

Canadians abroad at the 2025 RLSS Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships

After successfully hosting the 2023 event in Windsor, Ontario, Lifesaving Society Canada passed the torch to the United Kingdom to host the 2025 Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships in Swansea, Wales. Two full teams of Canadian athletes travelled to Swansea in mid-July, along with six support staff, and 15 Canadian officials helped make it another fantastic event. These championships, held every two years, aim to encourage participation in Lifesaving Sport and further the development of lifesaving practices while bringing the lifesaving community together.

Fiercely Canadian

The Canadian Development Team medalled on six occasions with four individual and two relay bronze medals. The National and Development teams, composed of five men and five women each, scored a total of 35 A-finals (top eight) and 25 B-finals (top 16). Personal bests and tight races were aplenty, while Canadian records were smashed to the sounds of splashes and cheers from the many fans in attendance. Alberta's Oliver Johnson led the way with four new Youth Canadian Records, with his team adding three more. Meanwhile, the National Team women beat a medley relay record held since 2014, when their now-coach, Ontario's Chantique Carey-Payne, was on the team.

Good things grow

Ontario had strong representation in the Canadian delegation. Two athletes came from Ontario: Rouge Valley LC's Chloe Chen and Saugeen Shores LC's Sydney Shemilt, with the latter claiming one of the bronze medals on the last day of competition in the rescue medley. Ontario supported the National teams with a coach (Chantique Carey-Payne), a manager (Kathleen Finn) and a physical therapist (Lindsay James). Of the 15 officials in attendance, 10 hailed from our lovely province.

Thank you to all those behind the scenes who support our athletes, clubs and competitions to continue the growth of our sport and success in events like the RLSS Commonwealth Lifesaving Championships. See you in 2027!



How to get the most out of Apprenticeship

The Lifesaving Society's success is rooted in mentorship. National Trainers mentor Trainers, Trainers mentor Instructors, Area Chairs mentor Examiner Mentors, Examiner Mentors mentor Examiners, and this chain of guidance continues throughout the organization. A key element of this mentorship is apprenticeship, which ensures hands-on learning and the development of skills through practical experience.

Apprenticeship is a significant investment of time and energy. Mentees aim to gain experience so they can teach courses independently. Mentors invest extra time and effort to ensure that the experience goes well while balancing their course delivery.

If you're about to start an apprenticeship, whether you're a mentee or a mentor, here are some tips on how to get the most out of the experience.

For Mentees:

- **Plan ahead** – Contact the affiliate or Area Chair early. Each site may have unique processes or requirements for apprenticeships, or extra steps such as interviews, Vulnerable Sector Checks or onboarding, so give yourself enough time to complete any requirements.
- **Collaborate with your Mentor** – Before the course, reach out to your mentor ahead of time to introduce yourself and begin planning. Have a conversation about roles, responsibilities, goals and mutual expectations. This sets the foundation for a successful experience.
- **Plan your teaching sections** – Work with your mentor to identify which parts of the course you'll lead. Use this planning time to ensure you're prepared and confident.
- **Ask questions** – If you're unsure about anything, ask. The purpose of the apprenticeship is to learn. There are a lot of resources you can consult, and it's okay to ask where to look. You are not expected to know everything.
- **Don't forget your paperwork** – After the course, have your Training Record and Apprenticeship Report ready with your sections completed for your mentor. Ensure you sign the test sheet as an Instructor, in addition to the apprenticeship section, as that is how your teaching experience is recorded.

THE CLASSIC FOX 40



Order from LifeguardDepot.com
or call 416-490-8844.

**Lifeguard
Depot.com®**



LifeguardDepot.com is the online store of the Lifesaving Society.
All proceeds from LifeguardDepot.com support drowning prevention
and the development of young leaders through Lifesaving Sport.

For Mentors:

- **Clarify expectations early** – Be transparent about what you expect from your mentees throughout the course. Clear expectations support accountability and reduce confusion.
- **Outline a plan** – Set clear timelines and expectations for the course. Plan for specific times when you will provide your mentee with feedback throughout the course. Involve your mentees in the planning process.
- **Follow Lifesaving Society requirements** – The Society has clear guidelines regarding apprenticeships to ensure a mentee can be signed off as a Trainer. Do not create your own rules or requirements. If the mentee demonstrates competencies in accordance with the Society's requirements, they have successfully met the requirements for apprenticeship.
- **Ensure ongoing feedback** – Continuous, constructive feedback throughout the course is essential to your mentees' growth and development. They're there to learn from your experience. Feedback ensures that there are no surprises at the end and provides them with an opportunity to address any issues they may be having.
- **Leverage their strengths** – Mentees are a valuable asset to your course. They bring new experiences and perspectives to the learning environment and can act as an extra set of hands in your classes. Take advantage of the extra help: have them facilitate small groups, assist with evaluation, provide feedback, help set up and lead portions of the course.
- **Ask questions** – Guess what—you're human too! Sometimes you need to ask questions and that's okay. You're not expected to know absolutely everything either. Talk to your affiliate, Area Chair, or Society staff.

