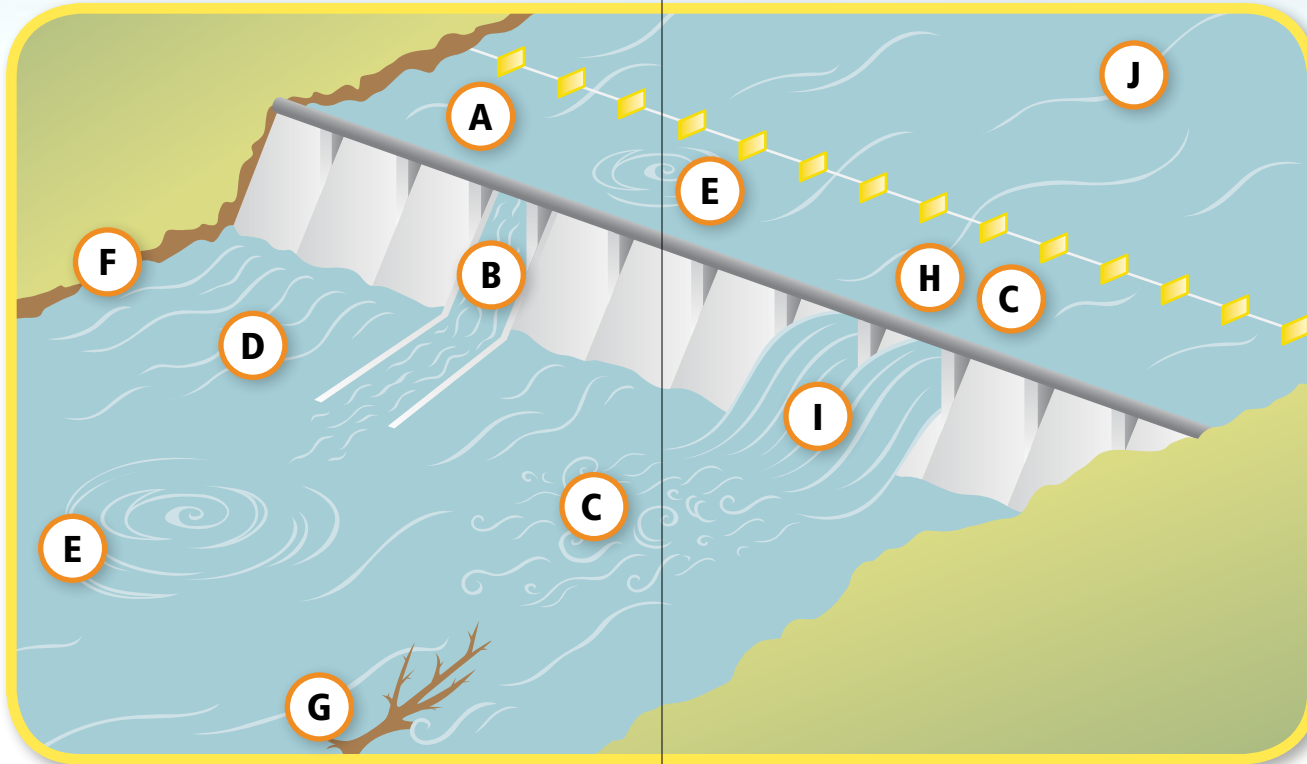


HAZARDS AROUND DAMS



A : Hazardous area identified by boom

B : Sudden water flow from open floodgates or sluices

C : Powerful and unpredictable currents upstream and downstream from the dam

D : Sudden turbulence

E : Unpredictable currents in spillways and vortexes created by bottom outlet gates can drag you under

F : Surfaces on and around dams can be slippery

G : Objects below the surface can be hard or impossible to see at times because of changes in the flow rate

