Canadian Red Cross

Canadian Red Cross Operational Best Practices for Aquatic Facilities

StayWell

Cette publication est disponible en français.

The term "facility" is used for pool, waterpark, and waterfront environments.

The terms "he" and "she" have been used throughout this document to ensure representation of both genders.

Design by Tinge Design Studio Inc.

Composition by Norm Reid, 4effect

CANADIAN RED CROSS OPERATIONAL BEST PRACTICES FOR AQUATIC FACILITIES

Contents

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Objective

This document provides guidance to you as an aquatic supervisor/manager for the operation of aquatic facilities authorized to provide Canadian Red Cross swimming and lifeguard training programs. This document should be used along with other available resources and advice that an aquatic supervisor/manager of an aquatic facility would reasonably consult in developing, implementing, and maintaining a risk-management plan for the facility.

Red Cross Swimming and Water Safety Goal

The Red Cross's Swimming and Water Safety Goal is to improve the quality of life by giving people the skills to make safe choices, increase physical fitness, prevent injuries, and act in emergency and rescue situations.

Canadian Red Cross's Involvement in Lifeguarding

The Canadian Red Cross has been involved in lifeguarding in Canada since 1964, when the National Lifeguard Service (NLS) Award was developed. As a leader in water safety education in Canada since 1946, the Red Cross is providing its customers with a Lifeguard Program that will meet the challenges ahead for aquatic facilities. Our program is designed to make the rescue process easier and safer for the aquatic safety team and the person being rescued.

Red Cross Lifeguard Slogan

Red Cross Lifeguard. Skilled. Proud. Ready.™

Canadian Red Cross Courses

All Canadian Red Cross courses

- teach candidates how to prevent injuries and avoid unsafe behaviours,
- include a component on the emergency medical services (EMS) system, and
- have a recommended time frame that allows the course content to be taught effectively based on the number of candidates, the amount of equipment available, and the previous training of the candidates.

All cardiopulmonary resuscitation/automated external defibrillator (CPR/AED) and first aid components of Canadian Red Cross courses are taught in accordance with the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation (ILCOR).

Additional Resources

Each province and territory has additional resources on the safe operation of an aquatic facility. Your location will determine where to find the resources. Some of these resources include

- provincial/territorial recreation associations,
- the provincial/territorial Public Health Act,
- aquatic facility operator courses,
- the local health authority,
- fire regulations, and
- parks bylaws.

Definitions:

Aquatic safety team: A network of people in the facility and emergency medical services (EMS) system who prevent, prepare for, respond to, and assist in an emergency at an aquatic facility. The team is comprised of lifeguards, other facility staff, and local EMS personnel.

Lifeguard team: A team formed when two or more lifeguards are on duty at a facility at the same time.

Special features: Extra features in a facility in addition to a pool or diving tank. Special features can include waterslides, lazy rivers, rope swings, sprays and fountains, wave actions, climbing walls, toddler pools, etc.

DEVELOPMENT OF AQUATIC FACILITIES

The design and construction of aquatic facilities in Canada has changed significantly over the last 15 to 20 years. As an aquatic supervisor/manager, you have therefore needed to adapt your procedures to address the safety concerns that may have resulted from facility design changes.

For example, back in the 1960s and 1970s, when a large number of aquatic facilities were built in Canada, the basic design was a four- to eight-lane pool, either 25 or 50 metres (27 or 55 yards) in length. Although this style of facility served the community well at the time, we have now seen a shift to a more leisure-based concept in aquatic facility design.

NEW FACILITIES AND THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

Facilities are now being built with larger free-form pools and special features such as spray toys, inflatables, and climbing walls. There has also been a growth in the number of specialty-use pools such as waterslide catch pools and wave pools.

These new design features have created an environment in which it is more challenging for lifeguards and for you as an aquatic supervisor/manager to maintain safety. Lifeguards are required to supervise larger facilities with more corners and areas that are hard to see. As an aquatic supervisor/manager, you have more equipment and sometimes multiple pool systems to maintain at a safe standard for public use.

CHALLENGES AT A WATERFRONT

A waterfront setting offers a different set of challenges than a pool environment does. With currents, tides, and unmarked underwater hazards at a waterfront, the possibility of an injury occurring is higher than in the controlled environment of a pool. As a result, staff will need additional and specialized training to supervise a waterfront setting. Recommendations for a waterfront environment are integrated throughout this document, and details about a Waterfront Orientation are provided in Section H: Programming Options. The orientation provides basic information about the waterfront environment and does not certify lifeguards to work at a waterfront facility.

INTRODUCTION

As the aquatic supervisor/manager, you are responsible for providing a low-risk environment for patrons and members of the aquatic safety team. The risks within an aquatic facility include

- injuries to patrons and members of the aquatic safety team,
- loss of facility assets, and
- legal action against the facility and its staff.

Minimizing and eliminating risk begins with injury prevention. You must understand how the actions and behaviours of your lifeguards play a critical role in the overall injury-prevention plan at your facility. You must also understand the role you play in supporting your lifeguards in this effort.

The Canadian Red Cross has developed this document to help you look objectively at your risk-management system. This document will guide you through the process of reviewing or developing your risk-management system to make your facility safer for the public that uses it.

Risk management involves identifying and evaluating dangerous conditions or behaviours that can cause injuries at your facility and then using strategies to minimize or eliminate them. Understanding basic concepts of risk management will help you to fully comprehend the risks at your facility and to develop a plan for reducing these risks. You and your aquatic safety team should work with senior management, an organization's risk manager, and an insurance professional to develop your facility's risk-management plan.

The term "risk management" generally describes the responsibility to and efforts by the entire staff to

- prevent injuries to patrons and staff,
- protect facility assets, including revenue, against loss, and
- minimize legal liability.

Aquatic facilities, by their very nature, are potentially hazardous environments. A hazard means there is always the possibility of injury. In addition to the obvious hazards inherent in an aquatic environment, additional risks are associated with water activities.

When operating a waterfront, you will need to take into consideration some additional requirements for risk management. Because a beach is accessible to the public at all times, lifeguards will have to ensure the beach is safe for swimmers every morning before opening and address any hazards that may have developed after the beach was closed the previous day. Additional considerations for waterfront risk assessment include

- providing signage indicating which waterfront areas are and are not supervised by lifeguards, as well as the times that lifeguards are on duty;
- providing signage to inform the public of hazards associated with that waterfront location;

- providing signage about municipality bylaws enforced at that waterfront location such as prohibiting animals, fires, and alcohol on the beach;
- ensuring that staff members are qualified to lifeguard at a waterfront; and
- making available the appropriate rescue equipment (e.g., rescue craft) and ensuring that all staff members know how to use the equipment.

By applying basic risk-management principles, you can help minimize or eliminate risks in any type of aquatic facility. A typical risk-management process has four components:

1. Identifying risks
2. Evaluating risks
3. Selecting methods to address risks
4. Implementing risk-management procedures (to help protect against loss)

1. IDENTIFYING RISKS

Begin by surveying your facility. As you check your facility, talk with your staff members about what risks they believe are present. Think about all the emergency situations that could occur and potential risks associated with these emergencies. Consider these factors:

- Any equipment used in the facility such as rescue tubes, backboards with head immobilization devices, oxygen, AEDs, personal protective equipment, lane ropes, etc.
- Any additional structures in the pool area such as diving boards and towers, play structures, piers, lifeguard stations, ladders, steps, movable bulkheads, pool lifts, and design features
- The environment in or around the facility such as currents, storms, fog, lightning, earthquakes, floods, and sun glare
- The conditions in and around the facility such as the deck, change-room floors, doors, and sidewalks
- The types of communication used in the facility such as telephones, radios, and hand and whistle signals
- When the facility would need to be evacuated such as during poisonous gas leaks, fires, storms, earthquakes, floods, power surges, power failure, civil disturbance, bomb threats, or chemical spills
- When rescues would need to be performed either for single or multiple persons, submerged at or near the surface of the water
- How initial care for all possible emergencies, including suspected head and spine injuries, will be provided in the facility
- How crowd control of patrons and bystanders will be managed for events such as rescues, theft, and missing persons
- What risks might exist after hours such as security, trespassing, and building access for staff

The risk-identification process must also include staff working at and patrons using the facility. Remember to include

- any staff working in the facility such as management, volunteers, lifeguards, lifeguard supervisors, lifeguard instructors, water safety instructors, cashiers, concession attendants, and public safety or security personnel;
- the different types of patrons using the facility such as youth, adults, seniors, and special needs; and
- other individuals using the facility such as parents, volunteers, program support groups, spectators, and officials.

Familiarize yourself with the provincial/territorial and local laws, standards, and guidelines that apply to your facility, and document the process you use to identify risks. Identifying risks is not a one-time process. It should be an ongoing practice at your facility, conducted at regular intervals.

2. EVALUATING RISKS

While some risks could lead to serious physical or financial loss, others can be less serious but more likely to occur (e.g., patrons falling and injuring themselves on a shower floor that is slippery). You can evaluate the likelihood and severity of risks in several ways. Evaluate previous facility records and reports and analyze past emergencies. Review how your team responded and the results of its actions. This information can help you develop a better picture of the risks of certain aquatic activities and facility structures or areas.

3. SELECTING METHODS TO ADDRESS RISKS

Once you have identified and evaluated risks, you need to decide what to do about them. You may decide to accept the risk, reduce it, or transfer it to another party.

Accepting Risk

Management often accepts relatively routine risks, such as the chance of a child falling when running on the deck, even though signs are posted and rules are enforced that prohibit running.

Reducing Risk

Risk reduction is a primary part of risk management. You need to regularly examine facility policies and procedures and evaluate your facility's operation to reduce the occurrence and extent of incidents and injuries. Some of these policies and procedures should include the following:

- Screening and selecting of staff
- Competence of staff and consistency of training of staff for the activities they supervise
- Employment guidelines and job descriptions
- Workplace injury- and illness-prevention programs
- Screening of patrons in activities by knowledge, skill, ability, and/or age

- Waivers, informed consent forms, medical information forms, and contracts
- Facility and equipment inspection and maintenance checklists and logbooks
- Provincial/territorial laws, local bylaws and codes, and other standards of care
- Warning signs
- Records and reports

Transferring Risk

Transferring a risk means moving the financial and other liability risks from one organization to another. This is done when risks cannot be completely eliminated and could have expensive consequences even when reduced. Examples of transferring risk include

- insurance for property damage,
- liability insurance in case of negligence by any facility staff member,
- accident insurance for patrons' medical expenses following incidents occurring on the premises, and
- workers' compensation for staff medical expenses.

Risks can also be transferred through a contract with a professional group to provide specific services. For example, a facility might contract with a local dive shop for certified instructors to teach SCUBA courses at the facility after business hours. Many of the risks associated with a course in SCUBA diving could therefore be transferred from the facility to the dive shop through specific legal terms in the contract that make the dive shop responsible for liability claims resulting from the course.

