



CANAL MAINTENANCE & SAFETY

A good maintenance and safety program for canals and ditches for irrigation, drainage and diking districts is very important. It helps prevent loss of life and property damage by minimizing canal breaches and accidents which can lead to expensive claims and repairs.

Guidelines for a maintenance program should include:

- An agreement with landowners allowing district personnel to access ditches and canals
- Easements for ditches and canals recorded with state and local governments enabling access
- Written policy stating how canals and ditches will be maintained
- Written policy outlining procedures for burning ditches and canals
- Written policy for spraying or treating ditch banks if applicable



What should the district be aware of when maintaining their canal facilities?

- Canals and ditches should be inspected continually for seepage, animal burrows, roots, and debris
- Measuring devices, elevation structures, gates etc. should be inspected regularly for loose parts, damaged materials, leakage, holes around structures
- Keep debris racks clean at all times
- Keep pipelines/canal linings in good condition
- Clean silt deposits, canal banks regularly and keep roadways in good condition



Canal Safety

How can the district keep their facilities as safe as possible?

- Install "Danger" signs in volatile or high visibility areas
- Install fencing, cameras, alarms, lights in site sensitive areas
- Post "No Swimming" signs in high visibility areas
- Install last-chance cables at large crossings and structures, siphons, diversions
- Keep all gates, entrances, dams, fish screen facilities, etc. locked at all times

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