For Affiliates:

Affiliates play a vital role in developing the next generation of Instructors, Examiners, and Trainers. Most affiliates already contribute to this by offering apprenticeship opportunities to their staff – and this support is deeply appreciated!

However, one common challenge faced by mentees is accessing apprenticeship opportunities when they are not currently employed by or affiliated with a specific organization. Affiliates who have the capacity to take on mentee apprenticeships should consider leveraging volunteer recruitment processes, which often include interviews and Vulnerable Sector Screenings, to meet their requirements and still offer opportunities to upcoming Trainers. You never know – this may be your next best Trainer!

Do it for our future

Mentors, Mentees and Affiliates working together in such a vital way ensure that we have a program that is high quality and successful. The next generation of Examiners, Examiner Mentors, and Trainers learn so much from apprenticeships, and they choose to continue to teach programs based on these experiences.

DONATE TODAY!

The Lifesaving Society is a registered charity, and every dollar helps! Donate today to help make a difference in Ontario.



Uniforms designed by lifeguards for lifeguards!

High-visibility lifeguard uniforms in distinctive red and yellow – international lifeguard colours. Singlets, T-shirts or long-sleeved shirts, shorts and hats.

Durable, lightweight fabric. Superior comfort and fit. Quick drying. UV protection. Available exclusively from the Lifesaving Society.

Order online at LifeguardDepot.com or call 416-490-8844.
Free standard shipping within Canada.
Some exclusions apply. Custom orders available.

**Lifeguard
Depot.com®**

Upholding standards: how the individual certification review process works

The Lifesaving Society is committed to safeguarding the integrity and reputation of its programs by ensuring that all Instructors, Coaches, Examiners, Trainers, and award holders adhere to the Society's established policies, procedures, codes of conduct, and standards. These elements are the foundation of public trust in the Society's certifications and the overall quality of our programs.

Every time a course is delivered, Lifesaving Society Instructors, Coaches, Examiners and Trainers maintain the organization's standards by following the most current *Program Guide*, teaching and evaluating according to the applicable Award Guides and technical references, and staying up to date on policies and procedures from the Society's website and *Lifeline*. This ensures consistency, fairness, and professionalism across all programs.

When standards are not followed

While most fulfill their responsibilities with integrity, there may be occasions when policies or standards are not followed. In such cases, the Society may initiate an Individual Certification Review. This is a confidential and detailed process used to investigate complaints and determine what, if any, action is needed.

The certification review process

1. **Complaint Submission** – The process begins when a formal complaint is submitted in writing to the Lifesaving Society. A Program Manager is assigned and investigates.
2. **Investigation Phase** – The investigation includes reviewing the complaint in detail, gathering relevant documentation (test sheets, lesson plans, teaching notes, evaluation forms, certification cards, etc.), and interviewing those involved, including the individual, witnesses, candidates, apprentices, or affiliate representatives. Findings are compiled into a written report. In some cases, issues can be resolved at this stage, and no further action is needed.
3. **Certification Review Panel** – If further review is required, a Certification Review meeting is organized to assess the case. This is led by a Certification Review Chair and up to five Society volunteer council members. The panel carefully reviews the investigation and considers any statements given by the individual during the meeting.

Based on the severity of the situation, the panel can issue a range of sanctions:

- No action required
- Written reprimand
- Probation
- Suspension
- Revocation of appointment or decertification
- Any combination of the above

In most cases, the outcome includes extra training or a mentor to help. This shows that the process isn't just about discipline – it's also about learning and support.

What can I do?

