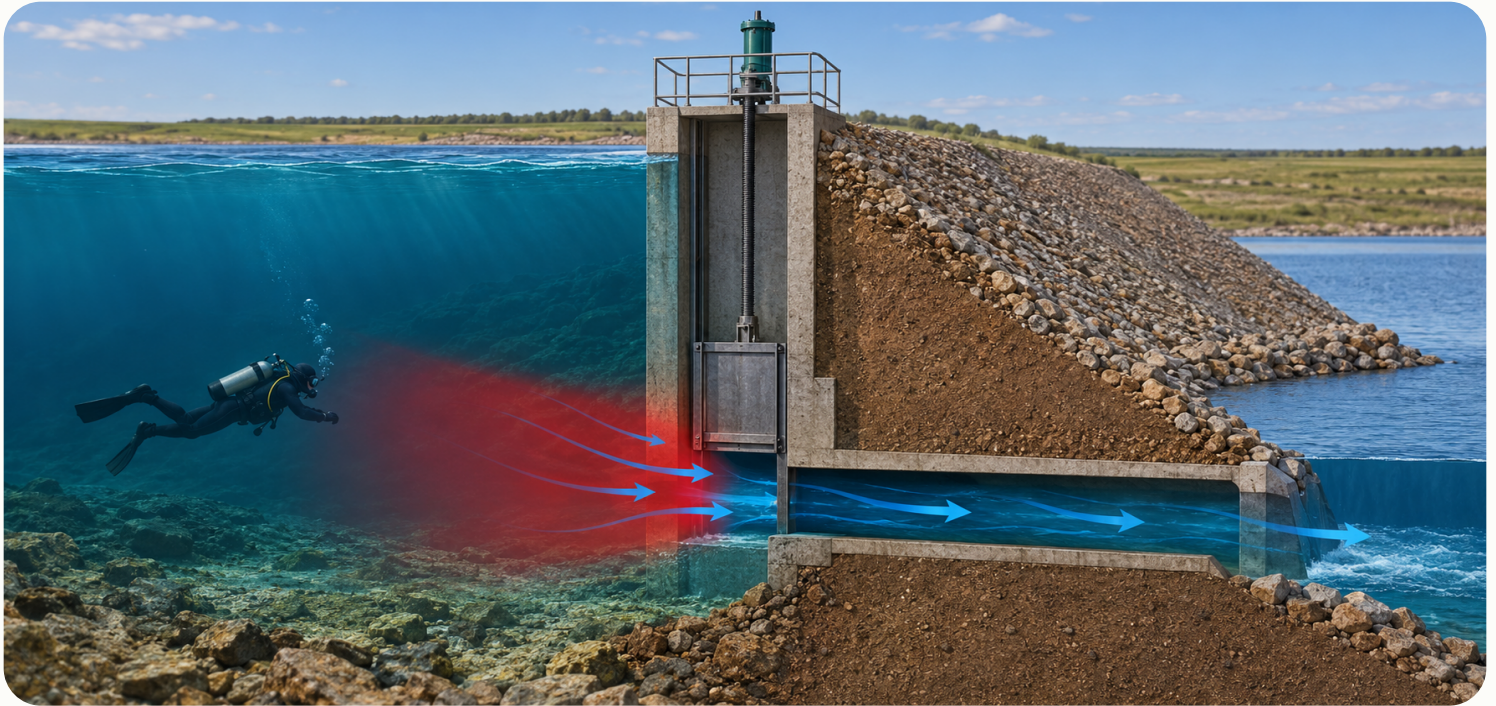


Worker Drawn into Reservoir Gate

Incident Date: October 19, 2022 / Location: Near Brooks, AB / Industry: Irrigation



AI Teaching Illustration. Cutaway explains water flow and the intake hazard before injury. Gate geometry, opening size and diver position are schematic.

What Happened

A worker prepared to scuba dive at the structure controlling water flow between Lake Newell and Rolling Hills Reservoir. The task was to inspect the gates and clear debris. The worker entered the water at the north gate, where the gate opening was about 7.3 metres below the surface.

Water flowing from the higher reservoir toward the lower one created differential pressure: a force that can draw a diver toward an opening and trap them. The worker was drawn into the gate and suffered fatal injury. A 'closed' reading at the surface had not been verified against the actual gate position below.

Why This Became Fatal

The water-flow hazard was not controlled before the dive. OHS found gaps in hazard identification, training, maintenance records and management communication. The worker lacked commercial-diving qualifications. A surface indication did not prove the submerged gate was closed or the intake flow safely stopped.

NEVER FORGET.

LET THEIR STORY PREVENT RECURRENCE.

What Safe Looks Like

Water flow is hazardous energy. Verify isolation before anyone enters.



1 Keep People Out

Prevent unauthorized diving and access to intake danger zones.

2 Stop and Lock Out Flow

Verify intake flow is stopped and its mechanism locked out.

3 Use a Qualified Team

Plan commercial diving, communications and rescue before authorizing entry.

AI Teaching Illustration. Pre-dive planning hold point; site-specific isolation must be verified. **LSR links:** Energy Isolation; Line of Fire.

Investigation Outcome

Eastern Irrigation District pleaded guilty on February 19, 2025 to failing to stop intake flow and lock out the intake before the dive. The court ordered **\$365,000**: \$300,000 for rescue-diving equipment and training and \$65,000 for awareness education. EID also prohibited diving except under its new policy, added training and replaced the gates.

Talk It Through with Your Crew

- 1 Where do our pumps, intakes or water-control structures create suction or flow hazards?
- 2 What proves the actual flow has stopped, beyond a switch or 'closed' indicator?
- 3 Who is qualified to assess the task and approve diving and rescue arrangements?
- 4 Would you stop or refuse entry if flow isolation could not be verified?

SAFETY COMES FIRST.

Your Right to Refuse – Alberta. You may refuse work you reasonably believe presents an undue hazard: a serious and immediate threat. Promptly report the refusal and reasons to your employer or supervisor. They must investigate. Contact Alberta OHS if unresolved. Take reasonable care not to endanger others. You are protected from reprisal.

Sources: [Alberta OHS investigation OHS-286831](#), pp. 2-8; summary completed April 28, 2025. [OHS Code s. 437](#). [Alberta refusal guidance](#). Prepared October 20, 2026. LSR links are learning associations, not findings of a breach.