

# 25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

fppt.com

George Deines, Surf and Swim | Melissa Lockwood, The Keller Pointe

## Session Overview

- Aquatic Incident Contributing Factors
- 25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety
  - Management Training
  - Staff Training
  - Policies and Procedures
  - Facility Issues
- Questions and Comments

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

fppt.com

George Deines, Surf and Swim | Melissa Lockwood, The Keller Pointe

### Aquatic Incident Contributing Factors

- ◆ Lack of Adult Supervision
- ◆ Inattentive Lifeguards
- ◆ Lack of Elevated Lifeguard Stands
- ◆ Improper placement of lifeguard stands
- ◆ Lack of Lifeguard Supervision by Management
- ◆ Disregard of Facility Policies
- ◆ Lifeguards' Failure to Act
- ◆ Non-Enforcement of Facility Policies
- ◆ Poor Water Clarity
- ◆ Allowance of Underwater Breath holding Competition
- ◆ Inattentive Swim Instructors
- ◆ Failure to Identify High-Risk Areas in Facilities

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

fppt.com

George Deines, Surf and Swim | Melissa Lockwood, The Keller Pointe

### Aquatic Incident Contributing Factors, Cont'd

- ◆ Lack of PFDs or Allowance of Non-Approved PFDs
- ◆ Lifeguard Distraction by Guests
- ◆ Lifeguard Lack of Emergency Response Equipment
- ◆ Lifeguard Lack of Zone of Protection Knowledge
- ◆ Lifeguard's Failure to Act
- ◆ Lifeguard's Failure to Recognize
  - ◆ Lifeguards Ignore Calls for Help
  - ◆ Lifeguards Think Guests are Merely Playing
  - ◆ Lifeguards Socializing
  - ◆ Lifeguards Distracted by Guests, or In-Water Activities
  - ◆ Zones of Protection are too big - Can't Maintain 10/20 Standard

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

fppt.com

George Deines, Surf and Swim | Melissa Lockwood, The Keller Pointe

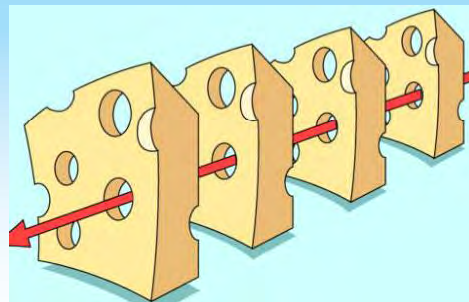
### Aquatic Incident Contributing Factors, Cont'd

- Failure to Rectify Surface Glare and Disturbance
- Failure to Regulate Groups and Proper Adult to Child Ratios

Typically, it takes more than one of these contributing factors to result in a submersion or drowning incident. On any given day, several of these happen multiple times. Serious incidents occur when they happen at the same time.



### Aquatic Incident Contributing Factors, Cont'd



- Hole #1 Inattentive Lifeguard
- Hole #2 Parent on cell phone
- Hole #3 Improper Floatation Device
- Hole #4 Surface Glare



# Management

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

## #25 Update supervisor training for managers, head guards and leads

- Review manuals and training materials
- Delegating training responsibilities to increase awareness and familiarity
- Create clear expectations

Make sure lifeguards have enough water;  
Make sure lifeguards are in proper uniform and have the required safety equipment;  
Check the water for cloudiness, dirt/debris;  
Constantly scan the pool to add an extra layer of protection;  
Limit conversation with lifeguards to less than 60 seconds;  
Conduct daily "timmy" drops to test lifeguards scanning and recognition;  
Ensure lifeguards know their zone of protection and identify areas of concern;  
Alert lifeguards to guests in the pool that might need assistance or rescuing;  
Conduct daily scenarios (passive and spinal) to maintain lifeguards skills at a high level;