Everyone plays a part in upholding our shared standards. Whether you're new to instructing or a seasoned trainer, you can actively contribute to the quality and integrity of our programs by:

- **Educating yourself** – Take time to use, read and understand the Society's policies, procedures, Award Guides and technical materials.
- **Using the *Program Guide*** – It outlines expectations and delivery standards for all awards.
- **Discussing Certification Reviews during Instructor level courses** – By understanding the process early, instructors can better appreciate the importance of doing things right from the start.
- **Asking questions** – If you're ever uncertain about a policy, evaluation standard, or procedure, reach out to the Lifesaving Society.
- **Speaking to your employer** – We're all human, and mistakes can happen. In some cases, the course may not have been scheduled or set up according to the *Program Guide*. Take the time to communicate and collaborate to resolve any issues and ensure that sufficient class and water time is allocated, and that all necessary equipment and resources are available for you to deliver the course to standard.

Why it matters

A Certification Review is an important process that protects the quality and credibility of the Society's certifications. It reinforces the Society's commitment to excellence, fairness, and public safety. By holding ourselves accountable, we help strengthen the Society's mission to prevent drowning and reduce water-related injury. For full details on certification reviews, please refer to the Lifesaving Society's official [Complaint Policy](#).



(From left to right, top to bottom) Melodie Stenson, Daniel Morgan, Elizabeth Jones, Marek Holke, Karen Downie, Caspar Eaton, Harry Anderson, Alexandra Ogilvie and Kionna Chapman at Shendy's Swim School for Canada's first Lifeguard Reciprocity course.

Lifeguard Reciprocity Project

Looking for an overseas adventure? Lifeguards with Canadian pool qualifications now have an easier path to work in the UK, Australia and South Africa thanks to a joint effort between organizations within the Royal Life Saving Society Commonwealth.

By closely comparing each country's pool lifeguard training programs, the Pool Lifeguard Reciprocity Project team mapped out the similarities and differences, helping to identify what's required to support lifeguards transitioning between countries. The result? A streamlined way for lifeguards to become locally certified and job-ready when seeking a lifeguard job to work overseas.

Chief Operations Officer at Lifesaving Society Canada, Wendy Schultenkamper, said, "The pool environment may look different in each country, but the core skills of lifeguarding are universal. This initiative gives lifeguards the chance to build on what they know, adapt to a new setting, and potentially be working to keep people safe around water more quickly."

This project is already seeing success. In June, Marek Holke from the Lifesaving Society Ontario and National Lifeguard Instructor/Examiner Melodie Stenson delivered Canada's first Lifeguard Reciprocity course, certifying seven lifeguards from the United Kingdom to the National Lifeguard program in Canada.

For more information on the Lifeguard Reciprocity Project, please contact [Marek Holke](#).

New edition of *Guide to Ontario Public Pools Regulation*

Updated and ready for you – the fifth edition of the *Guide to Ontario Public Pools Regulation* is here. This edition brings you up to speed on the January 2025 changes to Regulation 565, which governs public pools in Ontario. Updates include:

- Revised requirements for hot water pools and spas
- New regulations for cold plunge and float tanks
- Adjusted pool chemistry ranges
- Numerous small but important changes, along with clarifying notes from the Lifesaving Society throughout

Order your copy today from the newly improved [LifeguardDepot.com](https://lifeguarddepot.com).

If you have questions about the new regulation, the Lifesaving Society is here to help. Our experts can provide clarity and guidance to ensure you understand how the changes affect your facility.

Proven strategies for solving staffing shortages

Staffing shortages can lead to reduced access to swimming lessons, which are critical to achieving our drowning prevention mission. While many facilities have successfully improved aquatic staffing levels in recent years, it's important to stay focused on continued growth.

Over the past few years, our staff, volunteers and affiliates have come together to develop and share proven, effective strategies that will support aquatic staffing development. We have compiled best practices and implementation plans to help you continue to develop your staffing pipeline.

[Read the reports here.](#)

Keep sharing your stories

[Email us](#) to share your success stories, questions and challenges so we can continue to deliver new ideas and develop solutions together.

Another successful NDPW in the books!

July 20–26, 2025, marked our annual National Drowning Prevention Week campaign, and once again, the aquatics community really stepped up to the plate! Pools, municipalities, police, partners, media and volunteers really came together to exemplify this year's theme of *Safer Together*. From flag raisings to water safety events to lifesaving courses, it was inspiring to see such dedication to sharing valuable drowning prevention messaging with Canadians. To everyone who contributed, thank you!

The Lifesaving Society's Public Education and Communications teams stayed busy travelling all over Ontario – giving media interviews, attending events that saw over 6,000 attendees, promoting messages on social media, and educating the public at every opportunity.

