



# NLS Recertification Notes for Instructors

June 2012





LIFESAVING SOCIETY

*The Lifeguarding Experts*

## NLS RECERTIFICATION NOTES FOR INSTRUCTORS

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The Lifesaving Society is Canada's lifeguarding expert. The Society  
works to prevent drowning and water-related injury through its training  
programs, Water Smart® public education, water-incident research,  
aquatic safety management and lifesaving sport.

Annually, over 800,000 Canadians participate in the Society's  
swimming, lifesaving, lifeguard and leadership training programs. The  
Society sets the standard for aquatic safety in Canada and certifies  
Canada's National Lifeguards – the professional standard for lifeguards  
in Canada.

The Society is an independent, charitable organization educating  
Canadian lifesavers since the first Lifesaving Society Bronze Medallion  
Award was earned in 1896.

The Society represents Canada internationally as an active member of  
the Royal Life Saving Society and the International Life Saving  
Federation, and is the governing body for lifesaving sport – sport  
recognized by the International Olympic Committee.

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# NOTE TO NLS INSTRUCTORS

In the revised (2012) National Lifeguard program, NLS Recertifications have been standardized across the country. These Notes will guide your recertification planning.

The National Lifeguard Recertification must include the following components:

- Introduction on behalf of the Lifesaving Society
- The required physical standards (see below)
- The required “management” items (see below)
- Lifeguarding situations
- Closing session including evaluation results for each candidate
- Completion of the NLS test sheets

## SUGGESTED TIME GUIDELINES

- A minimum time of 4 hours is recommended based on a class size of 12 candidates for Pool, Waterfront and Waterpark options, and a class size of 9 candidates for Surf. The actual time needed will vary depending on the:
  - Recert format
  - Number of candidates and NLS evaluators
  - Open water conditions
  - Number and type of evaluation activities selected

## EVALUATING CANDIDATES

- The purpose of an NLS Recert is to reconfirm that National Lifeguards can perform at the NLS standard. Candidates are expected to actively participate in 100% of the NLS Recertification.

- The following items must be evaluated in an NLS Recertification:

### NLS Pool Recert

On the NLS test sheet, mandatory recertification items are indicated by the symbol †.

#### ***Physical Standard***

- Item 2a Object recovery
- Item 2c Sprint challenge
- Item 2e Endurance challenge

#### ***Judgment and Skill***

- Item 9a Management of distressed or drowning victim
- Item 9b Management of submerged, non-breathing victim
- Item 9c Management of spinal-injured victim
- Item 9d Management of an injured swimmer (may be evaluated in Lifeguarding situations)
- Item 10 Lifeguarding situations

### NLS Waterpark Recert

#### ***Physical Standard***

- Item 1a Spinal carry
- Item 1 b Approach and carry

#### ***Judgment and Skill***

- Item 11a Management of distressed or drowning victim
- Item 11b Management of submerged, non-breathing victim
- Item 11c Management of spinal-injured victim
- Item 12 Lifeguarding situations

### NLS Waterfront Recert

#### ***Physical Standard***

- Item 2a Run-swim-tow
- Item 2b Rescue sprint
- Item 2c Victim carry

***Judgment and Skill***

- Item 7 Use of rescue craft
- Item 10a Management of distressed or drowning victim
- Item 10b Management of submerged, non-breathing victim
- Item 10c Management of spinal-injured victim
- Item 10d Management of an injured swimmer (may be evaluated within Lifeguarding situations)
- Item 11 Lifeguarding situations

**NLS Surf Recert*****Physical Standard***

- Item 1a Run-swim-tow
- Item 1b Run-swim-run
- Item 1c Victim carry

***Judgment and Skill***

- Item 6 Use of rescue craft
- Item 9a Management of distressed or drowning victim
- Item 9b Management of submerged, non-breathing victim
- Item 9c Management of spinal-injured victim
- Item 9d Management of an injured swimmer (may be evaluated within Lifeguarding situations)
- Item 10 Lifeguarding situations

- First aid content from *Management of an injured swimmer* (Pool Item 9d, Waterfront Item 10d, Surf Item 9d) and *Slide rescue* (Waterpark Item 9b) is combined with Lifeguarding situations (Pool Item 10, Waterpark Item 12, Waterfront Item 11, Surf Item 10).
- The NLS Recertification may provide an opportunity for additional lifeguard education on specific topics or techniques added by the Lifesaving Society Branch, the affiliate or the NLS Instructor. However, such enrichment items are not part of candidate evaluation for NLS certification.

## DESIGNING SITUATIONS

- When designing lifeguard situations for an NLS Recert, consider the following:
- The majority of situations should occur in the water.
  - Situations should reflect those most commonly encountered in real life.
  - Examiners must select situations from the following lists:

Minor Emergency	Major Emergency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asthma (meds available)</li> <li>• Chest pain (meds available)</li> <li>• Hyperventilation</li> <li>• Hypoglycemia (food/fluids available)</li> <li>• Illness (e.g., nausea/vomiting results in pool contamination)</li> <li>• Heat exhaustion (fluids available)</li> <li>• Burn (e.g., 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> degree on arm)</li> <li>• DNS (“double clutch”)</li> <li>• Minor bleed (e.g., from nose, lip or finger)</li> <li>• Cramp (e.g., leg cramp)</li> <li>• Sprain (e.g., ankle sprain)</li> <li>• Fight (e.g., kick to stomach – victim winded)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anaphylaxis (with or without meds)</li> <li>• Seizure (land or water)</li> <li>• Stroke (e.g., one-sided paralysis and altered LOC)</li> <li>• Missing child (e.g., missing child found chewing gum, choking: severe obstruction to unconscious.)</li> <li>• Fainting</li> <li>• Heat stroke</li> <li>• Shallow water blackout</li> <li>• Aspiration (e.g., with laryngospasm)</li> <li>• Major bleed</li> <li>• Dislocated joint (e.g., shoulder)</li> <li>• Head injury with scalp laceration</li> <li>• Pool clear (e.g., fire alarm and panicked patron falls and breaks their lower leg)</li> </ul>

- Each team member should act as the 1<sup>st</sup> guard who responds to a minor incident. Subsequently, team members work as a team in responding to major emergencies.

- The design and the number of major emergencies needs to ensure that all Recert candidates have an opportunity to demonstrate to the evaluator's satisfaction that they are performing at the NLS standard

## NLS INSTRUCTOR RESOURCES

- The *National Lifeguard Award Guide* provides item descriptions, purpose statements, learning outcomes, evaluation criteria (Must Sees) and Notes for NLS Instructors. Recert candidate evaluation must be based on the items and Must Sees detailed in the award guide – and nothing else.
- *Alert: Lifeguarding in Action* is the textbook for the NLS program. The *Canadian Lifesaving Manual* provides resuscitation and CPR technical information in addition to the technical descriptions of all lifesaving skills and techniques.