Waivers and statements of informed consent can transfer risk back to the participant who signed them. Well-crafted waivers are part of many risk-management plans. Waivers are typically used for facility memberships, program participation, and group use. All waivers, statements of informed consent, and contracts are legal documents that should be prepared or approved by your facility's legal counsel.

4. IMPLEMENTING RISK-MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

In the final phase of the risk-management process, your facility can develop operational procedures to help management and staff carry out changes for eliminating, minimizing, or transferring risks in your facility. Such procedures may include the following:

- Rehearsing Emergency Procedures through in-service training
- Documenting all staff qualifications
- Documenting training and incidents at the facility
- Regularly and consistently evaluating, assessing, and correcting lifeguards
- Continually evaluating the results of emergency responses
- Compiling the manufacturers' safety and maintenance information on all equipment and incorporating that information into your operational procedures

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Introduction

In any job involving responsibility for others, staff is naturally concerned about the possibility of a lawsuit if something happens. A lawsuit is a legal procedure designed to settle a dispute or to seek relief. If your facility has an incident involving death or injury, such as a drowning or head and spine injury, your facility and its staff might be named as defendants in a lawsuit. Understanding the legal principles involved in your responsibilities, however, can help you avoid liability. The following sections describe legal principles you need to understand.

Duty to Act

Because of their job definition, lifeguards have a legal responsibility to act if an emergency occurs at their facility. The public expects lifeguards to help keep patrons safe by preventing incidents and injuries and by recognizing and responding to people in need.

Your job as an aquatic supervisor/manager includes providing regular in-service training for your lifeguard team by a qualified instructor or trainer, and identifying and correcting deficiencies in facility standards and procedures. If these responsibilities are not fulfilled, you expose your facility to a greater risk that someone will get injured. Some steps you should take to fulfill your responsibilities include the following:

- Maintain records of all staff training events and the performance of staff.
- Keep copies of all staff certifications on file at your facility.
- Conduct and document training in the use of all equipment specific to your facility.
- Provide a policies and procedures manual to staff and have a sign-off sheet for staff to ensure they understand their role and responsibilities.
- Conduct and document training on Emergency Procedures, including simulated responses to
    ~ patrons in distress in the water, on the deck, or in change rooms,
    ~ aquatic first aid emergencies,
    ~ chemical spills,
    ~ poisonous gas leaks,
    ~ facility evacuations, and
    ~ patron disturbances, to name a few.
- Conduct and document training in policies and procedures for special groups using your facility, such as swim and dive teams, summer camps, adapted aquatics, water exercise, and others.

Standard of Care

The public expects a certain standard of care from the lifeguards who look out for their well-being in your aquatic facility. This standard of care is based on training guidelines developed by national lifeguard training organizations, such as the Red Cross, and/or provincial/territorial or local laws or regulations. This standard requires lifeguards to communicate proper information and warnings to help prevent injuries, to recognize a person in need of care, to attempt to rescue a person needing assistance, and to provide first aid according to their level of training.

In a lawsuit, a court might determine whether you or your lifeguards were negligent by not following the standard of care. The court would ask whether a reasonably prudent person using current professional practices would have acted in the same manner under the same circumstances. This applies not only to the actions of the lifeguard team, but also to the actions of the individuals who supervise them. This standard of care includes whether

- adequate supervision is present,
- supervisors are aware of and in the process of rectifying a dangerous condition,
- rules and clear warnings have been posted in obvious places or have been drawn to the attention of patrons,
- all lifeguards have proper training and certification, and
- policies and procedures are in place, understood, and enforced.

Negligence

Negligence is defined as

- failing to do what a reasonable and prudent person would do in the same or similar circumstances or
- doing something that a reasonable and prudent person would not have done in the same or similar circumstances.

Negligence is a failure to act in accordance with the standard of care. Negligence includes failing to provide care, providing care beyond the scope of practice or level of training, providing inappropriate care, and failing to control or stop any behaviours that could result in someone being injured or that could cause further harm or injury.

Generally, four components must be present for anyone to be guilty of negligence:

1. The person had a duty to avoid reasonably foreseeable harm.
2. The person's actions or inactions were a breach of duty (infraction or violation of a law, obligation, or standard).
3. The breach was the cause of harm.
4. Damage (harm) to another resulted.

You have a duty to the public to provide trained lifeguards according to your provincial/territorial or local requirements. In addition, you have a duty to oversee lifeguards and ensure that they have been informed of their responsibilities; that they carry out their duties in a professional manner; and that they follow policies, procedures, codes, laws, and standards. You must also clearly communicate all expectations and job duties to your entire aquatic safety team. If you fail in this duty, you commit a breach of duty. Neglecting this duty can cause an injury or improper care to be provided, resulting in harm to a patron.

Confidentiality

Any time your lifeguards care for an ill or injured person, they might learn information about the person, such as medical conditions, physical problems, and medications being taken. The person's right to privacy is protected by keeping confidential any information learned about the person. Reporters, insurance investigators, or lawyers may ask questions. Your aquatic safety team should discuss the person or the care provided only with EMS personnel directly involved in the person's care; with facility

Documentation

management; or with the facility's legal counsel. Become familiar with the applicable privacy legislation in your province or territory. Sharing personal information with individuals not directly associated with a person's medical care may constitute a breach of the person's privacy.

Records and reports are essential for protecting your facility as well as possibly preventing a lawsuit. You should require your lifeguards to complete all necessary records and reports in a timely fashion. Accuracy in record keeping is essential for effective risk management. A fundamental principle in risk management is that if it is not written down, it did not happen. Documentation of all training and risk-management efforts is important should it become necessary to prove that you have met your responsibilities and any legal requirements.

In most facilities, the lifeguard supervisor documents daily operations and activities in a log. He enters in the logbook general comments about opening and closing times, as well as conditions of the facility, staff, and equipment. The lifeguard supervisor should also include changes in scheduling due to illness or emergency, any discipline problems, and routine maintenance. He must complete the appropriate forms for incidents and injuries, following facility protocols. All of this information can later be used to evaluate the total facility, staff performances, and day-to-day operations.

Each facility has its own forms and a requirement for a set number of copies of each. Although reporting systems differ, the content of the forms is usually similar.

As the aquatic supervisor/manager, you must be able to explain the forms, guide others in the use of the forms, and provide training in how to complete them. In addition, you are responsible for completing and maintaining several forms. Some of these forms include the following:

- Pre-employment forms
- Copies of current certifications
- Working reports
- Incident report forms
- Orientation records
- In-service training records
- Lifeguard evaluation forms
- Facility logbooks
- Facility checklists
- Maintenance records
- Occupational health and safety forms
- Purchasing records
- Other documents that the facility deems important

The purposes of records and reports include the following:

- To provide information for decisions about equipment maintenance and replacement schedules, staff, procedural changes, and facility improvements
- To provide information for research on the causes and prevention of injuries and fatalities

- To provide a basis for budget recommendations and future expenditures, along with their justification
- To comply with provincial/territorial and local laws requiring specific records about sanitation and maintenance
- To document incidents and injuries for use in facility risk-management programs, in compliance with laws, and to support or defend possible legal actions
- To document staff training throughout the year
- To identify areas within the risk-management program that require changes and/or improvements

You and your lifeguard team must complete records and reports accurately and thoroughly. Include report training in your in-service training program. All records and reports must be signed, dated, filed, and kept in accordance with the facility's record-keeping policies and the requirements of the law. Promptly review all reports, especially incident reports, and take immediate action to correct any hazardous conditions. You might also need to forward copies of certain reports to others for safekeeping.

Summary

As an aquatic supervisor/manager, you are responsible for meeting the standards of care for your profession. Even when responsibilities are performed exactly as trained, someone who is injured in your facility could file a lawsuit to challenge whether you and your aquatic safety team performed your duties correctly. In such a case, a court might compare what you did or did not do with the current standard of care. By recognizing risks and establishing practices to deal with them, you will be providing the public with a professional aquatic safety team that is acting in the best interests of patron safety.

As an aquatic supervisor/manager, you are responsible for ensuring that your facility is safe for the patrons who use it. Part of this responsibility has very specific requirements that are outlined by your province or territory and municipality. Some of the legislation that you need to be aware of in your area includes the following:

- Public Health Act
- Workplace Health and Safety Regulations
- Building code
- Fire regulations

Your facility will also need to have a set of written policies and procedures that will outline the guidelines for operations in your facility. These guidelines are normally based on a number of sources: the legislation in your area; the makeup of your aquatic safety team, including the facility operator, and the team's training requirements; industry standards; and industry best practices.

Training requirements for waterfront lifeguards should follow the same minimum as for lifeguards working in any aquatic facility. In addition, lifeguards need to take a specialized course for lifeguarding at a waterfront that focuses on the skills of guarding and performing rescues at a waterfront location.

- Waterfront regulations are normally a part of a municipality's bylaws. Lifeguards will need to understand these bylaws (e.g., no dogs on the beach except in designated areas) as they may be the first line of enforcement.

For a list of relevant legislation in your province or territory to assist you in the development or the updating of your aquatic facility policies and procedures, visit www.redcross.ca/lifeguardlegislation.

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

Lifeguards are often required to provide assistance in the operation of the aquatic facility where they work. Some provinces/territories require every facility to have a qualified operator. Aquatic facility operator courses are provided by a number of different organizations across the country, including recreation associations and health regions. For lifeguards that need to assist in the operation of their facility, it is recommended that they take an approved aquatic facility operator course.

Lifeguards should have a basic understanding of the operations at their aquatic facility, regardless of their level of responsibility. Some of the operations would include:

- Filtration system
  - ~ Common types used
  - ~ Pros and cons of common types
  - ~ Basic maintenance of the system used at the facility
- Sanitizing agents
  - ~ Common types used
  - ~ The level of agent required for different types of pools (this may be controlled by legislation)

- Deck and change-room cleaning
  - Routine cleaning and maintenance
- Water testing
  - When it should be done
  - How often it should be done
  - Who is responsible for correcting an imbalance
  - Documentation of results of testing and corrections made
- Fecal and biohazard guidelines
  - How a fecal incident is handled
  - Bodily fluid cleanup procedures including blood and vomit
  - Containment and cleanup
  - Any legislative protocols that need to be followed for cleanup
  - Information from local or provincial/territorial health authorities about communicable disease requirements and sanitization protocols

LIFEGUARDING AND THE RID FACTOR

Most drownings at supervised swim areas happen when neither lifeguards nor other patrons notice that a person has slipped below the surface of the water. Except for unconscious drownings, drownings in areas where lifeguards were on duty result from one or more of three causes, summarized as the **RID factor—Recognition, Intrusion, and Distraction**.[1]

Recognition refers to the failure of the lifeguard to recognize the instinctive drowning response. Your lifeguards should learn to tell the difference between someone who is swimming or playing safely in the water and someone who needs to be rescued. Lifeguards should not expect the person or other swimmers to call for help.

