

Waterfront Safety Standards

July 2004



LIFESAVING SOCIETY®

The Lifeguarding Experts

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Public Aquatic Facility Safety Standards: designed to assist public aquatic facility owners and operators in providing a safe aquatic environment. It recommends minimum safety standards for public aquatic facility operation.

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Public Wading Pool Safety Standards: designed to assist public wading pool owners and operators in providing a safe aquatic environment. It recommends a minimum safety standards for public wading pool operation.

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WATERFRONT SAFETY STANDARDS

Published by the Lifesaving Society

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The Lifesaving Society is Canada's lifeguarding experts. The Society is a national charitable organization working to prevent drowning and water-related injuries through lifeguard, lifesaving, and swimming training, competitive lifesaving, safety management standards and services, and Water Smart® public education.

The Society is an independent, charitable organization educating Canadian lifesavers since the first Lifesaving Society Bronze Medallion Award was earned in 1896.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Every owner of a waterfront facility has an obligation to provide a safe environment for every user of the waterfront. This obligation has been very clearly identified and affirmed by court decisions across Canada. In order to meet this obligation, you need the assistance of the experts – the Lifesaving Society. The Lifesaving Society is the authority in aquatic standards and safety. Our standards and expertise are based on extensive research and over 100 years of public safety education and service. We are leaders in research and prevention of injury and drowning.

The Lifesaving Society has a mandate for public safety. The Lifesaving Society *Waterfront Safety Standards* are your source of information about how to provide a safe environment and understand the regulations and standards that you must follow to achieve this goal. The Society developed and published these standards to educate waterfront owners about what they can do to safely operate their waterfront. Applying these standards to your waterfront will help you protect your customers – the public. It will also help you reduce the risk of injury or legal actions resulting from injuries.

The information in the Lifesaving Society *Waterfront Safety Standards* is organized in a logical order to help you understand the material and take the necessary actions to create and maintain a safe environment for your waterfront users. The following sections of the Standards address information for specific needs:

- **The Drowning Problem** – Provides you with information from the Lifesaving Society Drowning Research about who is at risk of drowning or being injured at your waterfront and the behaviors that may result in injuries.
- **Definitions** – Definitions of terms used in the standards.
- **Risk Management** – Provides you with information about your responsibility as the waterfront owner for the safe operation of your waterfront. Explains the risk management process that you can use to analyze and understand the risks associated with your waterfront and take steps to eliminate or reduce these risks.
- **Personnel and Supervision** – Explains the requirements for staff to operate and supervise a waterfront. It also includes recommendations for staff training and safety.
- **Emergency Procedures** – Emergency procedures are the steps waterfront staff can take to respond to an incident or help an injured person. This section provides guidance to help you identify and plan for the procedures you will need for your waterfront and select the necessary emergency equipment.
- **Safety Systems** – Safety systems are the day to day actions and policies established to prevent incidents and injuries. They include

such things as waterfront rules and how they are to be implemented, procedures for controlling access to the waterfront, suggestions for signs to educate users about hazards and safe behaviors for using the waterfront, and systems for supervising patrons.

- **Waterfront Operation** – Presents recommendations for the procedures used to operate the waterfront and maintain a safe waterfront. This includes maintaining safe water quality, and inspecting and testing waterfront equipment.
- **Safe Environment** – This section provides you with direction about how to make the physical environment of the waterfront safe. This includes items such as buoylines, recreational equipment such as swimming rafts, safe water quality, waterfront and equipment maintenance and much more.
- **Resources** – This section includes information about additional support resources and information available from the Lifesaving Society. This includes Lifesaving Society links to Government resources and other organizations which can assist aquatic facility owners and operators to provide a safe environment. The *Safety Management* section of the Lifesaving Society website, www.lifesaving.org, is your key to the most complete and current resources from the Society. The website will also have information about emerging issues that may not have been included in this edition of the Lifesaving Society *Waterfront Safety Standards*.

