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The Lifeguarding Experts
Les experts en surveillance aquatique

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Safety Standards for Canadian Swimming Pools and Waterfronts Aquatic Facility Standard

Lifeguard Safety Supervision Zone Standard

Standard

Owners and operators should post lifeguard positioning, zone and rotation charts in area commonly used by lifeguard staff.

Definitions

Aquatic Facility: any swimming pool, wading pool, waterpark, waterfront, or similar location that is used for aquatic activities such as swimming, wading, diving or aquatic sports.

Lifeguard: a person with current Lifesaving Society National Lifeguard certification appointed by the owner or operator to maintain surveillance and to supervise bather safety while bathers are on the deck or in the pool.

Lifeguard Positioning Chart: Charts or diagrams that indicate where lifeguards are to be stationed in a facility, the zones that the lifeguards are responsible for providing supervision over, and the rotation patterns lifeguards are to use when transferring from one station to another.

Operator: the trained individual designated by the owner to be responsible for the day-to-day operation of an aquatic facility.

Owner: the person or corporation who is the owner of an aquatic facility.

Rationale

- Lifeguard positioning, zone and rotation charts help to ensure staff are positioned to provide optimum safety supervision of bathers.
- The charts are created by aquatic specialists who have reviewed the pools operation, equipment use, traffic flow, glare resulting from sun positioning, hazardous areas, etc. in determining the best position for lifeguard staff to safely supervise the pool, deck and access points.

Implementation

- Conduct an evaluation of the facility at different times of the day and times of the year to assess the optimal lifeguard positions and zones of surveillance.
- Charts should depict lifeguard placement for various bather load ranges, activities in the aquatic facility, equipment supervision (e.g.: climbing walls, swing ropes, inflatables, etc.).
- Charts should be clear and concise. An overhead floorplan layout of the entire pool area could be used showing lifeguard zones depicted in a variety of ways to include circular colors, shading, overlap areas, etc.
- Charts should be reviewed at least annually (or whenever equipment or operational procedures are altered) and during in service and staff orientation training sessions.
- Charts should be posted in clear view of all facility staff. Staff should review and confirm the zones in use at the beginning of each shift.
- Lifeguard zones, size and position can vary depending on a variety of factors including shape of the facility, depth, bather ability, equipment (e.g. diving boards, climbing walls, etc.), glare, weather conditions (outdoor), etc.
- Charts and their implementation should be included in the swimming pool safety plan (if applicable).

References

- Royal Life Saving Society Canada. (2016). Alert: Lifeguarding in Action (2nd Edition), Chapter 2, Accident Prevention.
- Lifesaving Society Canada (2012). Bather-to-Lifeguard Ratios Standard. Retrieved from <https://www.lifesaving.ca/swimming-pool-standards.php>

Approval

- Approved by the Lifesaving Society Canada Safety Standards Commission on 18 November 2020.

Disclaimer

Lifesaving Society Canada's National Safety Standards are developed using Coroners' recommendations, the latest evidence-based research, and reflect the aquatics industry's best practices at the time the publication was approved.

The purpose of these standards is to encourage swimming pool, waterpark and waterfront owners, managers, operators and regulators to adopt these standards, in order to prevent drownings in aquatic environments.

Lifesaving Society Canada's National Safety Standards do not replace or supersede local, provincial/territorial or federal legislation or regulations, but they are considered the standard to which aquatic facility operators should work towards, in order to enhance safety within their operations and to prevent drowning.