- By conducting regular in-service training that reinforces lifeguards' patron surveillance and rescue skills, you can increase lifeguards' skills of recognition. This training should heighten the lifeguards' awareness of the difference in behaviours between a person in trouble and one who is swimming or playing safely in the water. Lifeguards also need training on how to recognize behaviours of a conscious drowning or an unconscious drowning person.

Intrusion refers to the intrusion of secondary duties on the lifeguard's primary responsibility of patron surveillance. While lifeguards often have to perform other duties as part of their job, such as maintenance or administrative tasks, these duties must not be performed when lifeguards are responsible for patron surveillance. Another lifeguard must first take over surveillance for the assigned area of responsibility.

- Never ask or require lifeguards to perform secondary responsibilities, such as maintenance tasks, while performing patron surveillance. A lifeguard cannot perform adequate surveillance duties while performing other tasks such as cleaning, conducting swim tests, or testing water. There should be another lifeguard for these additional activities, even if there are no patrons in the water.

Distraction refers to the distraction from patron surveillance duties, which might include talking with other lifeguards or friends. While lifeguards might think having a brief conversation is harmless, during that chat they might miss the 20- to 60-second struggle of a drowning person.

- Lifeguards must not have social conversations while conducting patron surveillance. Lifeguards on surveillance duty must not be allowed to read, talk on cellphones, send text messages, play games, or listen to individual music devices (e.g., MP3 players). Music can be played in the entire area (for example, during a water aerobics class), but should not be loud enough to disrupt effective communication. Be a role model by avoiding unnecessary and lengthy conversations with your lifeguards while

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[1] Adapted from Pia, Francesco "Frank," Ph.D. "The RID Factor as a Cause of Drowning." *Parks and Recreation*, June 1984: 52–57, 67.

they are performing patron surveillance. If you find it necessary to speak to a lifeguard on surveillance duty, keep the interaction brief and tell the lifeguard to continue scanning his area of responsibility. As you speak with the lifeguard, you should also scan his area of responsibility.

LIFEGUARD ROTATIONS

The system used for rotating lifeguards during their shifts should be clear and carried out professionally and safely at all times—even if only a few patrons are in the water. Periodic rotations from one station to another, along with breaks, help your lifeguards stay alert and decrease their fatigue. Rotating from station to station also helps lifeguards learn about the conditions and hazards in the entire facility, instead of in only one location. Do not rotate all lifeguards simultaneously if patrons are in the water, since this can lead to breaks in the scanning of the pool or water area. Lifeguards must not interrupt patron surveillance when rotating from one station to another.

Each lifeguard conducting patron surveillance should remain in place at his station until relieved. This requires you to add into the rotation at least one new lifeguard or a lifeguard not on surveillance duty. If only a single replacement lifeguard is available, then lifeguards must be rotated one at a time. The last lifeguard relieved then goes off surveillance duty.

Each lifeguard should carry his own rescue tube during the rotation. If this is not possible, then the rescue tube is passed from the lifeguard on duty to the relieving lifeguard during the rotation. Patron surveillance must always be maintained while the rescue tube is removed and passed on to the relieving lifeguard.

When lifeguards rotate from station to station or from station to some other duty or break, they must move in a timely, efficient, and safe manner. Rotating lifeguards must maintain constant surveillance of their area of responsibility. Rotations should be easy to understand and follow. Rotations should take place on a regular schedule and follow a defined pattern that covers all stations. A clockwise or counter-clockwise direction is often appropriate so that all areas of the facility are covered.

At a waterfront, lifeguard positioning and rotations need to take into consideration additional challenges such as the following:
- Weather (e.g., sun, heat, wind, rain, fog)
- Number of swimmers
- Recreational activities (e.g., boating, sailing, snorkelling)
- Distance between lifeguard stations
- Water conditions (e.g., waves) and clarity
- Glare from the water
- Distractions

BREAKS FROM SURVEILLANCE

Lifeguards should take scheduled breaks from active surveillance. In one system of surveillance, a lifeguard might spend 20 or 30 minutes at one station, rotate to another station for 20 or 30 minutes, and then take a 20- or 30-minute break. In another system, a lifeguard might spend 45 minutes at one station, take a break for 15 minutes, and then go to another station. As an aquatic supervisor/manager, you will need to determine, with your aquatic safety team, what will work best for your facility and the safety of the patrons.

EFFECTIVE SCANNING

Knowing how to recognize a person in trouble in the water is the first step in surveillance, but your lifeguards also need to know how to scan effectively. Scanning is a visual technique for watching patrons in the water. It is an active process. When lifeguards scan an area of responsibility, they are actively observing swimmers' behaviours and looking for signals that someone in the water needs help. The lifeguard's head needs to move while scanning so he looks directly at each area rather than staring in a fixed direction. Lifeguards may notice movement when using peripheral (side) vision, but recognition requires your lifeguards to look directly at the person. At the same time, lifeguards may notice other situations requiring intervention or action, such as a rule infraction, equipment malfunction, or a change in water conditions.

The following are guidelines for promoting effective scanning:

- Ensure that each lifeguard knows and understands the area he is responsible for scanning, including deck areas, particularly those under, around, and directly in front of the lifeguard station.
- Ensure that the lifeguard is scanning his assigned area of responsibility. This includes above and below the surface of the water and the bottom of the swimming area.
- Ensure that all assigned areas of responsibility overlap between lifeguards and are sufficient to cover the entire area.
- Identify conditions that affect visibility, such as glare from the sun or overhead lights, cloudy water, or shadows on the water at different times of the day. You should also be aware of areas that cannot be seen or are difficult to see. Areas might be blocked by patrons clustered together or by a special feature. Water movement, such as fountains or bubbles, can also block the view underwater. Adjust the position of the lifeguards accordingly, or add more lifeguards.
- Reduce the effects of fatigue by rotating your lifeguards frequently and providing appropriate breaks and water so they stay hydrated. Heat and the sun are significant factors that lead to fatigue. Be sure to provide protection from the heat and sun including supplying shade at outdoor facilities.
- Reinforce the principle of distress recognition by conducting regular in-service training on the subject. Lifeguards must not wait for patrons or other lifeguards to indicate that someone is

drowning. A drowning person is often surrounded by others who are unaware that a drowning is happening near them. New lifeguards sometimes feel unsure of themselves and mistakenly wait for patrons or more experienced lifeguards to tell them that someone is in trouble.

- Ensure that lifeguards do not interrupt scanning an area of responsibility except during an emergency or to educate someone about a hazardous activity. The facility's Emergency Procedures should address backup coverage if a lifeguard must make a rescue or provide care. If only one lifeguard is conducting patron surveillance and must educate someone about a hazardous activity, the lifeguard should do this quickly. The lifeguard must get the patron's attention, explain the danger and how he can become injured and, if necessary, how to avoid the injury. This should take only a few seconds and can be done while the lifeguard is still scanning the water. If the patron needs a detailed explanation, the lifeguard should call for assistance.

- A patron may approach a lifeguard on surveillance duty to ask a question or to get help with a problem. Simple questions, such as about the closing time, can be answered quickly while scanning continues. For more detailed questions, the lifeguard should politely state that he must continue to watch the water and then direct the patron to another staff member or the lifeguard supervisor for assistance. For potential emergencies, such as a lost child or an unwell patron, the lifeguard may need to pay additional attention to this patron during his scan to determine whether to activate an Emergency Procedure or to refer the patron elsewhere.

- In a waterfront environment, the area of responsibility assigned to a lifeguard is often larger than that assigned to a lifeguard working at a pool. As a result, waterfront lifeguards must take specific training in waterfront lifeguarding. In addition, communication at a waterfront can be much more difficult than at a pool facility due to the great distance between lifeguards. Waterfront lifeguards need to be able to communicate with each other over a great distance. This can be accomplished through the use of radio communications or hand signals.

PATRON/BATHER LOADS

The patron load refers to the number of people in the entire facility at any one time, which could include the change room and other areas. The bather load refers to the number of people using the swimming area and pool(s). Many provinces and territories have specific regulations about patron/bather loads. In some cases, you and upper management might establish the patron/bather load at your facility. The patron/bather load should be posted in the facility and should be consistent with the provincial/territorial regulations.

You should create a method to regulate how many patrons/bathers are in your facility to stay within the patron/bather load. You can keep track of the number of patrons/bathers by periodically taking a head count. At some

facilities, the cashier keeps track of the number of patrons entering and exiting the facility and stops admitting people when the facility reaches maximum capacity.

LIFEGUARD-TO-BATHER RATIOS

Some provincial/territorial regulations specify that a certain number of lifeguards must be on duty for a given number of bathers. For example, the regulations may specify that for every "X" number of bathers in the swimming area and pool(s), you must have one lifeguard on surveillance duty. Other codes may have guidelines based on ratios of pool surface area to number of lifeguards. In some cases, however, provincial/territorial regulations do not specify the ratio. You and upper management may set this ratio by taking into consideration the many factors that influence patron surveillance (e.g., activities, structures within the facility, blind spots, size and shape of the facility, environmental factors [e.g., glare, weather], skill of patrons, availability of lifeguard equipment, age of patrons, and position of lifeguard stations).

COMMUNICATION

Communication strategies help protect patrons from injury and death. These strategies require that lifeguards

- inform patrons about the potential for injury,
- educate patrons about inappropriate behaviour, and
- enforce rules and regulations.

Patrons need to know about the risks that could cause injury. Posted signs give patrons warnings, tell them how to use equipment, and list rules and regulations for preventing behaviour that can lead to injury. Your lifeguard team also helps inform patrons about the potential for injuries. Therefore, members of your lifeguard team need to understand the rules and regulations of the facility where they work.

Post rules and regulations at all entrances to your facility. Rules and regulations should also be posted at all special features and play structures. Do not assume, however, that all patrons will read and understand posted rules. Because age, mental ability, literacy, language, and other factors determine a patron's ability to read and understand, you cannot assume that rules and regulations are equally clear to all patrons.

Rules and regulations at your facility are usually based on health regulations, local ordinances, local protocols, manufacturers' recommendations, and facility policies and procedures. Health regulations focus on preventing disease transmission and other safety issues. For example, health regulations might prohibit patrons from entering the pool without showering and from swimming when they have open sores. You should review and understand health regulations and laws that dictate the operation of the facility.

Rules of conduct for patrons fall into two groups: (1) general behaviour expected of patrons anywhere in the facility and (2) specific behaviours

Informing Patrons About the Potential for Injury

expected of patrons when using certain equipment and structures. Ensure that your lifeguards clearly understand the rules adopted by your facility and their rationale so that they will be able to explain to patrons why certain behaviours are dangerous.

Train your lifeguards to use these steps to prevent patrons from engaging in risky behaviour:

- Explain the hazard or danger. For example, tell patrons, "You may hit your head on the bottom and be injured if you dive into shallow water" or "You may slip and hurt yourself if you run." Simply telling them not to do something often does not work. People usually understand and co-operate when they know why something is dangerous.
- Explain a safe alternative behaviour or activity. For example, tell patrons, "If you want to dive, please go to the deep end of the pool where it is safe," or "Excuse me, diving into shallow water is dangerous and can cause a head and spine injury. Please use the deep end." Or tell them, "Please walk."

