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SOCIÉTÉ DE SAUVETAGE

The Lifeguarding Experts
Les experts en surveillance aquatique

Lifesaving Society Canada
2420 Bank Street, M012, Ottawa, Ontario K1V 8S1
Telephone: 613-746-5694
E-mail: experts@lifesaving.ca Web: www.lifesaving.ca

Safety Standards for Canadian Swimming Pools and Waterfronts Waterfront Standard

Emergency Telephone Standard – Supervised Waterfront

Standard

Every owner and operator of a public supervised waterfront shall ensure that a functioning emergency telephone is provided at the waterfront and available for use whenever the waterfront is open to (or usable by) the public. The telephone shall be readily accessible and shall allow direct connection with an emergency service or the local telephone utility.

Definitions

Direct connection: able to communicate through an outside line to 911 or emergency services without the need to connect to a secondary agency or switchboard operator.

Readily accessible (Waterfront): the telephone is considered easily accessible to lifeguards when it is at a maximum distance of 100 meters from a lifeguard.

Emergency service: public emergency dispatch telephone service (911 service), often directly connected to emergency medical services (EMS).

Lifeguard: a person with a current National Lifeguard certification appointed by the owner or operator to supervise bather safety while bathers are on the deck or beach, or in the pool or body of water.

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

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

Supervised Waterfront: the designated area of a waterfront where certified staff provide safety supervision as part of the operations.

Rationale

When an emergency occurs, access to the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system is often required [1]. Timely activation of EMS is a critical part of patient care when dealing with drowning cases [2]. A means to quickly and efficiently contact EMS must therefore be accessible to lifeguards and the public since early advanced care may enhance patient outcomes [3].

Access to an emergency telephone may, however, be difficult to arrange on certain Canadian waterfronts. In these cases, a radio may overcome this difficulty.

Radio communications (mobile radio transceiver) allow lifeguards to communicate effectively with each other in large environments such as beaches, but also make it possible to remain in communication during an intervention with a bather or a victim [4].

Implementation

- The emergency telephone must be able to work in the event of a power failure.
- The emergency telephone must be labeled with facility information including location (address), phone number and specific access procedure.
- Lifeguards are to be trained to use the communication devices designated for their use.
- In the absence of cell coverage or where it is not reliable, owner or operator must make available to the public an emergency telephone or a proper communications system or device such as a handset or intercom directly connected to 911 dispatch [5, 6].

References

- [1] Royal Life Saving Society Canada. (2016). *Alert: Lifeguarding in Action (2nd Edition)*. Ontario: Royal Life Saving Society Canada.
- [2] American Heart Association. Out-of-hospital Chain of Survival. (n.d.). Retrieved February 27, 2020, from <https://cpr.heart.org/en/resources/cpr-facts-and-stats/out-of-hospital-chain-of-survival>
- [3] Government of Quebec. (2018). *Building Act: Regulation respecting safety in public baths (chapter B-1.1, s. 185, par. 38 and s. 215)*. Quebec: Éditeur officiel du Québec.
- [4] United States Lifesaving Association. (2017). *Open Water Lifesaving: The United States Lifesaving Association Manual, 3rd Edition*. Huntington Beach: Pearson Custom Publishing.
- [5] Centre for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). *2016 Annex to the Model Aquatic Health Code (2nd Edition)*. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- [6] Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). *2016 Model Aquatic Health Code (2nd Edition)*. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Approval

- Approved by the Lifesaving Society Canada Board of Directors on 10 April 2012.
- Revised and approved by Lifesaving Society Canada's Board of Directors on 21 April 2020.

Disclaimer

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

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 and aquatic-related injury.