Aquatics for Landlubbers

"The Recreation Professional's guide to Aquatics Management"

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the similarities and differences between Recreation and Aquatic Facility/Operation management
- Outline the necessary skills abilities and characteristics of aquatic personnel such as lifeguards, instructors and facility managers
- Recognize the differences between a safe, well run aquatic facility you can be proud of and one that needs attention.

Introductions

- Speakers
- Attendees

What Do You Want Out of This Session?

- Any particular questions you want answered?
- Any particular concerns you need addressed?

Will I learn everything I need to know to successfully run an aquatic facility?

- NO

Where Do We Begin?

- Task group exercise

Staffing Aquatic Facilities (All staff)

- Characteristics:
  - Reliable
  - Mature
  - Courteous and consistent
  - Positive
  - Professional
  - Responsible
  - Healthy and fit-Exercise, eat and hydrate properly, rest adequately, protect yourself from sun exposure
  - Knowledgeable and skilled

Lifeguards

- Skills and abilities:
  - Minimum age-Will vary according to agency, however candidates must be 15 years of age to participate in course and earn certification.
  - American Red Cross Lifeguard certification course is listed at just over 25 hours. This course includes water rescues, first aid, and CPR/AED training.
  - Many organizations also require additional training in Blood borne pathogens and emergency oxygen administration among others.

Certification

- **State of Florida Administrative Code**
  - CHAPTER 64E-9 PUBLIC SWIMMING POOLS AND BATHING PLACES:
- "(1) **All owners, managers, lifeguards or swimming instructors in charge of, or working at, public swimming pools shall be responsible for the supervision and safety of the pool.**

- (a) Lifeguards or swimming instructors, if provided, shall be in full charge of persons using the pool and shall have authority to enforce all rules. **Lifeguards and swimming instructors shall be certified in lifeguarding or swimming instruction, respectively, by the American Red Cross, the YMCA or other equivalent national aquatic training agencies** which meet the established standards, objectives and standards of care provided in the American Red Cross or YMCA programs. For the purpose of this rule, the standards found in the 2007 edition of the American Red Cross Lifeguarding Instructors Manual, the 2004 edition of the American Red Cross Water Safety Instructors Manual, the On the Guard II, The YMCA Lifeguard Manual, (2001) Fourth Edition, (YMCA), The Youth and Adult Aquatic Program Manual (1999), and (YMCA) The Parent/Child and Preschool Aquatic Program Manual (1999),are hereby adopted by reference. Swimming instructors of developmentally disabled students shall also be certified in accordance with Chapter 514.072, FS."

Lifeguard-Selection For Employment

- Interview
- Testing-Although Lifeguards must be certified, most agencies also require potential employees to be tested. GOOD IDEA
- Certification only means that on the particular date the certification was issued, that student displayed the knowledge and skills required for certification.
- Certifications are valid for two years.
- Any and all personnel who may provide patron surveillance or respond to an emergency situation should be tested prior to employment and periodically thereafter.
- Management is responsible for keeping records of Lifeguard certifications available to Health Inspector upon request.

Lifeguard Test

- The lifeguard test should include:
  - Water rescue skills
  - Spinal injury management skills
  - CPR/AED skills
  - First Aid skills
  - Scenarios
  - Should be “site specific”

Nation-Wide Lifeguard Shortage

- Aquatic Facility Managers in Florida and throughout the country must be prepared for the challenges they will face filling their Lifeguard positions.
- Some factors contributing to the Lifeguard shortage:
- Low pay
- High level of responsibility
- Physical requirements
- Lack of available training opportunities
- Cost of training

Strategies to Address Lifeguard Shortage

- "Grow your own"-provide low cost or free training
- Jr. Lifeguard programs
- Recruitment incentives
- Job Fairs
- Visit high schools and colleges
- Robust advertising
- Recruiting "non-traditional" segments of the population (retirees, stay at home parents)
- Different Lifeguard classifications (Waterfront, Waterpark, Shallow water, etc.)

Instructors

- Skills and abilities:
  - Should possess skills and abilities of Lifeguard shown previously.
  - Aquatic Instructors are in several categories
  - Water Safety Instructors-Provide a variety of water safety education programs including swimming lessons-Approximately 32 hours
  - Lifeguard Instructors-Provide Lifeguarding, Waterfront, Waterpark, Shallow Water Lifeguarding, First Aid CPR/AED training-Approximately 22 hours
  - Water Exercise Instructors-Programs vary, approximately 25 hours

- In all categories, Aquatic Instructors must be able to:
  - Plan and prepare a safe and successful learning environment
  - Effectively observe and assess student skill performance
  - Promote student learning and success, including customizing strategies to meet individual student needs.
  - Communicate effectively with students and/or their parents or caregivers

Aquatic Facility Managers Skills and Abilities

- Certified Pool Operator or Aquatic Facility Operator
- Minimum 3-5 years experience in aquatics
- 4 year degree
- Any combination of experience and education that provides the necessary skills and abilities required.
- Considerable knowledge of rescue methods and first aid as applies to accidents in the water and surrounding areas.
- Knowledge of Parks and Recreation Department's pool safety operating procedures.
- Ability to exercise judgment and discretion in applying and interpreting department rules, regulations, policies, and procedures.
- Knowledge of pool chemistry and pool filtration systems.
- Skill in swimming, rescue work, resuscitation and first aid.
- Ability to follow and enforce rigid safety rules and regulations.
- Ability to plan, organize, direct, and appraise the work of assigned personnel.