WATERFRONT SAFETY SUPERVISION AND INJURY PREVENTION

Before entering open water near a dock, lifeguards should ensure they know the dangers in the area and try to identify the cause of the emergency. For example, at a marina, particular care should be taken, as the water may contain an electrical current from a docked boat that is recharging.

Additional considerations for safety supervision and injury prevention for lifeguards working at a waterfront location include the following:

- Number of lifeguards needed to cover the designated swimming area
- Distance between lifeguards
- Travel time between lifeguard stations
- Positioning of the lifeguards
- The size of the swimming area
- Number of swimmers using the swimming area
- Response time to swimmers in need of assistance
- Clarity of the water and underwater hazards
- Sun exposure and glare
- Protection from weather
- Changing water and weather conditions

SWIM TESTS

Swim tests are used in different circumstances for different purposes. In an instructional setting, they may be used to determine the appropriate level of instruction for a beginning swimmer or whether a person is sufficiently comfortable in the water to enrol in a lifeguarding or SCUBA class. In a recreational setting, they may be used to determine whether a person has the appropriate skill level to safely participate in a swimming or boating activity. Commonly, nonswimmers are limited to water no

higher than chest deep and to activities that match their skills. In other cases, those not passing the swim test might be required to wear a personal flotation device (PFD)/lifejacket.

There is no single set of swim test criteria that best meet the needs of all facilities. You may wish to consider the following items when developing a swim test for your facility:

- **Purpose**. Define the purpose of the swim test. Test components will likely differ depending upon how the results are to be used. For example, a test used only to determine if a patron has a sufficient skill level to be in deep water in a single facility will differ from another used to qualify the person to participate in different activities. A test should be relevant to its purpose: a test that appears to be irrelevant may be resisted by patrons and difficult to administer.
- **Application**. Clarify who is subject to testing in the facility. A test may be required of everyone at the facility or only of particular individuals, such as children under a certain age who want to use the diving board.
- **Safety**. Exercise caution during all components of the test. For example, when evaluating a person's comfort level in deep water, don't ask a nonswimmer to jump into deep water as part of the test. The test should begin in shallow water to determine if the person is ready for deep-water components.
- **Test Administrators**. Administer the test one-on-one. Lifeguards on surveillance duty must not serve as test administrators.

ADMISSION STANDARDS

Here are some examples of admission standards that some facilities use to help keep children safe:

- Children under the age of 10 years who are nonswimmers must be accompanied by a parent or guardian who is at least 12 years of age and responsible for their direct supervision. The ratio is four nonswimmers to one parent or guardian (4:1). The ratio may be increased to a maximum of eight nonswimmers to one parent or guardian (8:1) if PFDs/lifejackets are worn by all nonswimmers.
- Children between six and 10 years of age who are swimmers (able to demonstrate comfort in the water and pass the facility swim test) may be admitted to the swimming pool unaccompanied.
- Children under the age of six years may not be admitted to the swimming pool unless they are accompanied by a parent or guardian who is responsible for their direct supervision, and with a maximum of two children for each parent or guardian (2:1).
- Guardians or group leaders are responsible for the children in their care while at the facility and must directly supervise the children at all times.
- Guardians or group leaders should be at least 12 years of age.
- Ratios of instructors/lifeguards to bathers must also be maintained, and provincial/territorial regulations must be followed if applicable.
- The development of admission requirements with other aquatic facilities in your area will help the public understand that there are consistent standards regardless of which facility they visit.

INTRODUCTION

You are responsible for ensuring that your lifeguards and other members of your aquatic safety team are prepared for emergencies that might arise. Part of being prepared includes understanding, practising, evaluating, and updating the Emergency Procedures. Emergency Procedures are detailed, written plans that outline the roles and responsibilities of aquatic safety team members during emergency situations.

Some Emergency Procedures might be similar. For example, evacuating the facility for a fire alarm might be similar to evacuating the facility for a power failure. The facility may have one general procedure to cover all related emergencies, such as all acts of violence, rather than separate procedures for different acts of violence. In all situations, the procedure's effectiveness depends on clearly defining and practising

- the responsibilities of facility staff and management,
- the communication across all channels, and
- the follow-up procedures.

As in any aquatic facility, municipalities and organizations that are operating a waterfront facility also need to have appropriate written Emergency Procedures in place that all staff are familiar with. These procedures should include planning for as many emergency scenarios as possible.

Some of the Emergency Procedures that should be considered at a waterfront include the following:

- Dealing with stings and cuts from marine life
- Dealing with injuries related to motorized vessels, power boats, and jet skis
- Conducting a missing persons procedure in water with poor clarity
- Dealing with emergencies from exposure to cold water (e.g., hypothermia)

All procedures should be described in your facility's policies and procedures manual and should be included as part of your new staff orientation program. Your Emergency Procedures should be practised regularly by all aquatic safety team members during in-service training. The sections below include some of the common incidents that can occur at an aquatic facility, and some recommendations you may want to include in your facility's policies. These Emergency Procedures should be reviewed regularly to ensure they meet the needs of your facility.

DROWNING PERSON

The procedure to assist a drowning person (conscious or unconscious) can vary based on the size and type of facility you are operating. If your facility normally has only one lifeguard on duty at a time, you need to identify who will provide assistance. If you have a larger facility with multiple lifeguards on duty at one time, you need to have a clear procedure that has been communicated to all of your staff, outlining what

happens when there is a drowning person. Here are some of the key points that you have to identify in your procedure:

- It is essential for a lifeguard to signal that there is a drowning. This signal will alert the other lifeguards and staff so they can provide assistance and ensure backup coverage for the lifeguard making the rescue.
- The different responses for drownings in shallow and deep water.
- The roles of the second lifeguard:
  ~ Some facilities have procedures that require a second lifeguard to enter the water if the first lifeguard has entered deep water to rescue a drowning person.
  ~ If the first lifeguard is entering shallow water, the second lifeguard will usually take up a position to provide surveillance for the first lifeguard's area of responsibility.
- Which lifeguard will take over scanning once a lifeguard enters the water. This will depend on the number of lifeguards working at the facility at any one time. If only one lifeguard is on duty, you need to identify who the backup person is at the facility and how the lifeguard will contact her if there is an emergency.

MISSING PERSON

The procedure for a missing person needs to identify how you will systematically check off the steps you will take in locating this person and who will assume which role during the search. Here are some of the key points that you have to identify in your procedure.

- The person who will take the report and collect information about the missing person.
  ~ This can be the lifeguard who first received the report about the missing person or the supervisor who takes the lead role in the search process.
- The information that is needed.
  ~ This will usually include things like the person's name, age, gender, home phone number, a description of her clothing, the location where she was last seen, and the name or a description of anybody else she was with or could be with.
- The initial response when a report is received.
  ~ Some facilities have specified in their procedures for an in-water check to be conducted by a lifeguard immediately upon report of a missing person. This is to ensure the person has not drowned and is still in the water.
  ~ Pools can be checked either from on the deck or in the water based on the type of facility and the number of lifeguards available to do a search.
  ~ Change rooms and storage rooms should also be checked by members of the staff.
  ~ If your pool is part of a large multi-use facility, other areas of the facility need to be checked to ensure the person has not simply moved from the pool area to another part of the facility.

BASIC FIRST AID

Basic first aid will probably be one of the most commonly used procedures at your facility. A lot of basic first aid is required at an aquatic facility, for everything from cut toes and fingers to bleeding noses. Remember that when lifeguards provide first aid, it must not interrupt their primary responsibility of providing patron surveillance. Here are some of the key points that you have to identify in your procedure:

- Availability of first aid equipment: Identify whether your staff will carry first aid equipment with them on the deck or whether all first aid incidents will be attended to in the first aid room.
- Conducting basic first aid with one lifeguard on duty: The lifeguard needs to know how to communicate with other staff so they can assist her in providing first aid. When you operate a facility with one lifeguard, other staff members should have a minimum level of first aid training and understand their responsibility for providing assistance to the lifeguard when needed.
- Conducting basic first aid with multiple lifeguards on duty: Your procedure will need to outline the roles of each lifeguard in response to a basic first aid incident. If one of the lifeguards on deck is attending to the first aid incident, you will need to indicate in your procedure which lifeguard will take over providing surveillance for her area of responsibility.

SUSPECTED HEAD AND SPINE INJURIES

The potential for suspected head and spine injuries at an aquatic facility is significant, so you need to have safety measures in place to reduce the risk to patrons. Red Cross's primary goal is to educate and prevent this type of injury, however, in the event of an injury, your procedures should outline what the role of each lifeguard is, where to move the person for removal from the water, and how to ensure the safety of other patrons in the facility while lifeguards are responding to this emergency. Here are some of the key points to identify in your procedure:

- If one lifeguard is on duty at your facility:
  - ~ You will need to ensure that other members of the staff are familiar with the procedure and understand their role in providing assistance to the lifeguard,
  - ~ You may need to specify how patrons in the facility can assist in removing the person from the water or in clearing the water of other patrons.
- If multiple lifeguards are on duty at your facility:
  - ~ Your procedure will need to outline the roles of each lifeguard in response to a suspected head and spine injury. If one of the lifeguards on deck is attending to the injury, you will need to indicate in your procedure which lifeguard will take over providing surveillance for her area of responsibility.
  - ~ The lifeguards have the advantage of working as a team to provide assistance.

~ The lifeguards may still need to enlist the assistance of other staff and patrons in the facility. Other staff can call EMS/9-1-1 or clear patrons from the water while the lifeguards are assisting the injured person.

- Your facility should have clearly designated location(s) for the removal of a person.
- These location(s) should be known by all staff.
- The required emergency equipment should be easily accessible at these location(s).

FACILITY EVACUATION

Most buildings need to have an evacuation procedure as part of the requirements of the fire code. The evacuation procedure is an important part of your Emergency Procedures and needs to be incorporated into your lifeguards' policies and procedures manual. Here are some of the key points that you have to identify in your procedure:

- The chain of command (the person who is in charge of the evacuation)
- Where the emergency exits are located
- How to clear the pool
- How to keep the patrons warm (identify if you have another facility where these patrons can easily go to stay warm)
- Location of towels and blankets to keep patrons warm
- The person who calls EMS/9-1-1
- Location of the first aid equipment for the evacuation
- The meeting place once the facility is evacuated, and how the location is communicated to patrons
- The person(s) responsible for searching the building to ensure everyone is out, and when the risk is too great to conduct a search

RELEASE OF AN ILL OR INJURED PERSON

The facility needs to have procedures for when to release an ill or injured person. Here are some of the key points that you have to identify in your procedure:

- When to call EMS/9-1-1
- The person who calls EMS/9-1-1
- When it is appropriate to release the person from care
- The instructions that should be given to the person when releasing her from care

DOCUMENTATION

Documentation is an important part of due diligence when operating an aquatic facility to reduce your risk of incidents and to defend the facility in the event of a lawsuit. Some documentation is required by law and other documentation is recommended as an internal practice.

