	Minimum number of minutes
..	10	1
10	15	2
15	20	5
20	25	10
25	30	12
30	36	15
36	40	20
40	50	25

Decompression table.

Penalty for violation or noncompliance.

SEC. 7. Violation of or noncompliance with any provision of this article by any employer, manager, superintendent, foreman or other person having direction or control of such work shall be a gross misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not less than two hundred and fifty dollars or by imprisonment for not more than one year or by both such fine and imprisonment.

Director of labor and industries to enforce provisions of act.

SEC. 8. The director of labor and industries through and by means of the division of safety shall have the power and it shall be his duty to enforce the provisions of this act. Any authorized inspector or agent of the division of safety may issue and serve upon the employer or person in charge of such work, an order requiring compliance with a special provision or specific provisions of this act and directing the discontinuance of any employment of persons in compressed air in connection with such work until such specific provision or provisions have been complied with by such employer to the satisfaction of the division of safety.

Passed the Senate March 6, 1937.

Passed the House March 9, 1937.

Approved by the Governor March 15, 1937.