- Ability to make decisions and function effectively in high stress, emergency situations.
- Ability to prevent dangerous situations from arising, to recognize emergencies and to take appropriate action.
- Ability to perform first aid and manage emergency situations.
- Ability to perform necessary tasks to maintain the pool filtration system.
- Considerable knowledge of modern governmental office practices, procedures, equipment, and standard clerical/administrative support techniques.
- Ability to prepare operational budgets, capital improvement budgets and calculate return on investment.
- Ability to make recommendations and to use resourcefulness and tact in solving problems.
- Analytical and research skills; ability to ascertain priorities and meet deadlines and objectives.
- Strong written and oral communication skills.
- Skill in the use of standard office computer equipment and software applications; ability to maintain accurate records and reports.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships.

- Ability to conduct a comprehensive aquatic program to include swimming instruction, lifeguard, CPR and first aid classes, special events and specialty camps.
- Ability to initiate, organize, schedule, coordinate and promote aquatic programs.
- Ability to coordinate aquatic services with those in related areas and the community.
- Ability to enforce safety and health rules and regulations.
- Ability to obtain required permits for successful facility operation (swimming pool operation permit, food concession, slides).
- Ability to assign, train, schedule, evaluate and supervise assigned staff.
- Ability to record and update all lifeguard certifications.
- Ability to oversee maintenance of the pool, equipment and supplies; inspects pools on a daily basis.
- Ability to perform necessary tests, and maintain proper chemical balance.
- Ability to maintain a clean, safe pool environment, including restroom and pool deck areas.
- Ability to prepare necessary reports and maintains records.
- Ability to prepare correspondence, press releases and other written materials.

What are the Biggest Concerns When Managing an Aquatic Facility?

- **Safety**!
  - The primary responsibility of a Lifeguard is to prevent accidents and injuries and respond appropriately to emergency situations.
  - Successful Aquatic facilities must have a strong safety record and reputation.
  - To that end, Aquatic Facility Managers must conduct a variety of regular, relevant and documented in-service training sessions with their staff.

- **Facility and Programs**
  - Aquatic facilities must have the features customers want and high quality programs customers need.
  - Aquatic facilities are very expensive to operate, therefore are high expense/low revenue community resources.
  - Demands for high quality, safe aquatic facilities and programs and demands for low cost services are in constant conflict.
  - Aquatics professionals must strive to establish their facilities as essential resources for the communities in which they serve by producing high attendance numbers.
  - Aquatics professionals must constantly seek to increase revenues and decrease expenses by introducing innovative programs, features and technologies.
  - **Empty** aquatic facilities are destined to be **closed** aquatic facilities.

Keeping Current

- Aquatic facility managers must stay current of all trends, initiatives and directives local, state and federal guidelines.
- VGB
- ADA

Aquatics Leisure Opportunities by Program Classification

- Arts and Crafts
- Hobbies
- Outdoor Recreation✓
- Self Development ✓
- Senior Programming✓
- Social Recreation✓
- Special Needs✓
- Travel and Tourism
- Health and Wellness✓
- Sports and Athletics✓

- **Water Quality**
  - State Health codes mandate certain water quality standards. In addition, customers want to swim in crystal clear water, free of hazards, debris and odors.
  - In order to accomplish this, Aquatic Facility Managers must be concerned with:
  - Circulation (pumps)
  - Filtration (filters)
  - Sanitation (chlorine and other hazardous materials)
  - Water Balance
  - Maintenance (periodic and preventative)
  - Repairs (Friday afternoon 6:00pm)
  - Fecal accident preparedness and response

What Does a Well Run Aquatic Facility Look Like?

- The pool, deck, restrooms and other areas are clean, organized and free of hazards.
- Proper signage present, rules enforced consistently.
- Most recent Health Department Inspection Report posted in public view.
- Lifeguards present, easily recognizable, stationed appropriately and "rescue ready".
- All required rescue and first aid equipment present and in good repair.
- Open/Close and Facility Safety checklists are completed and reviewed daily.
- Accident charts present for staff review.
- Pump rooms neat, orderly and in good repair.
- Daily chemical logs complete and up to date.
- All hazardous materials are secure and stored properly.
- PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) is available and used regularly by staff.
- Detailed Emergency Action Plans available for review and practiced regularly.
- Emergency contact numbers posted (chemical spills, gas leaks, etc.)
- Programs and activities are being conducted safely and in an organized fashion.