Standard reports that all facilities should have include the following:

- Safety checklist
- Incident Report Form and first aid reports
- Staff training records
- Chemical tests (monthly, weekly, or daily)
- Safety audit reports
- Any other reports required by provincial/territorial regulations

Safety Checklist

To help reduce the risk that a hazardous situation will not be noticed or attended to, your facility should perform and record routine safety checks on all equipment in change rooms and public areas, including safety, communication, and recreational equipment (e.g., ladders, railings, waterslides, etc.). The safety check ensures that all equipment and special features are safe for patron use and that rescue and first aid equipment is ready in the event of an emergency.

The facility's safety checklist is the guide for performing a safety check. At a minimum, the facility's checklist must be based on provincial/territorial legislation; however, the list can be expanded to include the following:

- Communication equipment and safety equipment
- Pool decks or waterfront shorelines
- Pools, waterfront swimming areas, and/or leisure facilities' special features
- Change rooms (dressing areas, lockers, shower areas, and washrooms)
- Recreational equipment and special features

See Table 1 for typical items found on a safety checklist.

Table 1: Sample Facility Safety Checklist

	Yes	No	Date of Safety Check	Action Needed	Action Taken
DECK					
Safety equipment is in good condition					
Rescue tubes and straps are in good condition					
Backboards with head immobilization device and straps are readily accessible					
First aid station is clean					
First aid equipment (e.g., AED and oxygen equipment) is accessible; supplies are accessible and well stocked					
Telephones are working properly					
Deck is not slippery and is in good condition					
Deck is clear of patrons' belongings					
All equipment used by patrons is stored properly					
Lifeguard stations are clean and in good condition					
Deck is clear of standing water					
Deck is clear of glass objects					
No chipped surfaces					
POOL					
Emergency exits are in good working order and clearly identified					
Ladders are secured properly					
Ladder handles are clean and rust-free					
Steps are not slippery and are in good condition					
Ramp is not slippery and is in good condition					
Drain covers are secured properly					
Drain covers are clean					
Lifelines and buoys are in order					
Water colour is satisfactory					
Pool is free of debris					
Gutters are clean					
Water temperature in pool is satisfactory					
Water temperature in hot tub is satisfactory					
CHANGE ROOMS					
All areas are clean and free of algae					
Floors are clean and not slippery					
Showers are in good condition (no drips)					

	Yes	No	Date of Safety Check	Action Needed	Action Taken
Soap in washrooms is available, and also in showers, if applicable					
Drains are clean					
Wastebaskets are empty					
Drinking fountains and sinks are clean and in good working order					
Signs are in good condition and properly displayed					
Walls are clean and free of markings					
Toilets and urinals are clean					
Mirrors are clean and unbroken					
No unpleasant odours					
Toilet tissue is available					
Paper towels are available					
Doors and windows are working properly (including locks)					
Locker keys have no broken pins					
All articles are removed from lockers daily					
Collapsible shower seats, if available, are in upright position					
Locker benches are clean					
Change rooms are clear of glass objects					
SPECIAL FEATURES AND PLAY STRUCTURES					
Ladders to diving boards are not slippery and are in good condition					
Rails on diving boards are clean and in good condition					
Diving boards are clean and not slippery					
Diving apparatus is in good condition					
Movable fulcrums are locked or working properly					
Removable starting blocks are stored properly					
Access to permanent starting blocks is restricted					
Play structures are clean, in good condition, and not slippery					
Non-moving parts on play structures are secure					
Joints on play structures move freely					
Removable play structures are placed far enough from deck and from other structures					

	Yes	No	Date of Safety Check	Action Needed	Action Taken
Removable play structures are tethered properly: • Attachment points are secure • Hooks and connections are in good condition with no sharp edges • Tethers are not worn or frayed					
Play structures have no gaps or leaks in seams					
Correct air pressure is in inflatable play structures					
"Flow-through" inflatable play structures have pump attached securely, are located in a safe place, and are plugged into the appropriate electrical circuit					
Removable play structures are stored properly					
Waterslides are smooth and in good condition					
Water flows properly on waterslides					
Landing pads under slides are in good condition, securely fastened, and have no gaps to cause tripping					
Equipment, such as kickboards and toys, are stored properly					
CHEMICAL STORAGE AREAS					
Chemicals are stored properly					
Doors are labelled properly					
Signs are legible and in good condition					
Doors are locked					
No suspicious odours					
Emergency equipment is readily accessible and in good working condition					

INTRODUCTION

As an aquatic supervisor/manager, you are responsible for making sure that your lifeguard team is properly prepared to respond to any emergency. When a drowning occurs at a facility where lifeguards are present, in most instances the cause of drowning is not that the lifeguards lacked proper training. Instead, the cause may be that the lifeguards did not follow their training.

Preparation and training is essential also for lifeguards working at a waterfront facility. A lifeguard at a waterfront is going to be dealing with more adverse conditions, and with changing water and weather conditions. Distances lifeguards will need to cover to perform a rescue can be significantly longer, and lifeguards need to be comfortable with the additional rescue equipment used at a waterfront and meet higher physical standards.

By scheduling, developing, and conducting in-service training on a regular basis, you can improve your lifeguards' skills and ability to respond in an emergency. You should also assess the effectiveness of your training by conducting regular performance evaluations of your team members.

STAFF ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

The first opportunity you will have to guide a member of your lifeguard team is at the orientation. This session must occur prior to a lifeguard's first shift. Be sure to provide the following information to your lifeguards before the orientation session:

- Purpose of the orientation
- Starting date, time, and duration
- Any specifics he might need to know before orientation starts, such as where to park and how to enter the facility
- Any special needs, such as meal arrangements, equipment, and whether to bring a swimsuit and a towel

At the orientation, remind your lifeguards that they will need to complete any appropriate employment forms and provide copies of certifications if they have not already done so. Check with your human resources department to ensure you have all the forms required for the new staff.

Planning for the Orientation

Before conducting an orientation, consider how long it will take to cover the material. Be sure to plan time for questions, discussion, breaks, and a tour of the facility. To prepare for the orientation, organize the appropriate forms, equipment, and supplies, such as the following:

- Staff policies and procedures manual
- Orientation checklist
- Uniform (e.g., whistle, shirt)
- Equipment, materials, or paperwork required by the facility or employer

Set up your training area so that it is conducive to learning, and check the facility in advance to ensure that equipment is arranged appropriately.

Conducting the Orientation

You are responsible for orienting lifeguards so that they will understand their responsibilities and your expectations. The orientation should include some or all of the following elements:

- A personal welcome. Lifeguards should be made to feel comfortable. Introduce them to each other and to the other management or staff present. Let them know that you will help them adjust to the facility and job.
- A tour of the facility, to view and discuss the following:
  - ~ Hazardous areas
  - ~ Location of rescue equipment, telephones, first aid supplies, and chemical and electrical control rooms
  - ~ Lifeguards' areas of responsibility
  - ~ Lifeguards' office and break area
- A review of lifeguarding information, including the following:
  - ~ Dress code (e.g., uniform—shirt, whistle, name tag)
  - ~ Sun protection (e.g., sunscreen, sunglasses, hats, umbrellas)
  - ~ Correct posture while in the lifeguard station
  - ~ How to perform an appropriate rotation
  - ~ How to operate equipment (e.g., telephones, lane lines, pool vacuum)
  - ~ Opening and closing the facility
- Staff policies, including the following:
  - ~ Policies and procedures manual
  - ~ Scheduling
    - • Posting of schedules
    - • Meals and other breaks
    - • Time-off procedures
    - • Call-in procedures
    - • Substitution procedures
    - • Time cards/time sheets
  - ~ In-service training schedule and certification renewal opportunities
  - ~ Security policies
  - ~ Pay schedule
  - ~ Benefits
  - ~ Probationary period (if applicable)
  - ~ Methods of staff evaluation and corrective action
- Review of job descriptions and responsibilities so that staff have a clear understanding of what is expected of them
- Review of communication techniques, Emergency Procedures, and the facility's reporting structure
- Discussion of maintenance procedures, such as water chemistry and analysis, and related safety protocols, such as proper handling of chemicals, if included in the lifeguard's job description

Lifeguards should leave the orientation session with a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Follow up with your new staff to ensure that all of their questions have been answered.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

Management should make sure that all lifeguards have the information they need to work safely and to perform their duties effectively. A policies and procedures manual can provide this information. This manual usually includes the following:

Introduction

- A mission statement
- An organizational chart (showing chain of command and job descriptions)

Human Resource Procedures

- Job descriptions
- Guidelines for staff (including pre-employment requirements, hiring policies, conditions of employment, and standards of performance and conduct)
- Staff evaluation process
- Uniforms

Facility Procedures

- Administrative policies and procedures
- Rules and regulations
- Opening and closing procedures
- Sample record and report forms
- Guidelines for daily pool activities and supervision needed for each (e.g., swim lessons, fitness classes, and diving)
- Guidelines for special pool activities and supervision needed for each (e.g., large groups, day camps, parties, and movies)
- Hand and whistle signals
- Instructions for administering swim tests
- Diagrams of areas of responsibility for patron surveillance
- Rotations and assigned lifeguard stations
- Location and use of facility equipment for public swims, swimming lessons, and other activities

Emergency Procedures

- Emergency phone numbers
- A floor plan of the facility that shows emergency evacuation routes and location of emergency equipment
- Location and use of rescue equipment
- Emergency Procedures for all possible emergencies identified in the risk-management plan

Health and Safety Procedures

- Location of Safety Data Sheets (SDS)
- Location and use of protective gear

CONDUCTING TRAINING FOR LIFEGUARDS

Training should be provided to both new and returning lifeguards, especially those who have not had the training or used the skills recently. These skills can degrade fairly quickly without repetition and/or reinforcement, especially in a seasonal facility. You need to ensure that your staff members are certified and participate in in-service training or recertification as required.

If your facility has a waterfront, offering the Red Cross Waterfront Lifeguard Course is the recommended level of training.

Training for lifeguarding at a waterfront setting also involves the use of specific rescue equipment. A waterfront setting will need all the same type of rescue equipment found in a pool facility as well as additional specialized equipment designed for rescues in open water. Some of the additional equipment used at a waterfront would include a rescue craft of some type. This could be a motorboat, rowboat, rescue board, or personal watercraft. As an aquatic supervisor/manager, you need to ensure that lifeguards are properly trained to use these rescue craft. For information about the required equipment, please refer to the Red Cross Lifeguard National Program Standards.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Lifeguards have a professional responsibility to attend in-service training. It is your responsibility to remind them of the professional commitment to attend in-service training. It is also your responsibility to schedule in-service training sessions throughout the season or year.