The Lifesaving Society recommends that you read the Lifesaving Society *Waterfront Safety Standards* and use this document to evaluate your waterfront and determine what steps you can take to create a safe environment for your patrons. This information should be shared with facility staff such as lifeguards as well as management who have a safety management role such as a parks director and your organizational risk manager. At least one copy of the Lifesaving Society *Waterfront Safety Standards* should be kept in the waterfront office for easy reference by facility staff. Additional copies are recommended for the other safety managers who should be aware of these standards.

Contact the Lifesaving Society for assistance to understand, interpret and implement the recommendations in the Standards. The Society contact information is located on the inside back cover.

FOREWORD

Faced with the potential for multi-million dollar lawsuits, waterfront owners are becoming more proactive in assessing and managing risk in their aquatic environment. The Lifesaving Society believes that many incidents are foreseeable and therefore preventable.

As the lifeguarding experts, the Lifesaving Society is the authority in aquatic standards and safety. The Society establishes standards for public safety and consults on aquatic safety issues. The Society sets public safety standards for the aquatic industry such as the owners and operators of waterfronts, interprets safety standards for aquatic facility owners, advises government and serves as an expert witness in legal cases involving aquatic safety issues. The Lifesaving Society *Waterfront Safety Standards* present the Lifesaving Society standards and recommendations for the safe operation of waterfront facilities.

The Lifesaving Society has developed and published public safety standards for aquatic activities and facilities throughout our history. The Lifesaving Society Safety Standards are compilations of aquatic safety guidance from Lifesaving Society research that has been published over many years in a variety of Society manuals and publications as well as external publications. The scope of Society research into public safety and risk management practices includes research and real operational experience from across Canada and around the world. In turn, the Society's expertise is shared internationally with the Royal Life Saving Society Branches throughout the Commonwealth and with the International Life Saving Federation.

The Lifesaving Society *Waterfront Safety Standards* assembles the standards published in these many different sources into a single document to make this information available and readily accessible to the waterfront owner. This document provides owners of waterfront facilities a set of clear recommendations from the Lifesaving Society for the safe operation of their waterfront. In addition to the Society's recommendations, this document also refers waterfront owners to other codes, regulations, statutes or standards that should be considered when developing safe operating practices for their waterfront. This document does not in any way replace or supersede current legislation. Owners and users must obey all provincial and municipal legislation, regulations and by-laws specific to their waterfront and community.

The Lifesaving Society recognizes that the recommendations provided in the Lifesaving Society *Waterfront Safety Standards* are not the only solutions that waterfront owners can use to provide a safe environment for their customers. The Lifesaving Society also recognizes that each waterfront has unique features. No single document can address every situation and need. In

situations where owners implement alternative safety measures, the Society recommends that they thoroughly evaluate and document these measures. Contact the Lifesaving Society for assistance to understand, interpret and implement the recommendations in the Standards.

THE DROWNING PROBLEM

Drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional death in Canada. The great tragedy is that the vast majority of these deaths are preventable. More than 99% of these fatalities occur in aquatic environments without lifeguard supervision. Aquatic facilities that are supervised by trained lifeguards are the safest locations for Canadians to go to enjoy aquatic activities. These supervised facilities include supervised waterfronts as well as public swimming pools and waterparks.

Over a 10 year period from 1991 to 2000, 2,224 people drowned in natural lakes and ponds, and artificial waterbodies such as reservoirs, retention ponds and artificial lakes. Recreational swimming in these waterbodies claimed the lives of over 300 Canadians and many more people were injured and needed medical attention. Some of these deaths and injuries occurred at waterfront facilities.

Waterfront facilities have a drowning prevention role both within the waterfront as well as within the larger community. Within the facility, they must make every effort to identify potential hazards and take effective steps to protect bathers from injury.

Within the larger community, the staff of a supervised waterfront can provide training in swimming and lifesaving skills as well as Water Smart[®] education to teach the public to protect themselves around aquatic settings or during aquatic activities. Information about Lifesaving Society training programs and Water Smart[®] education can be accessed through the Society website, www.lifesaving.org, or by directly contacting the Lifesaving Society. Water Smart[®] education materials available from the Lifesaving Society includes posters such as the “Within Arm’s Reach” poster and brochure, safety messages for signs and brochures, videos and activities that can be used to educate the public.