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

**#24 Implement a manager on-deck policy, i.e. 80/20**

✦ **Proactive management vs. reactive management**

Proactive management reduces risk

On-deck managers can address safety concerns before they become catastrophic

✦ **Create a task list for on-deck managers**

Lifeguard evaluations/Vigilance training

Checking water conditions

Helping lifeguards spot potential risk

✦ **80/20 – Management should be on deck 80% of the time (48 mins/hour)**

✦ **No one has ever drowned in the pool office.**



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

**#23 Schedule time to directly observe/audit supervisors and lifeguards on a regular basis**

- ◆ Staff evaluation is essential to maintaining safe facilities
- ◆ Management presence in the park creates a safer park
- ◆ Items to evaluate

- Are they on deck?
- Are they observing lifeguards?
- Are they correcting poor scanning?
- Is emergency response equipment ready?



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

**#22 Review discipline policy and align it with your expectations for management staff**

- ◆ Let them know that poor performance will not be tolerated
- ◆ Discipline or dismiss poor performing managers
- ◆ Discipline can create better performance from other managers
- ◆ Create clear expectations\*
- ◆ Don't delay – Dismiss today!



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

fppt.com

George Deines, Surf and Swim | Melissa Lockwood, The Keller Pointe

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

# Staff Training

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

fppt.com

George Deines, Surf and Swim | Melissa Lockwood, The Keller Pointe

**#21 Review policy and skill training for employees; make necessary updates**

- Continually evaluate your lifeguard staff (cf. #23)
  - Keep list of items to address
  - Know their areas of weakness
  - Training is always on-going
  - Know who's your best guard and your worst guard



**#20 Train lifeguards to be proactive scanners**

- Ensure lifeguards are maintaining the 10/20 standard of protection
- Train lifeguards to identify high-risk guests
- Prevent rescues by being proactive (unattended children, tired swimmers, etc.)
- Continually train lifeguards with manikin drops
- Teach scanning patterns that give 100% zone coverage (NASCO Manual)



Side-to-side scanning pattern.



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

fppt.com

George Deines, Surf and Swim | Melissa Lockwood, The Keller Pointe

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety



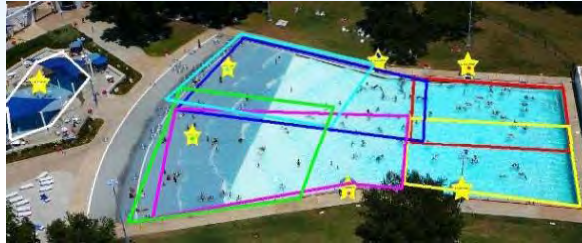
25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

fppt.com

George Deines, Surf and Swim | Melissa Lockwood, The Keller Pointe

**#19 Post zone coverage charts in employee areas and add them to your employee manual**

- Lifeguards must know what area to scan
- Zones should overlap to add layers of protection
- Give a zone of protection test to your lifeguards
  - Do they know where to look?



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

**#18 Implement an "On the Stand" lifeguard communication policy**

- Create clear communications standards for lifeguards
- If more than 10 seconds, lifeguards should always call on-duty manager
- Lifeguard distraction is a key contributing factor in aquatic incidents

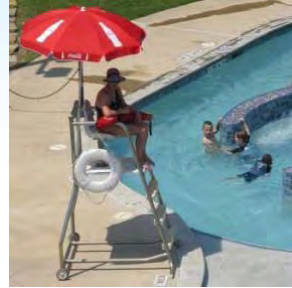


25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

#17 Teach lifeguards to maintain scanning in the midst of distractions

- Lifeguards tend to stop scanning when a rescue occurs in another part of the pool
- Lifeguards get distracted by on deck disturbances (crowds, kids, etc.)
- Lifeguards get distracted by in-water games, noisy guests, etc.