An effective in-service training program begins with long-term planning. Factors such as the length of your season, budget, facility operational hours, and the availability of your lifeguards will influence your planning decisions. For example, management may insist that the facility not be closed for training during normal operating hours. In such a case, you would need to be more creative in scheduling your in-service training. Possible solutions may include offering the training during the hours that the facility is closed, conducting more than one session so that lifeguards can attend when they are not on duty, or offering makeup sessions for lifeguards who weren't able to attend.

Try to make your in-service training fun, informative, and challenging. Be creative when conducting the training. For example, bring in a guest speaker to talk about a current trend in lifeguarding, or divide your lifeguards into teams and have a lifeguard competition. During the in-service training, you should also conduct simulated emergencies involving other agencies, such as EMS personnel. The facility manager, lifeguard supervisor, a head lifeguard, or an individual who is an expert in a particular subject—such as a public health official, risk manager, or human resources representative—may conduct sessions as well.

Planning Your In-Service Training

In-Service Training Template

In-Service Training Template

Title:

Goal:

Recommended Group Size:

Approximate Time:

Location:

Activity Leader:

Materials, Equipment, and Supplies:

Key Points:

Activity:

Optional Activities/Variations:

Wrap-up Questions:

Selecting Your In-Service Training Topics

When planning in-service training, select topics or skills practices that will enhance the lifeguards' knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm. Suggested areas include the following:

- Prevention
- Fitness
- Response
- Leadership
- Professionalism

Prevention

Although lifeguards are expected to perform emergency rescues, they will spend far more time practising preventive lifeguarding to make sure emergencies do not happen in the first place. To further develop their preventive lifeguarding skills, you should emphasize patron surveillance, facility safety, rules and regulations, and safety-related facility policies and procedures.

Patron Surveillance. Patron surveillance is the most important duty of a lifeguard and is a critical injury-prevention strategy. When discussing patron surveillance during in-service training, you should include information on the following:

- Recognition of unsafe behaviours
- The RID factor (Recognition, Intrusion, and Distraction)
- Effective scanning
- Rotations
- Areas of responsibility
- Coverage during special events and instructional programs
- Backup coverage during emergencies

Facility Safety. Safety checks are another injury-prevention strategy used by lifeguards. You are responsible for training lifeguards to identify unsafe conditions within the facility and either correct them or report them to you.

Rules and Regulations. Providing your lifeguards with a clear understanding of why a rule exists can make them more effective at enforcing it. However, they may tend to forget some rules over the course of a season, so it is important that you periodically review facility rules and regulations with them. When reviewing rules and regulations with your lifeguards, emphasize that rules should be enforced consistently and that any corrective action taken should follow the established policies and procedures of your facility. Explain how inconsistency on the part of one team member can negatively affect the entire team. You should also review the chain of command with your lifeguards so they will know to whom to go for assistance.

Policies and Procedures. Lifeguards may forget some of the facility's policies and procedures during the course of employment. To reinforce the importance of the policies and procedures and to help ensure their consistent enforcement, review the facility's policies during in-service training.

In addition to current policies and procedures, you may also have to present new policies and procedures at the facility. Any new rule, policy, or procedure may have an impact on lifeguards, and you need to explain how they will be affected. You should also obtain any feedback from them to ensure that the new policy or procedure is effective and does not have any unforeseen consequences. Involving your lifeguards in the development or revision of the policies and procedures will help them better understand why the policy is in place and make it easier to enforce.

Fitness

You are responsible for preparing lifeguards for situations in which they have to swim quickly to a person while retaining enough energy and strength to make the rescue, bring the person to safety, and perform CPR/AED, if necessary. To help your lifeguards stay fit, you should include a fitness program as part of your in-service training.

Lifeguard Fitness Program. Your fitness program should be designed to encourage your lifeguards to exercise on a regular basis. This program should be fun and include a variety of exercises such as jogging, resistance training, bicycling, and swimming. You can also use a fitness program to motivate your lifeguard team by providing a reward for the lifeguard who shows the most improvement over a season.

Response

The ability to respond appropriately to an emergency situation is a critical part of a lifeguard's job. An emergency can occur at any place and at any time. You and your lifeguard team must always be prepared to respond. The best way to keep your team prepared is to practise your facility's Emergency Procedures on a regular basis through in-service training.

Emergency Procedures. Emergencies can happen even at a well-guarded facility. To make sure any emergency will be handled effectively, periodically review your facility's Emergency Procedures with your aquatic safety team during in-service training. Have your lifeguards walk through the procedures and simulate different types of emergencies. Discuss with them the importance of Emergency Procedures and the essential role of each lifeguard in the success of a procedure.

When planning an emergency simulation, you should try to involve EMS personnel in the training. This helps your aquatic safety team and EMS personnel better understand each other's roles and responsibilities during an actual emergency. In your simulation, concentrate on the following aspects of a general Emergency Procedure:

1. The lifeguard recognizes that a person needs immediate assistance and checks the scene for danger.
2. The lifeguard activates the Emergency Procedure.
3. The lifeguard follows the rescue procedure for specific land or water emergencies.
4. The lifeguards provide first aid.
5. The aquatic safety team members assist in the emergency.
6. A lifeguard documents the names and contact information of witnesses.

7. A lifeguard notifies the chain of command.
8. The aquatic safety team completes the required reports.
9. The aquatic safety team checks the equipment.
10. The staff takes corrective action.
11. The facility's management conducts follow-up staff discussion.

For more information on Emergency Procedures, see Chapter 7 of the Canadian Red Cross *Lifeguard Manual.*

Leadership

Lifeguarding is one of the few entry-level positions that require young people to make critical decisions. As the aquatic supervisor/manager, you are responsible for developing their leadership and decision-making skills through in-service training. Assigning members of the lifeguard team to conduct in-service training fosters confidence as well as communication and leadership skills.

Professionalism

Professional lifeguards are mentally, physically, and emotionally prepared at all times to do their job. As their supervisor, you are responsible for providing opportunities that will further develop their communication and technical skills.

Customer-Service Training. Although preventing emergencies and ensuring the safety of patrons are the lifeguard's primary responsibilities, customer service is also important. How patrons view the lifeguard affects how well the lifeguard can do his job. For example, the way a lifeguard talks about safety rules affects how seriously patrons adhere to them. Your role as an aquatic supervisor/manager includes providing customer-service training and monitoring how the lifeguard team gives that service.

In your customer-service training, include opportunities for staff to role-play. Acting out a scenario involving patrons who are uncooperative or potentially violent helps lifeguards learn how to be strict and assertive while still ensuring the safety of other patrons. Acting out a scenario involving a patron who unintentionally violates a rule helps lifeguards learn how to be positive and inoffensive in communication.

Professional Development. In-service training is also an excellent way to review knowledge and skills and give new certification courses to your lifeguards. Giving new certification courses is a great way to help lifeguards grow professionally. These courses can range from first aid training to instructor-level certification in specialty areas.

Conducting In-Service Training

To effectively conduct in-service training, you should become familiar with common patterns of class organization, such as group discussions, demonstrations, drills, and scenarios. Look for correct performance and note any critical errors. You can refer to the Canadian Red Cross *Lifeguard Instructor Manual* with CD-ROM for lists of evaluation criteria for skills.

When evaluating skills, be sure to give the lifeguards feedback on their performance. Focus on the skill, not the person performing it, so that the lifeguard does not perceive the feedback to be negative. Be sensitive to the situation. Skill-based feedback in front of others can be a good learning experience for all. Any personal corrections meant for a specific lifeguard should be discussed with that lifeguard in private. Follow these four steps to give corrective feedback:

1. Describe what you observed. Tell the lifeguard what he was doing correctly. Then, describe the critical errors. Do not overwhelm the lifeguard with a long list of problems. Start with the error that will result in the most improvement.
2. Make suggestions for improvement.
3. Allow time for questions or clarification.
4. Give the lifeguard an opportunity to practise correctly.

As in any training and evaluation session, you must ensure the safety of all participants by having a lifeguard perform surveillance during all water activities.

Aquatic facilities must keep records on all in-service training, including the following:

- Date, time, and location
- Name of instructor
- Subjects covered
- Names of attendees and their signatures

ON-SITE EVALUATIONS

On-site evaluations can be used to assess your lifeguards' patron surveillance and rescue skills. These evaluations should be used to determine what additional training your lifeguards need to perform their jobs effectively. On-site evaluations should be unannounced, conducted frequently, and documented. During orientation, you should let your lifeguard team know that you will be randomly conducting on-site evaluations. (Note: Written performance evaluations are discussed in Section G.)

On-site evaluations also can be conducted by an independent, qualified third party.

SUMMARY

One of your key responsibilities is to keep your lifeguard team prepared. Preparedness is achieved through in-service training that addresses areas such as prevention, fitness, response, leadership, and professionalism. Evaluating your lifeguards will help you identify the strengths and weaknesses of your team and will assist you in planning your training.

In-Service Training Reports

INTRODUCTION

Teamwork is a shared sense of spirit in a group of individuals working together toward a common goal. Being part of a successful team that achieves its goals often leads staff to strongly identify with one another and experience a sense of pride in their work. A group of people working together is not automatically a team. You are responsible for helping your lifeguards become a successful team by creating, developing, and maintaining a sense of teamwork among your lifeguards. If you were previously a lifeguard with the team you are now supervising, you should not expect to have the same relationship with that team that you had as a lifeguard. However, you should not set yourself apart. You should always consider and refer to the team as "our team" rather than "my team." A leader supports the team through knowledge and respect and seeks to advance the team and each individual in it.

INTERACTING WITH YOUR LIFEGUARD TEAM

Creating a team environment begins with your attitude toward and interaction with the lifeguards. As you interact with others in your daily routine, use the following techniques, as appropriate, to help build your team and improve your leadership skills:

- Check things out yourself. Regularly schedule time specifically for working on deck with your lifeguard team. Observe your facility and team in action and help out with unpopular tasks.
- Have regular meetings. Do not underestimate the power of communicating often. Your lifeguard team will benefit from your knowledge and experience, and you will benefit from the team's feedback and observations. Regular meetings are a great way for sharing these observations. However, the meetings should be short and focused. Long meetings can result in a loss of interest and reduce the attention span of team members.
- Participate in social events. Activities that bring the lifeguard team together as a group help build teamwork. In-service training and lifeguard competitions are good ways to build the team, especially if you plan ways for the lifeguards to interact socially during these activities. You can also plan social events for lifeguards to help them get to know each other better.
- Have your lifeguards evaluate you. You gain insight into how your team views you as a leader when you have team members fill out anonymous evaluations that assess your leadership qualities and effectiveness. Be prepared for negative as well as positive comments. Some may initially hurt your pride or reveal perceptions others have that make you uncomfortable. However, constructive comments can be helpful as you work to maintain or improve your relationship with the members of your lifeguard team.
- Participate in staff orientations. These orientations give you and your staff an opportunity to get to know each other. It also sends a message that you care about training.
- Be available and approachable. Talk with your lifeguards. Try not

to make them wait to speak to you. Also be present as much as possible. The more accessible you are, the more comfortable your lifeguards will be in approaching you with a problem or issue.