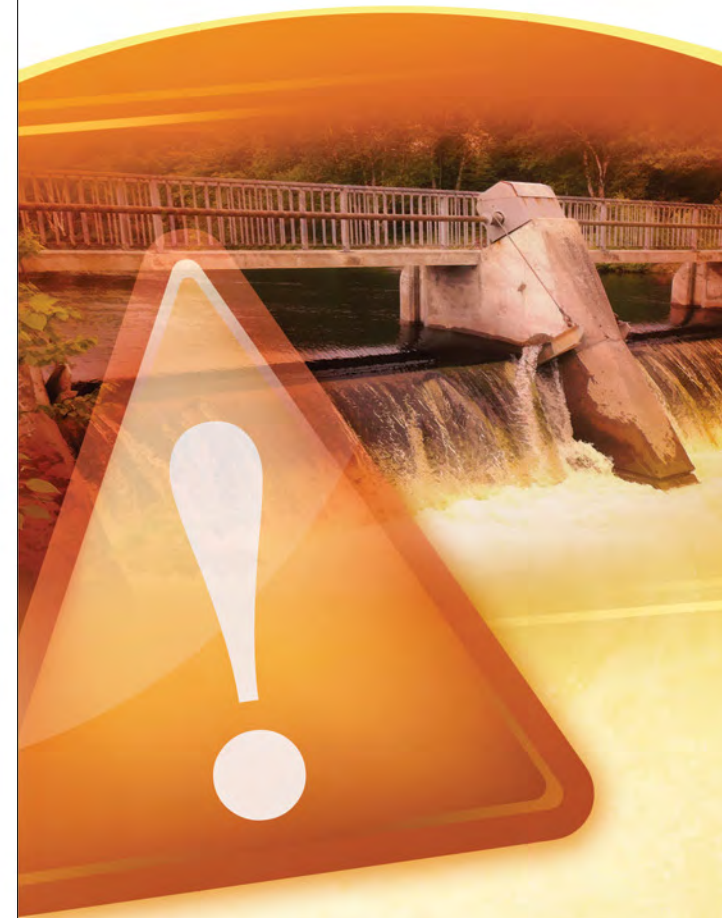
H : Open floodgates or sluices from upstream side can be hard to see until it is too late

I : Objects flowing through the dam are pulled by powerful currents and can damage boats or injure people on the downstream side

J : Ice near dams can be thin and dangerous

**THINK
“SAFETY FIRST”**

AROUND DAMS



HAZARDS AROUND DAMS

Why are dams hazardous?

Water levels downstream from dams can change dramatically at any time, and the resulting currents can easily carry a person away. At any moment, floating objects can be pulled through the dam, exiting with great force and without warning. That's why it's important to stay alert and be extremely cautious during activities like hiking, fishing, boating, swimming, snowmobiling, or cross-country skiing near a dam.

How can you recognize the risks?

Hazardous areas are identified with signs, gates, booms, and buoys. Keep a safe distance from these areas. These measures all have the same goal: to protect the public.

What precautions should you take near a dam?

The best way to avoid accidents is to obey some basic safety rules. Follow the elementary safety precautions listed on the following page when engaged in any type of activity near a dam. Be aware that this list is not exhaustive.

About us

Centre d'expertise hydrique du Québec (CEHQ) is an agency of Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs. It manages, monitors, and maintains some 780 dams located throughout Québec.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

- ⚠ Keep away from hazardous areas identified by signs, booms, buoys, and gates.
- ⚠ Keep a safe distance from shore and from waterways near dams. **Rocks may be slippery, and water levels can rise suddenly.**
- ⚠ Do not climb onto or walk on a dam if access to it is prohibited. **It was not built for that purpose.**
- ⚠ If a siren sounds, move away from the dam immediately. **Sirens are installed on some dams to warn of imminent operations (like opening floodgates).**
- ⚠ Do not swim near dams (upstream or downstream) or in rapids near dams. **Some dams have bottom outlet gates that can drag you under when opened.**



Photos: MDDEP

- ⚠ Do not jump or dive off of dams.
- ⚠ When engaged in any activity near a dam, keep an eye on the water level at all times to avoid being surprised by changes in the level or the current.
- ⚠ Never leave children unattended near dams.
- ⚠ In winter, do not snowmobile, ski, skate, walk, or fish on ice near a dam. **Adjustments to the rate of flow affect water levels, currents, and ice movement. That means the ice near a dam can be very thin and much more unpredictable than elsewhere on the same body of water.**

