

Within Call

Lifesaving Society Standard Approved by the Ontario Board of Directors, January 2024

Standard

Operators should designate a person as “within call” during all aquatic facility operating hours.

Definitions

Within call: means that the individual designated as the “within call backup person” be able to be summoned by voice, or by a recognizable alarm system.

Background/Rationale

Within Ontario Health Regulation 565, “within call” is used to define the specific safety requirements during periods when the facility is being supervised by one lifeguard. It is unreasonable to expect a single lifeguard to perform at a reasonable standard of care in an emergency where follow-up is required. It is essential that another individual be available in case of an emergency and that this person possess relevant training.

Implementation

Regulation 565 requires that an individual be designated as within call whenever the facility is in operation. Operators should ensure this individual:

- is 15 years of age or older
- may be paid staff or volunteer
- is trained in the facility’s emergency procedures (certification is not a requirement).
- is able to effectively and efficiently respond to within call system in a timely manner
- reviews and practices emergency procedures a minimum of once per year

The Lifesaving Society recommends operators include this position in their facility policy and procedures manual, and staff handbooks.

All staff should review this position and its application at least once a year during staff training sessions, or better, update and refresher sessions should be scheduled regularly throughout the year. A training record should be maintained listing aquatic staff who have participated in the training.

References

- Ontario Health Regulation 565
- *Alert: Lifeguarding in Action*

Disclaimer

Lifesaving Society 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 Safety Standards do not replace or supersede local, provincial/ territorial 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.

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