At unsupervised waterfronts, safety signs and posters can be used to educate patrons about the risks of aquatic activities and how to make Water Smart[®] choices to minimize these risks. Providing information about how to contact sources of Water Smart[®] education such as the Lifesaving Society is another strategy for protecting patrons.

The following Water Smart[®] information can be used to help develop safety rules for your facility and educate your patrons.

Children & Aquatics

While all age groups are at risk around water, deaths involving children are of particular concern. Drowning fatalities in children under the age of 5 are more than double that of any other age group. A major contributing factor in the deaths of children is the lack of adult supervision. For children under 5 years old, 85% were unsupervised when they drowned. For children age 5-12, 61% were unsupervised and in the age group from 13-15, 34% were unsupervised. These are alarming statistics, and speak volumes to the need for supervision of bathers at your waterfront.

Children are naturally curious about water. They are persistent and ingenious in finding a way to it. Tragedy can strike quickly. Ten seconds of unsupervised play or exploration can result in a drowning. That's all the time it takes! It also only takes a few inches of water for a drowning to occur. To prevent such tragedies, children must be supervised any time they have access to the waterfront. The best protection is to insist that all young children at the waterfront be directly supervised "Within Arm's Reach" distance by a caregiver. The message to your patrons should be: "If you are not within arm's reach, you have gone too far". At a Supervised Waterfront, the role of the lifeguard should be to provide an additional level of supervision and educate caregivers about their supervision and drowning prevention roles. School age children also need Water Smart® education about safe ways to enjoy the waterfront. Requiring a buddy system for these children is a good way to provide another layer of supervision.

The key to protecting children at a waterfront is always insisting that they be closely supervised when in the waterfront area.

Adults at Risk

Children aren't the only ones at risk of drowning in the waterfront. Adults are the second largest group at risk after young children under the age of 5. Drowning usually occurs when the adult goes for a dip alone. This may include swimming for fitness or just cooling off on a hot day. Nobody is around to notice, give assistance or get help if the adult gets into difficulty in the water.

The adult at risk of drowning, like the young child, swims unsupervised. And that's where the greatest danger lies! Everyone should swim with a buddy – adults too.

Diving & Shallow Water

Lifesaving Society Drowning Research has found that shallow water presents risks that the waterfront owner should consider. Any structure that patrons can walk on such as a dock or climb onto may be used for diving and possibly result in a diving injury. For shallow water (less than 2.5m deep), the only safe entry method is feet first. Patrons who dive into shallow water are at great risk. They risk hitting the bottom head-first and injuring their spine from the impact. Many of these victims are young men. The consequences are tragic. Death sometimes occurs, but most times, the person is paralyzed.

One dive into the waterfront can change their quality of life forever.

Approximately 34 Canadians become partially or completely paralyzed each year as a result of breaking their necks in water-related incidents. Most of these injuries occur while diving into shallow water. They also occur as a result of roughness or “horseplay” around the waterfront – throwing or pushing a person into the water, diving from high heights, diving off shoulders, or being “boosted” into the air by another swimmer. Dangerous play can result in a range of injuries which include possible spinal injuries, injuries resulting from collisions with the waterfront bottom as well as injuries resulting from collisions between bathers. Patrons need Water Smart® education and rules about safe ways to enter, play and enjoy the waterfront. Steps should be taken to minimize the risk that they will use waterfront structures to dive into shallow water.

Alcohol Alcoholic beverages are involved in approximately one-third (36%) of all Canadian preventable water-related deaths, and half (48%) of fatalities where the victim was 18 to 34 years of age.

The high incidence of drowning and alcohol is an important factor for the waterfront owner to keep in mind. Many Canadian adults do not understand the increased risk from mixing aquatic activities and alcohol consumption. The effects of alcohol can include impaired judgement and physical coordination. Impaired patrons may not recognize hazards and may engage in dangerous behavior. In addition they are at increased risk of injury as a result of their physical impairment. Consumption of alcohol at the waterfront or using the swimming area while under the influence should be prohibited.

