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{\rtf1\mac\deff2 {\fonttbl{\f0\fswiss Chicago;}{\f2\froman New York;}{\f3\fswiss Geneva;}{\f4\fmodern Monaco;}{\f11\fnil Cairo;}{\f13\fnil Zapf Dingbats;}{\f15\fnil N Helvetica Narrow;}{\f16\fnil Palatino;}{\f18\fnil Zapf Chancery;}{\f20\froman Times;}
{\f21\fswiss Helvetica;}{\f22\fmodern Courier;}{\f23\fttech Symbol;}{\f200\fnil Compton's- Superscript;}{\f201\fnil Mishawaka Bold;}{\f209\fnil Compton's-Subscript;}{\f256\fnil Mishawaka;}{\f257\fnil MissVikki;}{\f1039\fnil Dagger;}
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{\f4323\fnil PalatialItalic;}{\f4767\fnil Moderne;}{\f6468\fnil Palatia;}{\f8234\fnil Tubular;}{\f8237\fnil Heather;}{\f8366\fnil Muriel;}{\f8411\fnil Standout;}{\f8433\fnil Steamer;}{\f8477\fnil Jester;}{\f8482\fnil Calligrapher;}{\f8487\fnil Scribble;}
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\page Date: Wed, 5 Jun 1996 15:08:21 -0400\par
From: JAMES SHECKELS <sheckej@EARTHLINK.NET>\par
Subject: Re: Question about Aquatic Activities\par
To: Multiple recipients of list SCOUTS-L <SCOUTS-L@TCUBVM.IS.TCU.EDU>\par
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Dexter Lovrien writes (snipped):\par
>Ira,\par
>Any amusement parks I have been to which have water rides have large\par
>lifeguard staffs and therefore should, IMHO, provide those attending the\par
>park with a safe/superfised enviroment. I'm not saying justt take the whole\par

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>troop to one of these parks and turn them loose for the day. I feel adults
>from the troop should still keep an eye on things but need not worry about
>"safe swim defense".

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The Guide to Safe Scouting clearly states that ANY Scout activity involving
swimming must be supervised by at least one adult (21 or older) that has had
Safe Swim Defense training and is committed to the eight defenses in the
plan. This does not mean that the unit must provide for all eight defenses,
only that the adult who is the Safe Swim Defense trained person in
attendance should ensure that the eight defense principles are present. The
above statement "need not worry about SSD" causes me concern, both for the
safety of the swimmers and liability protection of the leaders and BSA.

Looking at the eight defenses:

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- 1) Qualified supervision: By having the 21 year or older SSD trained adult
in attendance, this requirement is met.
- 2) Physical Fitness: Unit responsibility BEFORE any activity is conducted -
have that physical history on the back of the Join Scouts form properly
completed. Use the higher classes of physicals if the activity requires it.
- 3) Safe area: As explained in SSD, the unit checks out the area. In
principle, this is required only for areas the unit is assuming total
responsibility for (i.e. a lake near a campsite, pool at a leaders home,
etc). For swim areas where the vendor ensures the principles of this
defense are met, the spirit of the safe area defense is met. The adult SSD
person should satisfy him/herself that this is in fact true.
- 4) Lifeguards on duty: Again, the adult SSD person should satisfy
him/herself that the vendor is meeting this requirement. Can't say I have
ever been to a commercial water attraction that did not have at least two
TRAINED lifeguards on duty. Note that the SSD requirement does not specify
the Lifeguards are to be Lifeguard trained/certified, only capable of
performing the duties described! No age requirement neither.
- 5) Lookout: Again, provided by the commercial vendor most of the time.
Nothing wrong with the unit specifying a person for this duty, even if it's
on a rotational basis.
- 6) Ability Groups: Unit responsibility - know the ability of each member
BEFORE the activity occurs. Ensure that each member knows where he/she may
and may not go at the place the activity occurs. Most of these activities
mark off areas by depth.
- 7) Buddy system - Unit responsibility. Do it. Do it for EVERY activity, be
it aquatics, camping, hiking, or a simple excursion to the local fire
department. Make the Scouts responsible for each other.
- 8) Discipline - Unit responsibility. As with #7, should ALWAYS be present
anyway.

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So, you see it is very easy to comply with this BSA policy no matter where
the swim activity takes place. It just ain't hard enough to "not worry"
about it, but it sure is very hard to explain why you didn't "worry" about
it when a young Scout ends up dead.

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I've said it before, I'll say it again "Scouting isn't an exact science, so
use your brain - nobody else is! ;-)\par

YIS Jim Sheckels I used to be a Bobwhite....SE-308-7(82)\par

sheckej@earthlink.net Commissioner, COR, Trainer\par

/The nice thing about TEAMWORK is that you have someone on your side\par

Scouting is NOT an exact science, so use your brain..noone else is!\par

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