- Treat everyone fairly and do not show favouritism. When speaking to one or more members of the team, do not criticize or demean team members who are not present.

DELEGATING

Delegating tasks does not mean getting others to do things you find boring or unpleasant. Delegation helps you multiply your efforts by dividing your duties. In other words, you can get more done in less time. Through delegation, the lifeguard team can accomplish common goals, and everyone can share in the resulting rewards and recognition. In addition, delegation can give individual team members the opportunity to learn new skills and be successful.

COACHING LIFEGUARDS

As a leader, you are expected to help individual team members improve their performance. By observing the leadership principles of "coaching," you can resolve performance problems in a positive manner. Coaching is a basic leadership skill. It is a process by which a supervisor provides staff with information about what they are doing well, about areas or behaviours they could improve, and about steps for making those improvements. Ultimately, coaching is getting staff to suggest and find their own paths to improvement whenever possible.

This might be a first job for a lifeguard on your team. Your ability to be an effective coach is an important skill. To effectively coach your lifeguards, you must be able to clearly describe both the behaviours you observe and the behaviours you would like to see. This challenges you as a coach to be so concrete and descriptive that you leave no room for misunderstanding.

Your lifeguards are entitled to feedback, both positive and corrective. If a lifeguard is not measuring up to the expected, agreed-upon performance level, she should be informed about it. Meet with the lifeguard as soon as possible. If the lifeguard's actions, such as ineffective patron surveillance, are creating an unsafe environment, you will need to correct the situation immediately.

If the problem behaviour still occurs after your meeting, follow your facility's disciplinary procedures. Speak with your supervisor or your facility's human resources department about further corrective actions that may be needed.

CONDUCTING WRITTEN PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

A written performance evaluation is usually done annually or at the end of a season. It should serve as a review of a lifeguard's overall performance over that period and should include the results of any on-site evaluations (see Section F). Written performance evaluations should recognize what the lifeguard does well and assess what improvement is needed.

Lifeguards are evaluated on the basis of specific criteria, such as the following:

- Knowledge of all job responsibilities
- Lifeguarding skills (swimming ability, rescue skills, and first aid, including CPR/AED)
- Development (participation in orientation, in-service training, and staff meetings)
- Co-operation and attitude (ability to work with the lifeguard supervisor, facility management, and other staff members; acceptance of responsibility and authority; being a team player)
- Attendance (reports to work and in-service training on time)
- Contribution to team goals
- Dependability
- Judgment (ability to decide how to act in emergencies, good problem-solving skills, knowledge about when to consult a higher authority)
- Patron relations
- Rule enforcement
- Initiative (ability to act on own as needed)
- Appearance (cleanliness and proper uniform)
- Overall work performance

A lifeguard evaluation form is used to document a lifeguard's job performance. A copy of this form should be included in your facility's policies and procedures manual. It should be specific enough to inform the lifeguard what job performance is expected. Review the form with each lifeguard when completed, forward copies to your human resources department, and provide a copy to the lifeguard for her records. A Sample Lifeguard Evaluation Form is provided at the end of Section G.

Ideally, the lifeguards on your team will receive good evaluations or will be able to correct weak areas. Your facility should have policies and procedures for actions to take if a lifeguard continually receives poor evaluations and does not respond to corrective coaching. Follow your facility's policies for any corrective actions needed.

USING PROBLEM-SOLVING AND DECISION-MAKING SKILLS

Problem-solving and decision-making skills are critical for all members of the lifeguard team. Decision making can be difficult, especially in an

emergency. Because of your leadership role, the lifeguard team will bring problems to you and expect them to be resolved. You can improve your problem-solving skills and make informed decisions by practising a decision-making model. The following Four Steps to Decision Making model can be a useful tool for helping lifeguards to understand clearly what is involved in a decision and to make informed decisions:

1. Figure out the problem. Identify the problem, not your reaction to the problem.
2. Identify possible solutions for the problem. Never assume there is only one way to solve a problem. Brainstorm with your aquatic safety team to develop possible solutions.
3. Name pros and cons for each possible solution. Evaluate the alternatives. Which will work best? Do you have resources for each solution?
4. Decide which solution is best. Select the preferred solution. Consider whether you need approval from your supervisor or any external organizations. Implement the solution. Be sure to communicate clearly with everyone involved when the solution involves a change in policies or procedures.

After any decision is made, do a follow-up evaluation. Wait long enough to give the solution a chance to work, and then determine whether the problem has been solved without creating new problems. If the solution is not working as well as you had hoped, re-evaluate the problem—you might need to try an alternative solution.

MOTIVATING YOUR LIFEGUARD TEAM

Motivating your lifeguard team is an important aspect of effective leadership. You can do this by showing enthusiasm for your job and the team. By setting the tone and leading by example, you create an effective atmosphere where motivation can take place. In addition, you can take steps to inspire and motivate, including

- developing goals,
- promoting positive communication, and
- recognizing and rewarding positive behaviours and performance.

DEVELOPING GOALS

Team members work together more effectively when they share a common goal. By establishing goals, you provide the lifeguards with the focus and direction they need. To develop these goals, do the following:

- Know the overall mission of your facility or organization, and communicate that mission to the lifeguard team.
- Ask your lifeguards how they can contribute to the mission.
- Discuss with your lifeguards what each individual team member views as important.
- Create an environment in which every team member feels "safe" to contribute to the discussion. For example, discourage team members from making comments that inhibit the ideas of others, such as saying, "I think that's a stupid idea."

- Ensure that the goals you and the entire team develop are challenging, obtainable, and consistent with the facility's mission statement.
- Be sure that pursuit of the goals is meaningful to the group.

Each goal that you and the lifeguard team establish should be a SMART goal:

- **S**pecific (one idea, not different ideas presented together)
- **M**easurable (progress can be evaluated)
- **A**ttainable (challenging, but achievable)
- **R**elevant (compatible with the supervisor's goals and facility's mission)
- **T**ime-oriented (can be achieved within a defined period, before a proposed deadline)

Once the team has agreed on the goals, you need to provide the necessary resources and support to help the team accomplish these goals.

COMMUNICATING

An effective communication system is necessary to support the work of your lifeguard team. When creating this system, consider the different layers of communication that occur within your facility. These include communication between you and your aquatic safety team, between you and your lifeguard supervisor, and between the lifeguards themselves.

To effectively communicate with the lifeguards within your aquatic safety team, do the following:

- **Learn and use the names of new lifeguards immediately.** Not using a person's name can give the impression that you are impersonal or not interested in the growth, development, progress, or success of the lifeguard.
- **Say what you mean and mean what you say.** Be concise when communicating with members of your team. Get right to the point instead of indirectly talking around the subject.
- **Respect the feelings and ideas of the person with whom you are speaking.** Work to keep the communication moving in both directions instead of one person doing all the talking.
- **Maintain your composure.** You are the lifeguards' role model for how to behave in and react to different situations.
- **Be specific.** Say, "Please clean the deck at the end of your shift," rather than, "Let's clean up this place later."
- **Ask open-ended questions.** When seeking information or ideas, yes-or-no questions limit the response of the other person. For example, ask open-ended questions such as, "What do you think of this?" or, "How do you think this problem can be solved?" rather than, "Do you like this?"
- **Ask questions to maintain the focus.** If someone is communicating vaguely, ask questions to help her focus more specifically on the topic. Another good communication skill is to repeat the statement back to the person to verify understanding.

- **Do not be afraid to be silent.** Sometimes you need to pause to give the other person time to clarify her thoughts and find words to express them. However, never compromise your safety or that of the patrons or staff by being silent.
- **Always discuss patrons' complaints or negative feedback in private.** Allow the patron to remain anonymous if the feedback is negative. Remember to ask the lifeguard for suggestions to improve her performance, if necessary. Don't take sides or jump to any conclusions until you have all of the information, from both the patron(s) and/or the lifeguard. Once you have all of the information, you are in a better position to support the lifeguard and ask for suggested solutions, and then to summarize your agreement and timelines.
- **Take the time to give complete information.** For example, do not simply tell a new lifeguard, "Allow only the swim team to use the starting platforms." This communication is ineffective if the policy is to let the swim team use the starting platforms only during practice when the coach is supervising. Otherwise, the lifeguard might let anyone who says she is on the swim team use the starting platforms anytime, even without supervision. You should tell the lifeguard, "The starting platforms can be used only by the swim team and only during practice when a coach is supervising the use."
- **Encourage comments and provide feedback.**
- **Be open for questions.**
- **Be decisive.** When work needs to be completed, do not present your instructions as a question. For example, "Do you want to fill out the deposit report?" should be, "Please complete this deposit report by the end of your shift and turn it in to the manager today." It should be a statement, not a negotiation.

SAMPLE LIFEGUARD EVALUATION FORM *

The following form can be used by facilities that don't have a formal human resources staff evaluation process.

Name of Lifeguard: _____

Facility: _____

Period covered by this evaluation: _____ to _____

The evaluation process should result in a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses and should lead to the establishment of a program aimed at improving weak areas and building on strengths.

Performance Indicators: 1-Unsatisfactory, 2-Marginal, 3-Satisfactory, 4-Good, 5-Excellent

Performance Factors	Qualifications	Indicator	Comments
Job Knowledge	Has an understanding of all job responsibilities		
Lifeguarding Skills	Demonstrates competency in lifeguarding skills and techniques		
Development	Participates during orientation, in-service training, and staff meetings		
Co-operation and Attitude	Has the ability to work with others, accept responsibility, carry out instructions, and be part of a team		
Attendance	Consistently reports to work and training on time and avoids being late Secures a substitute if absent		
Contribution to Team Goals	Works effectively with co-workers to achieve identified team goals		
Dependability	Works conscientiously according to instructions		
Judgment	Handles emergency situations when they arise and/or has the ability to appropriately solve problems or to consult others when necessary		
Patron Relations	Is courteous, professional, alert, and tactful		
Rule Enforcement	Applies rules and regulations with consistency		
Initiative	Has the ability to act on own initiative and take the lead		
Appearance	Is clean and wears appropriate uniform		
Overall Work Performance	Overall evaluation of individual's performance during this evaluation period		

Supervisor comments: _____

Lifeguard comments: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Lifeguard Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of lifeguard indicates that this evaluation was seen and reviewed by the lifeguard, but does not imply agreement.

* This type of form can be used to help identify a lifeguard's strengths and weaknesses in order to address, praise, and coach where appropriate. It should not be considered a scorecard.

In an effort to make the Canadian Red Cross Lifeguard courses easier to run and to help facilities offer candidates several certifications at one time, Red Cross has created options for programming and combining courses.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Ensure that all content has been delivered and that the Red Cross Lifeguard National Program Standards for each course have been met.
- Review the outlines below regarding content that can be combined or omitted.
- Review these documents: Red Cross Lifeguard National Program Standards, Red Cross *Swim Instructor Development Program Guide*. For prerequisites, refer to Red Cross *Swim Program Guide.*
- Ensure that course conductor requirements have been met.