Waterfront Risks The nature of a waterfront poses risks that are not present in swimming pools. The following Water Smart® messages will help protect your patrons:

- **Always swim with a buddy and be each other’s lifeguard.** Friends can challenge poor risk choices or help rescue each other. 40% of drowning victims were alone.
- **Swim at a marked swimming beach.** Go to a marked swimming area and keep within the boundaries. Nonswimmers should wear a lifejacket or PFD in the water. Floating toys require close supervision. Also beware of special hazards such as currents and offshore winds.
- **Check the weather and avoid storm conditions.** Get off the water if you spot a storm coming.
- **Choose It. Use It. Wear your PFD and insist that everyone in your boat use it.** Wearing a PFD while boating is a Water Smart® choice that can help protect against hypothermia and help the boater rescue himself during an incident. Lifesaving Society’s drowning statistics show that only one in ten boaters were wearing a PFD and half did not have one in the boat.

- **Get trained.** Learn to swim and learn lifesaving skills. The Lifesaving Society Swim for Life program teaches critical self rescue and swimming skills, and the Canadian Lifesaving Program teaches lifesaving skills to rescue others. Most drowning victims (67%) were less than 15 metres from a point of safety. Many were closer at only 2 - 3 metres. Simple reaching and throwing assists can make all the difference in these circumstances.

Groups

Waterfronts may be used by a variety of groups within the community. At a Supervised Waterfront, lifeguards will be present to educate the group members about how to enjoy the waterfront safely and be part of the safety supervision of the group. At unsupervised waterfronts, the group is responsible for providing for the safety of its members while using the waterfront. Owners of unsupervised waterfronts can assist groups to plan for their safety through a variety of mechanisms which may include:

- Safety signs that provide recommendations for groups including safety rules and safety systems with recommendations for the group to provide lifeguard supervision;
- Contacting local groups that may be known to use the waterfront and providing safety recommendations;
- Safety planning recommendations on a website associated with the waterfront;
- Recommending that they contact the Lifesaving Society at the Society website: www.lifesaving.org.

Recommendations for Water Smart® safety rules and safety systems for groups are available on the Lifesaving Society website.

DEFINITIONS

- ❑ **Waterfront** means an aquatic facility composed of a water area designated for swimming, the associated beach area of the shoreline and any associated structures such as washrooms and changerooms. The facility may be located on a natural water body such as a lake or a similar artificial water body such as a man-made lake. The waterfront may be a public facility open to the general public or a private facility whose use is restricted to registered guests, customers, owners, tenants and their guests.
- ❑ **Facility Manager or Operator** means a person designated by the waterfront owner as being responsible for the management and operation of the waterfront facility.
- ❑ **Owner** means the person or corporation who is the owner of a waterfront.
- ❑ **Swimmer or Bather** means a person participating in any recreational activity in or on the water.
- ❑ **Patron** means any person using the aquatic facility. This includes swimmers or bathers plus any spectators or other persons on the beach or in other associated areas such as changerooms.
- ❑ **Lifeguard** means a person holding a current National Lifeguard (NLS) certification appointed by the owner or operator to maintain supervision over the swimmers while they are on the beach or in the swimming area.
- ❑ **Swimming Area** means the water area designated and marked for swimming.
- ❑ **Beach** means the shore area immediately surrounding the waterfront and designated as part of the waterfront facility.
- ❑ **Diving Board** means a flexible board intended for use by divers.
- ❑ **Diving Platform** means a rigid board or platform intended for use by divers.
- ❑ **Current Award** means a training certification which is valid for a specified period from the date of certification or examination. The length of time that a certificate is current may be set by the certifying body and/or government regulation. For example, Lifesaving Society National Lifeguard Award is current for 2 years from the date of certification and Lifesaving Standard First Aid certification is current for 3 years from the date of certification.

- ***Lifeguard Supervision*** is the deliberate and conscious act of observing facility users to ensure the lifeguard is immediately aware of any incident or behavior which may prove life-threatening or injurious.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Who is Responsible?