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

fppt.com

George Deines, Surf and Swim | Melissa Lockwood, The Keller Pointe

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

#16 Create in-service training calendar and agendas for each season

- Proper planning ensures all safety topics are covered
- Supervise managers to make sure they are covering all items
- Have managers lead "mock" in-services

**In-Service Operation Alpha/Bravo**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
Alpha Weeks: June 6-12 & June 19-26				10 ALPHA Operations: 10:00am- 12:00pm	11	12 Birthday Bash	
13	14	15 BRAVO Operations: 9:30am- 11:30am	16	17	18 BRAVO Operations: 10:00am- 11:30am	19	
Bravo Weeks: June 23-29 & June 27-July 3		20	21	22 ALPHA Operations: 9:30am- 11:30am	23	24	25 ALPHA Operations: 10:00am- 11:30am
26	27	28 BRAVO Operations: 9:30am- 11:30am	29	30	July 1 Alpha Operations: 10:00am- 11:30am	July 2 BRAVO Operations: 10:00am- 11:30am	July 3

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

fppt.com

George Deines, Surf and Swim | Melissa Lockwood, The Keller Pointe

# Policies/Procedures

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

## #15 Evaluate guest education

### ◆ Signage

Do guests notice your signage? Does it convey your policies?

Do you include every policy? Do you have policies available to handout?

### ◆ In-park announcements

### ◆ Policies

Are they consistent throughout your park/organization?

Which policies do you want your guests to know and see?

Are staff consistently applying and enforcing policies?

### ◆ Uniforms

Do you use lifeguard uniforms to convey safety messages?



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

fppt.com

George Deines, Surf and Swim | Melissa Lockwood, The Keller Pointe

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

#14 Review your personal flotation device policy; make necessary changes

- US Coast Guard Approved PFDs are the standard; Outlaw "Floaties"
- Teach guests the proper way to put on a lifejacket.
- Don't let guests use noodles or tubes as a primary flotation device
- How many PFDs should you have on-site?

Does your park run out of lifejackets? 25% of maximum capacity; 80% should be child sized



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

fppt.com

George Deines, Surf and Swim | Melissa Lockwood, The Keller Pointe

**#13 Review your adult/parental supervision policy**

- Specify the age of when a guest can enter your park alone
- Specify the age of the “supervising adult”
- Implement a system for lost and found children
- Identify weak swimmers or children who are required to be with an adult



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

**#12 Plan how to safely guard your facility when not at full staffing levels**

- What do you do when a lifeguard doesn't show up?
- Prioritize attractions and the order in which you close them
- Can you use non-aquatics staff for slide dispatch?
- Maintain all zones of protection
  - Are zones small enough to combine?
- Train on-duty managers to deal with this dilemma
- Safety trumps guest service

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

#11 Write and enforce a policy for group use and supervision policy

- Require specific adult to child ratios
- Require in-water supervision by group staff
- Require lifejackets for non-swimmers (w/in-water supervision)
- How long can groups stay at your park?
- What does enforcement look like?

Do you ban groups for non-compliance?

Are your restrictions posted?

**A Note to Group Leaders**

Water Country is committed to the safety of all our guests. Only you, as the responsible leader, know the swimming skills of your individual group members. Please familiarize yourself with our attractions, so that you can make good decisions on which ones will be appropriate for your group members. Life jackets are free and available at many locations within the park. Just ask a member of Guest Relations to assist you in finding them. Remember, a person with weak swimming skills should not be turned loose, even with a life jacket on!

#10 Address underwater breath holding at your facility

- Don't allow extended, underwater breath holding
- Train lifeguards to spot and enforce
- Add to park rules signage



# Facility Layout and Design

25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

fppt.com

George Deines, Surf and Swim | Melissa Lockwood, The Keller Pointe

## #9 Design/Expand waterparks with safety in mind

- Just because it looks good, doesn't make it safe
- Involve aquatic safety personnel in design/expansion decisions
- Evaluate potential blind spots, glare, slope, pool layout



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

fppt.com

George Deines, Surf and Swim | Melissa Lockwood, The Keller Pointe

**#8 Address problem areas in your pool**

- Glare
- Surface disturbance (wave pools)
- Water clarity
- Slope
- Inform lifeguards of high-risk areas
- Train lifeguards to adjust position when needed
- Train management staff to observe these areas while on deck
- Have a written policy for determining water clarity