Aquatic Buzzwords, Acronyms, and Abbreviations

- ORP
- RWI
- RID-Factor
- WSI
- LGI
- CPO
- AFO
- AED
- VFD
- EAP
- BVM
- Area of Responsibility
- Rotation
- Scanning
- 5 minute scanning strategy
- Instinctive Drowning Response
- Stabilizer
- Controller
- Feeder
- Geothermal
- Shock

Reference Material

- In addition to publications you are already familiar with like Parks and Recreation Management and Athletic Business, you will want to check out the following:
- **CHAPTER 64E-9-Florida Administrative Code**
- Public swimming pools and bathing areas
- Aquatics International Magazine
- Model Aquatic Health Code
- Florida Aquatic Council
- Association of Aquatic Professionals
- http://www.floridahealth.gov/Environmental-Health/swimming-pools/index.html
- http://www.cdc.gov/mahc/
- http://www.aquaticsintl.com/
- www.facebook.com/floridaaquaticscouncil
- http://aquaticpros.org/

What is Wrong or Right With This Picture?

6 IN.

GUARD

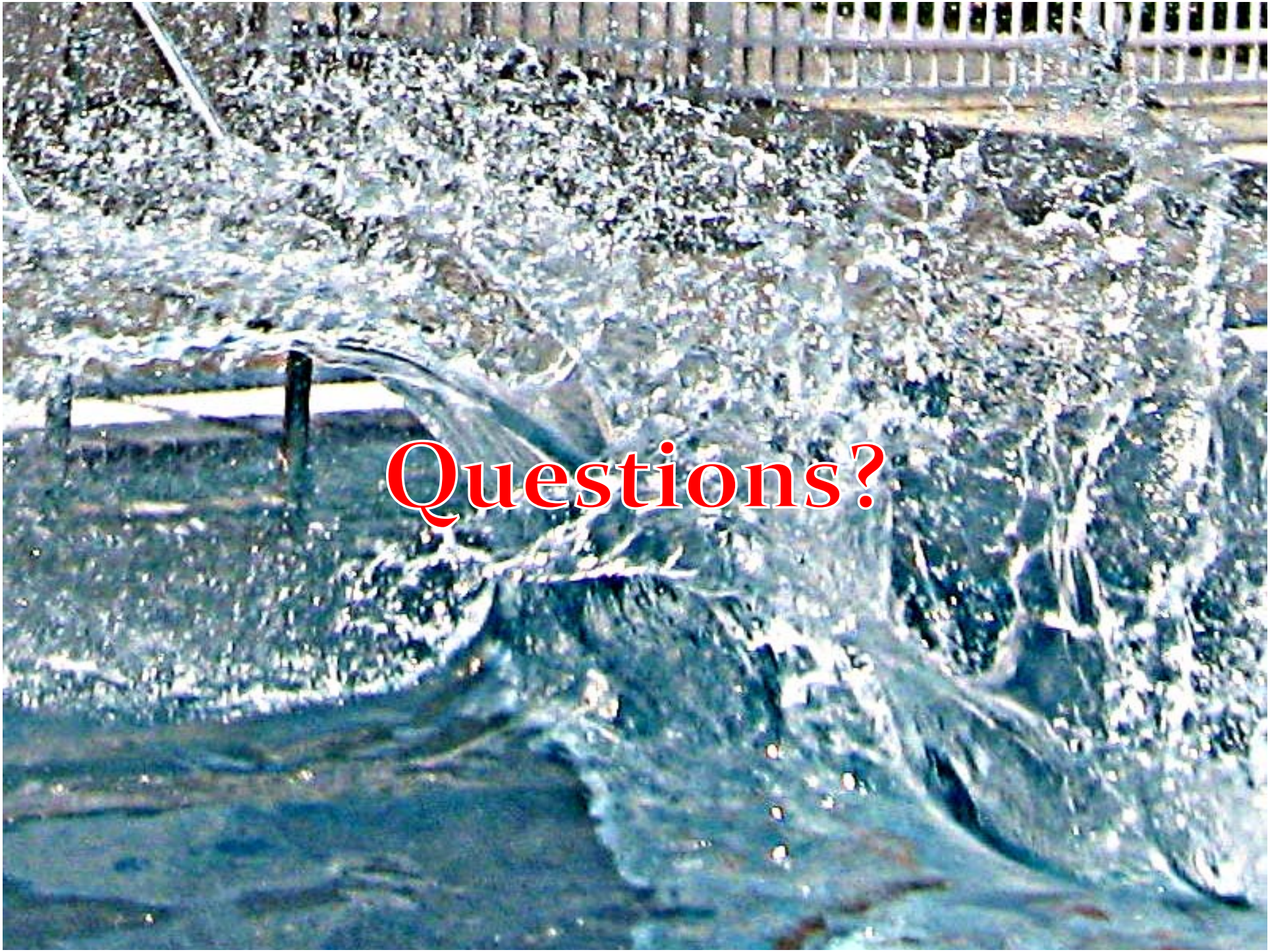
FRONT
RIGHT
RIGHT

pulsar plus
Calcium Hypochlorite

GUARD

GUARD
LINCOLN
3 FT

GUARD
GUARD


Questions?

Thank You
For Your Participation

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