Ultimately the owner of a waterfront is responsible for the safe operation of the facility. The responsibility for the operation of the facility may be delegated to a Facility Manager or Operator. This responsibility may be further delegated to individuals such as Supervisors or Lifeguards who may be left in charge of the facility if it is a supervised waterfront. When the owner or manager is not present, the “in-charge” person, regardless of title, assumes full responsibility for the safe operation of the facility.

The Lifesaving Society *Waterfront Safety Standards* outlines the Lifesaving Society’s recommendations for minimum safety requirements for waterfronts. Safety shall be the primary concern of waterfront owners and managers. All facility staff are encouraged to go beyond the minimum requirements in their mandate to provide a safe environment. This means practising risk management: working diligently to prevent emergencies, but also responding to them quickly and efficiently if they do happen.

Risk Management Process

Risk Management is an ongoing process that is used to identify risks associated with your waterfront and activities at the waterfront, and take measures to reduce risk and prevent incidents and injuries. The process includes the following steps:

1. Identify risks
2. Evaluate: Why are they happening? What is the source?
3. Develop controls and strategies to minimize or eliminate risks including education of facility users regarding safe behaviors
4. Implement
5. Monitor efforts and evaluate results

Preventing Incidents

All waterfront personnel and owners/operators shall view incident prevention as an integral part of their jobs. An attitude should be fostered and encouraged among staff that they are hired to anticipate incidents and take steps to prevent them, as well as respond to emergencies.

Establishing safety systems are important steps in prevention. One way of doing this is to keep accurate incident records. Tracking incidents and analysing these records to develop strategies to reduce risk is critical to risk management.

Facility analysis is an important means to reduce risk. Is equipment in good working order? Are there danger zones where incidents tend to occur or may occur? Are there problems created by structures or design? How secure is the area? Are the marking systems for the swimming area adequate? Can these be changed or the potential risk be reduced?

Insurance The owner of a waterfront facility shall make certain that an insurance policy and liability coverage are in place to cover the facility, staff, volunteers and patrons. Check with your insurance broker or agent to make certain that you have the appropriate insurance coverage and understand any requirements, limitations or exclusions that may be conditions of the insurance policy.

PERSONNEL AND SUPERVISION

Waterfront Categories

For the purposes of these standards, waterfronts are divided into two categories:

- **Unsupervised Waterfront** – public or private waterfront which is not supervised by lifeguards.
- **Supervised Waterfront** - public or private waterfront which is supervised by lifeguards.

Note: Waterfronts for use at camps for children are categorized as Supervised Waterfronts and shall provide lifeguard supervision.

Supervision

Lifesaving Society drowning research statistics show that most drownings occur in aquatic settings without lifeguard supervision. Almost half of the victims were alone at the time of their death. These are alarming numbers, and this is why the Lifesaving Society encourages all owners of waterfront facilities to consider the need and options to supervise the waterfront when it is used by patrons.

Supervision options include:

1. A lifeguard who is responsible for continuous surveillance of bathers in the swimming area. ***The lifeguard system is the approach recommended by the Lifesaving Society.*** Lifeguarded facilities provide the highest level of public safety for facility users and owners.
2. A buddy system where waterfront patrons should be accompanied by another person with the clear expectation that they are responsible for supervising each other. Swimming alone should not be an acceptable practice.

If the waterfront is not supervised by a lifeguard; the owner of a waterfront shall post signs in visibly conspicuous locations on the beach and at all access points stating the following or something similar:

Warning: No Lifeguard on Duty. Children must be supervised by an adult.

Lifeguard Supervision

At Supervised Waterfronts, lifeguards shall be on duty and in position at all times during the hours of supervision. Signs shall be posted and clearly visible to patrons indicating the hours of supervision. In the event that the waterfront is being used solely for aquatic instruction, a qualified aquatic instructor may be substituted for a lifeguard only if each instructor is also a qualified lifeguard. Each instructor can only supervise one class or group. Direct supervision means direct and uninterrupted control of the bathers by the aquatic instructor who is charged with their care. If even one instructor is not a lifeguard, a qualified lifeguard shall supervise the waterfront area.

