



Safe handling of drop bars and meter outlet doors

Approved customers have the ability to add or remove drop bars at regulators or meter outlet doors, in order to regulate water supply to their properties.

Given this, it is important that that customers understand the correct way of handling drop bars to ensure the task is done in a safe and effective manner. It is extremely important to us that everyone is who is permitted to access or operate our structures does so in a safe and cautious manner.

Please take the time to read and understand the correct way in which to handle drop bars. By following the step-by step instructions below, you will greatly reduce the risks associated with operating drop bars and meter outlet doors.

Key points for the safe operation of check bar regulators

- Bars should be inserted with the lifting pin located on the left (looking upstream) for right handed people and on the right for left handed people. Ideally, bars should have pins fitted to both ends of the timber bar. In most cases, single pin bars can be turned upside down to make them 'left-handed' or 'right-handed';
- the safest way to remove bars is by using a 'bar hook';
- the regulator or 'check' should be fitted with appropriate hand/safety railing and have safe access;
- manual handling techniques (bending knees and keeping a straight back during lifts) should always be used;
- the platform surface may be slippery in wet conditions;
- check bars are usually covered in a slippery slime and must be handled with care;
- non slip safety footwear in good condition should be worn when working on all SRW structures; and
- unused bars should be stored in racks, where provided.

Removing or inserting bars without a bar hook

In most situations where customers remove or replace bars themselves, it is usually only the top one or two bars that need to be moved. More often than not, these bars are easily reached without a hook and are probably more safely handled by kneeling on the platform and manipulated by hand.

There will be some degree of adhesion to the bar below and breaking the seal can usually be achieved by levering the bar backward or forward using a shovel. Once the seal is broken, bars are more easily removed, but please be aware that bars are usually covered in slime and are very slippery when wet.

Removing bars by hand

1. Check there are no tripping hazards on or around the area you need to work.
2. Using a shovel and standing directly over the bars, lever or exercise the top bar to break the seal. If the seal is not broken first, bars can come away with a sudden thrust, causing the operator to lose balance.
3. Kneel on the platform at one end (not in the centre) and support yourself with one hand, while reaching down to the bar.
4. Take hold of the bar - preferably by the lifting pin - and straighten up to a point where you have regained a good balance.
5. At this point, and while still on your knees, move more to the centre and use both hands to lift the bar out of the water (remembering it will be slippery).
6. Complete the lift of the bar out of the slots and place on the platform in front of you.
7. Stand and reposition yourself so that you can now perform a safe lift, by keeping your back straight and bending your knees.
8. Pick up and place the bar in the racks. If racks are not provided, store them in an area where they will not become a tripping hazard.

Removing bars using a bar hook

1. Check there are no tripping hazards on or around the area you need to work.
2. Bend your knees to form a squatting position and hook the bar hook onto the left-hand pin (for right-handed operators) or vice-versa for left handed people.
3. Crack the seal between the top bar and the one underneath by rocking the hook backward and forward. If the seal is not broken first, bars can come away with a sudden thrust, causing the operator to lose balance.
4. Prepare to lift the bar using one hand while steadying yourself with the other. While keeping your back straight, straighten the knees until the end you are lifting is clear of the guide slot, and out of the water.
5. Using the bar hook with both hands, place the bar on the platform and then remove the bar hook from the bar.
6. Remembering to bend your knees and keep your back straight, pick the bar up and place in the racks by hand (remembering it will be slippery). If racks are not provided, store them in an area where they will not become a tripping hazard.

Important note

If the end of the bar dislodges from the guide slot during the removal operation - do not try to retrieve it as part of that operation. Abandon the operation and remove the hook. Try to dislodge the bar so as it washes downstream, where it can be retrieved later.

Adding drop bars

1. Check there are no tripping hazards on or around the area you need to work.
2. Approach bar rack and pick up a suitable bar with both hands, holding it close to your body.
3. Go to the guide slot, bend your knees (perhaps kneel on the platform, more so if working at night) and carefully drop the bar down the guides to meet the water evenly.
4. Stand up, and using your bar-hook or shovel on the centre of the bar, push it firmly home.

Opening of meter outlet doors

When opening meter outlet doors, always use the correct manual handling technique:

1. Lift at one side of the door to crack the seal using a smooth application of force.
2. Level the door by lifting other side.
3. Use the leg muscles to lift the door from the centre, in a smooth manner.

Further Assistance

We can help to ensure you are working with drop bars safely by providing:

- a bar hook;
- suitable hand rails or barriers;
- on-site demonstrations;
- safe access;
- bar racks; and
- dual pinned bars, so they can be lifted from either end.

More information

For more information contact us on **1300 139 510**, or your planner on **1300 360 117**.