



POLICY STATEMENT

All NL Instructors must teach and evaluate both the flatboard and slantboard method of removing a suspected spinal injured patient from the water.

BACKGROUND

The BC & Yukon Branch Management of a Spinal Injured Victim Policy dated November 15, 2011 replaces the Management of a Spinal Injured Victim Policy from January 10, 1996. Due to the continuing evolution of pool design, there is a need for lifeguards to be trained in alternative methods of spinal injury management. Having learned both of these two basic removals, lifeguards will be better prepared to adapt to new situations.

RATIONALE

Lifeguards must be able to adapt spinal rescue principles and skills for handling suspected spinal injuries due to variables such as:

- Type of pool gutter
- Facility design and features (e.g. waterslides, wave pools)
- Victim and/or rescuer size
- Victim condition
- Lifeguard size
- Number of lifeguards on duty
- Availability of suitable bystanders
- Time factors
- Water depth
- Spineboard variations
- Lifeguard skill level
- On-going lifeguard skill training

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Management of Spinal Injured Victim

Training in more than one method of handling a suspected spinal injury widens the lifeguard's range of options and enhances their ability to adapt the method to the specific situation encountered. Lifeguards are continually making judgement calls and will be better able to modify their approach if competent in more than one technique.

REFERENCES

Specific procedural information has been removed from this policy. Please see listed support resources for description of the flatboard and slantboard removals.

- Canadian Lifesaving Manual (page 5-19 to 5-22)
- Alert: Lifeguarding in Action (page 52-54)
- NL Award Guide Item 3c