Lifeguard Qualifications

Lifeguard - Required minimum qualifications

- Minimum age 16;
- Hold a current National Lifeguard (NLS) Award (NLS Waterfront option is recommended, any other NLS Award is acceptable);
- Hold a current Standard First Aid (Aquatic Emergency Care Award or Lifesaving Standard First Aid recommended);
- Be trained in the waterfront safety systems and emergency procedures.

Aquatic Instructor Qualifications

Aquatic Instructor - Required minimum qualifications

- Minimum age 15;
- Hold a current Instructor award such as Swim for Life Instructor or Lifesaving Instructor;
- Hold a current lifesaving or lifeguarding award - minimum Bronze Cross (Distinction and National Lifeguard exceed the Bronze Cross minimum);
- Be trained in the waterfront safety systems and emergency procedures.

Note: If the instructor is required to also function as a lifeguard, he shall meet the required minimum qualifications for a lifeguard.

Orientation Training

All new or returning supervision staff shall receive orientation training before assuming their supervision duties. This training should include:

- Introduction to fellow staff members;
- Exploration of job description and responsibilities;
- Introduction to and evaluation of hazards and risks in the facility, and a review of facility rules and policies concerning them;
- Review of personnel policies and procedures;
- Specific job-related training required to familiarize staff with the facility's programs, activities, operation and maintenance, and policies and procedures concerning supplies and equipment;
- Specific training in the waterfront safety systems and emergency procedures;
- Specific training in public relations and effectively dealing with the patrons.

Inservice Training

Waterfront staff and employers shall recognize the need for regular review of procedures and skills assessment. Inservice training should include:

- Evaluation and practice of emergency procedures designed specifically for the waterfront;
- Review and practice of supervision, recognition and rescue skills;
- Practice use of safety equipment;
- Review of supervision policies and procedures including number of staff per patron and guidelines for patron and staff conduct;
- Review and practice of first aid skills including use of first aid

equipment and supplies;

- Practice of public relations and effectively dealing with the patrons;
- WHMIS training appropriate to the materials and equipment they may be expected to use.

Aquatic Facility Supervision Standard

Every owner/operator of a supervised waterfront shall establish an Aquatic Facility Supervision Standard. This standard shall define the minimum requirements for lifeguards and instructors who are responsible for the supervision of bathers. The standard should include:

- Fitness and skill standards appropriate for the waterfront;
- Minimum vision and hearing standards;
- Practices to evaluate if conditions such as injuries, illness and pregnancy prevent the staff person from meeting the standard;
- Minimum training to effectively perform all required supervision duties;
- A process to identify and replace on duty any staff member who is not able to meet the standard at any time she is scheduled to work in a supervision role.

Two parties have a responsibility to ensure that staff are able meet their obligations - the employer and the lifeguard/instructor. The employer is required to take reasonable steps to ensure that supervision staff are able to perform to the Aquatic Facility Supervision Standard when employed in a supervision role. The lifeguard/instructor also has a personal responsibility to be able to meet the required Aquatic Facility Supervision Standard at anytime that she is lifeguarding or instructing. It also requires that anytime she is not able to meet the standard (eg. due to illness or injury) she shall inform her employer. A lifeguard/instructor who is unable to meet the minimum standard to lifeguard or instruct at her facility should not work in a supervision role until she is able meet the standard.

Staff Manual

Every waterfront should develop a Staff Manual. This manual should be readily available to the waterfront staff. The Lifesaving Society recommends that all staff be provided with a personal copy of the Staff Manual. The intent of this manual is to function as a training and reference resource for the waterfront staff and management. The suggested content should include:

- All facility supervision procedures and requirements;
- All specific safety systems and emergency procedures that the staff member is required to know and be able to do;
- Relevant employment policies and procedures as well as any specific employment standards such as the Aquatic Facility Supervision Standard.

The Staff Manual may be a subset of the more comprehensive Facility Operating Manual.

以上内容仅为本文档的试下载部分，为可阅读页数的一半内容。如要下载或阅读全文，请访问：<https://d.book118.com/638002120061006110>