RED CROSS ASSISTANT LIFEGUARD COURSE

To get candidates into the Red Cross Assistant Lifeguard Course, your Water Safety Instructors could promote the course to candidates in teen and adult programs.

When offering the Assistant Lifeguard Course, also consider that the Red Cross Lifeguard National Program Standards must be met for the following programs.

Prerequisites

- Candidates must meet the prerequisites for the ALG course since there are no prerequisites for the SFA & CPR and CPR/AED courses.

Programming Notes

- The SFA & CPR or CPR/AED course should be offered first, so candidates can reduce the amount of first aid content they need to learn in the ALG course.
- Programming for a maximum of 5 hours per day is recommended due to the young age of the candidates.

Total Time

- 14–26 hours
  - ~ SFA & CPR course: 16 hours
  - ~ CPR/AED course: 4–6 hours
  - ~ ALG course: 10 hours

Supporting Documents

- Red Cross Lifeguard National Program Standards
- Red Cross First Aid Program Standards

Programming Ideas

Combining the Red Cross Assistant Lifeguard (ALG) Course with a Standard First Aid (SFA) & CPR Course or CPR/AED Course

- Canadian Red Cross *First Aid & CPR Instructor Manual* Core Plans
- Canadian Red Cross *Lifeguard Instructor Manual* Course Plan: Standard First Aid Upgrade to Red Cross Assistant Lifeguard Course

Prerequisites

- Candidates must be 15 years of age to take the AWSI course, which exceeds the prerequisites for the ALG Course.

Programming Notes

- The AWSI course should be offered first, so candidates can reduce the amount of content they need to learn in the ALG course.

Total Time

- 40–44 hours
  - ~ AWSI course: 30 hours + 8 hours of teaching experience
  - ~ ALG course: 14 hours if the candidates do not have first aid training; 10 hours if the candidates have a CPR level C. An additional 2 hours must be added to the course if the observation assignment is being completed during the course.

Supporting Documents

- Red Cross Lifeguard National Program Standards
- Canadian Red Cross *Lifeguard Instructor Manual* Course Plan: Assistant Water Safety Instructor Upgrade to Red Cross Assistant Lifeguard Course
- Canadian Red Cross *Water Safety Instructor Trainer Manual*

Prerequisites

- Candidates must be 16 years of age to take the WSI course, which exceeds the prerequisites for the ALG Course.

Programming Notes

- The WSI course should be offered first, so candidates can reduce the amount of content they need to learn in the ALG Course.

Total Time

- 31–35 hours
  - ~ WSI course: 25 hours + 12 hours of teaching experience
  - ~ ALG course: 10 hours if the candidates do not have first aid training; 6 hours if the candidates have CPR level C. An additional 2 hours must be added to the course if the observation assignment is being completed during the course.

Supporting Documents

- Red Cross Lifeguard National Program Standards
- Canadian Red Cross *Lifeguard Instructor Manual* Course Plan: Water Safety Instructor Upgrade to Assistant Lifeguard Course
- Canadian Red Cross *Water Safety Instructor Trainer Manual*

RED CROSS LIFEGUARD COURSE

Prerequisites

- Candidates must be 15 years of age.

Programming Notes

- The SFA & CPR Course must be offered first because it is a prerequisite for the Red Cross Lifeguard Course.

Total Time

- 56 hours
  - ~ SFA & CPR course: 16 hours
  - ~ Lifeguard Course: 40 hours + 2-hour observation assignment

Supporting Documents

- Canadian Red Cross Lifeguard National Program Standards
- Canadian Red Cross *Lifeguard Instructor Manual* Course Plan
- Red Cross First Aid Program Standards

Prerequisites

- Candidates must have current Standard First Aid with CPR level C, Red Cross Assistant Water Safety Instructor and NLS certification.

Programming Notes

- These courses can be programmed in any order and could be offered over two weekends.

Total Time

- 33 hours
  - ~ WSI course: 25 hours + 12 hours of teaching experience
  - ~ NLS Transfer to Red Cross Pool Lifeguard: 8 hours

Supporting Documents

- Red Cross Lifeguard National Program Standards
- Canadian Red Cross *Lifeguard Instructor Manual* Course Plan
- Red Cross *Swim Instructor Development Program Guide*

Prerequisites

- Candidates must be 16 years of age to take the WSI course, which exceeds the prerequisites for the Red Cross Lifeguard Course.
- Candidates must also have current Standard First Aid with CPR level C, Red Cross Water Safety Instructor, and Red Cross Assistant Lifeguard certification.

Programming Notes

- These courses can be programmed in any order, and the Lifeguard Course can be pool or waterfront.

Combining the Red Cross Lifeguard Recertification with a Water Safety Instructor (WSI) Recertification

Total Time

- 44 hours
  - ~ WSI Recertification: 4 hours
  - ~ Lifeguard course: 40 hours + 2-hour observation assignment

Supporting Documents

- Red Cross Lifeguard National Program Standards
- Canadian Red Cross *Lifeguard Instructor Manual* Course Plan
- Red Cross *Swim Instructor Development Program Guide*

Prerequisites

- Candidates must have current Standard First Aid with CPR level C, Water Safety Instructor, and Red Cross Lifeguard certification.

Programming Notes

- These courses can be programmed in any order.

Total Time

- 9 hours
  - ~ WSI Recertification: 4 hours
  - ~ Lifeguard Recertification: 5 hours

Supporting Documents

- Red Cross Lifeguard National Program Standards
- Red Cross *Swim Instructor Development Program Guide*

Combining the Red Cross Lifeguard Recertification with a Red Cross Water Safety Instructor (WSI) Recertification and a Standard First Aid (SFA) Recertification

Prerequisites

- Candidates must have current Standard First Aid with CPR level C, Water Safety Instructor, and Red Cross Lifeguard certification.

Programming Notes

- These courses can be programmed in any order and could be done as a weekend crash course (Friday night, Saturday, and Sunday).

Total Time

- 17 hours
  - ~ WSI Recertification: 4 hours
  - ~ Lifeguard Recertification: 5 hours
  - ~ Standard First Aid Recertification: 8 hours

Supporting Documents

- Red Cross Lifeguard National Program Standards
- Red Cross *Swim Instructor Development Program Guide*
- Red Cross First Aid Program Standards

RED CROSS ASSISTANT LIFEGUARD INSTRUCTOR COURSE

Prerequisites

- Candidates must have current Standard First Aid with CPR level C, Water Safety Instructor, and NLS certification.

Programming Notes

- The NLS Transfer to Red Cross Lifeguard needs to be offered first, so candidates can apply the Red Cross lifeguard skills to the ALGI Course.

Total Time

- 12 hours
  - ~ NLS Transfer to Red Cross Lifeguard Course: 8 hours
  - ~ ALGI Course: 4 hours

Supporting Documents

- Red Cross Lifeguard National Program Standards
- Canadian Red Cross *Lifeguard Instructor Manual*

Prerequisites

- Candidates must meet the prerequisites for the WSI and the ALGI courses.

Programming Notes

- The WSI course needs to be offered first so candidates can build on the WSI course content to get their Assistant Lifeguard Instructor certification.

Total Time

- 29 hours
  - ~ WSI course: 25 hours + 12 hours of teaching experience
  - ~ ALGI course: 4 hours

Supporting Documents

- Red Cross Lifeguard National Program Standards
- Canadian Red Cross *Lifeguard Instructor Manual* Course Plan
- Canadian Red Cross *Water Safety Instructor Trainer Manual*

RED CROSS WATERFRONT ORIENTATION

The purpose of waterfront orientation is to educate people on the basic safety precautions, risks, and hazards they need to be aware of when at a waterfront environment.

You can provide waterfront orientation to individuals who might be interested in assisting at a waterfront in the following capacities:

- Open-water swim attendants (e.g., for triathlons)
- Camp staff
- Teachers for school groups
- Cottage owners

This orientation does not replace a Waterfront Lifeguard course. In order to be certified to work at a waterfront setting, the lifeguard MUST successfully complete a Waterfront Lifeguard course. Many areas are requesting lifeguards to supervise open water without completing their Waterfront Lifeguard certification. The information session below could be provided to staff and other individuals to educate them on the risks and make them aware of the differences between working at a pool and at a waterfront. This orientation needs to be conducted by a Red Cross Waterfront Lifeguard Instructor.

Table 2: Session Hours for Red Cross Waterfront Non-Certification Orientation

Note: No classroom hours required

Session	Hours in Water Required
Hazards ■ Common Hazards (e.g., submerged objects, marine life, cold water, bottom conditions) ■ Personal Protective Equipment ■ Common Rules ■ Weather Conditions (e.g., lightning, thunderstorms, heavy rain and hail, tornadoes, high wind, fog, currents) ■ Injury Prevention ■ When to Close the Facility	0.5
Communication ■ Hand Signals/Whistle Signals/Flags	0.5
Supervision and Surveillance ■ Factors That Affect Surveillance (customize discussion to the facility) ■ Lifeguard Stations (e.g., positioning, preparation) ■ Swim Test/Buddy Checks ■ Competitive Events (e.g., regattas, swim meets, boat race supervision. Customize discussion to the facility)	1.0
Rescue Skills ■ Open-Water Rescues (e.g., using watercraft or rescue boards; swimming. Customize discussion to the facility) ■ How to Use Rescue Equipment (e.g., rescue boards, rescue tubes) ■ Basic Watercraft Operation, Approaches, and Rescue Skills ■ Waterfront Rescue Skills (e.g., docks and special features, such as rafts, trampolines. Customize rescues to the facility) ■ Search Techniques/Buoys to Identify the Search Area	2.0
Total Orientation Hours (4.0)	4.0

Other Notes

Instructor to Candidate Ratio: 1:16

Orientation Conductor: Current Red Cross Waterfront Lifeguard Instructor or Instructor Trainer

Candidate Prerequisites: Candidates can swim 100m continuously and are 12 years of age or older

Candidate Materials: Red Cross handout, whistle, wrist bungee (or breakaway lanyard), aquatic fanny pack

Orientation Training Materials Required:

■ Rescue tubes (127 cm [50 in.] long, 15.24 cm [6 in.] wide and 10.16 cm [4 in.] thick): one rescue tube per two candidates

■ Backboard with a head immobilization device *

■ Reaching assists (two different types, excluding the rescue tube)

■ Throwing assists (two different types, excluding the rescue tube)

- Towel/blanket
- Practice first aid kit
- One barrier device with oxygen inlet per candidate
- One pair of latex-free gloves per candidate
- First aid kit for an incident in the class
- Rescue craft, including one or more of the following:
  - ~ Rescue board
  - ~ Rigid hulled inflatable craft
  - ~ Surfboard
  - ~ Sailboard
  - ~ Canoe
  - ~ Personal watercraft

Recommended:
- Flip chart or dry-erase board
- Office supplies

* Ratio with the backboard would be one board to six candidates