**#7 Be realistic with management that safety concerns trump guest service**

- A safe guest is better than an upset guest
- Do not trump guest safety for guest service
- Do not ever compromise a guest's safety because of cloudy water, being short-staffed, or other unsafe conditions
- Inform management they will have to close attractions for maintenance or staffing issues and train them how to handle the situation

**#6 Ensure lifeguard chairs and properly located and elevated**

- Elevated stands provides a better overall view of a lifeguard's zone
- Periodically check stands to make sure zones are covered
- Require lifeguards to stand on lifeguard stand, not on pool deck



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

**#5 Validate your zones of protection at different times of the day and throughout your entire operating season**

- Involve staff so they are informed of how zones change based on sun position, clouds, and surface glare



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

**#4 Keep rescue equipment in close proximity to all areas of the park**

- Perform equipment checks daily at park opening
- Is rescue equipment close to the point of guest extrication?
- Is equipment out and ready to go in case of an emergency?



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

**#3 Conduct facility analysis and pinpoint problem areas**

- Periodically conduct a facility walkthrough during operating hours
- Check for maintenance issues that need addressing
- Scan your park's water
- Don't get caught up in administrative tasks, guests services, and park cleanliness to the detriment of safety
- Address issues immediately, or as soon as possible
- Use off-season time to fix non-critical, issues



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

**#2 Establish incident analysis procedure (spreadsheet, facility map, etc.)**

- **Track facility rescues on an on-going basis**

Age

Time of day

Water depth/water clarity

Lifeguard stand/area of pool

Use a map to determine rescue area

- **Inform management of proper record keeping procedures**



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

fppt.com

George Deines, Surf and Swim | Melissa Lockwood, The Keller Pointe

**#1 Watch for rescue and incident trends at your facility and address immediately**

- **Analyze the data and make a plan of action**
- **Address areas of concern in your facility**
- **Inform lifeguard staff of high risk rescue areas**



25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

fppt.com

George Deines, Surf and Swim | Melissa Lockwood, The Keller Pointe

## 25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety

### *Management*

- #25 Update supervisor training for managers, head guards and leads
- #24 Implement a manager on-deck policy, i.e. 80/20
- #23 Schedule time to directly observe/audit supervisors and lifeguards on a regular basis
- #22 Review discipline policy and align it with your expectations for management staff

### *Staff Training*

- #21 Review policy and skill training for employees; make necessary updates
- #20 Train lifeguards to be proactive scanners
- #19 Post zone coverage charts in employee areas and add them to your employee manual
- #18 Implement an "On the Stand" lifeguard communication policy
- #17 Teach lifeguards to maintain scanning in the midst of distractions (rescues, on deck disturbances, etc.)
- #16 Create in-service training calendar and agendas for each season

### *Policies/Procedures*

- #15 Evaluate guest education
- #14 Review your personal flotation device policy; make necessary changes
- #13 Review your adult/parental supervision policy and what to do when it is not followed
- #12 Plan how to safely guard your facility when not at full staffing levels
- #11 Write and enforce a policy for group use and supervision
- #10 Address underwater breath holding at your facility

### *Design/Facility Issues*

- #9 Design/expand waterparks with safety in mind
- #8 Address problem areas in your pool (glare, surface disturbance, water quality, etc.);
- #7 Be realistic with management that safety concerns trump guest service
- #6 Ensure lifeguard chairs and properly located and elevated
- #5 Validate your zones of protection at different times of the day and throughout your entire operating season
- #4 Keep rescue equipment in close proximity to all areas of the park
- #3 Conduct facility analysis and pinpoint problem areas
- #2 Establish incident analysis procedure (spreadsheet, facility map, etc.)
- #1 Watch for rescue and incident trends at your facility and address immediately

## 25 Ways to Increase your Park's Safety