One achievement we'd be remiss not to highlight is that we had 24 landmarks and buildings lit up blue for World Drowning Prevention Day on July 25, doubling the count from 2024. We love knowing that our province can come together for such a meaningful cause.

The success of NDPW has only inspired us to keep educating and raising awareness for drowning prevention. Save the date, because NDPW 2026 will take place July 19–25, 2026, and it'll be bigger and better than ever!

Why we're updating the National Lifeguard Test Sheet

The Lifesaving Society values diversity and inclusion. We know our lifeguard candidates come from many different backgrounds and identities. Until now, the National Lifeguard test sheet only asked candidates to mark "male" or "female." That doesn't reflect everyone, and it doesn't provide space for people who don't identify within that binary.

Why do we ask about sex identification at all?

The Society uses sex-identification information to ensure our physical standards are fair. We follow a legal process called the *Meiorin Test* to demonstrate that our requirements are necessary for the job and do not unfairly impact one sex over another. Without this information, we would not know whether the standards work equally for everyone. This approach is also used in other industries, such as Emergency Services, the Canadian Armed Forces, and Border Services, where sex-based data helps test and review physical standards.

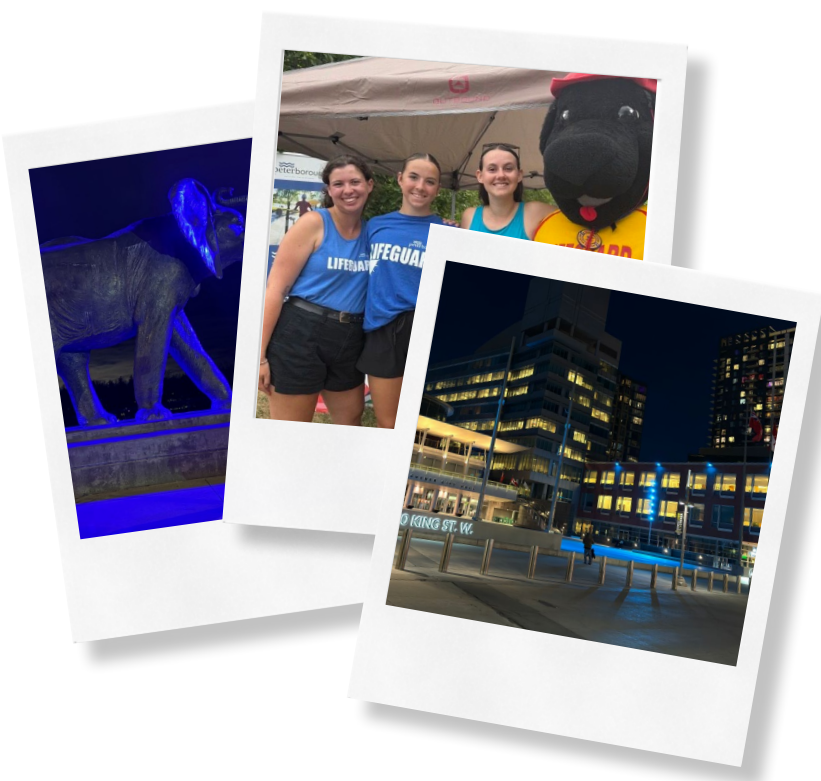
What's changing and why

We know that sex and gender are not the same. Gender is personal and not always tied to biology. That's why the test sheet is being updated to offer the options: M, F, or X. You'll be able to download these updated test sheets October 1. Once available, please ensure all National Lifeguard courses and recertifications use the updated test sheets.

Additionally, in early January, we will update our *Program Guide* to provide in-course support for Instructors on this topic.

Inclusivity is a priority, and with this change, we took the time to also update our internal member management software too. Simply offering an X option without registering it would be symbolic, not genuine inclusivity.

We are also inviting members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community to provide feedback so we can continue to improve and grow. This change is one small step toward making our programs more respectful and inclusive for everyone.



Making a Splash

Designated Water Smart® schools get an A+

With the school year back in full swing, it's the perfect time to highlight the efforts of Norfolk County and its partnerships with two local school boards: Grand Erie District School Board and Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board.

In 2023, Norfolk County partnered with these boards to award schools a Designated Water Smart School certificate. The criteria and concept entirely originated from Norfolk County. To earn this designation, schools had to participate in Swim to Survive or Swim to Survive+ programs, which include both in-class and in-water sessions, as well as a presentation from Norfolk County's aquatic staff.

Beyond awarding this certificate, Norfolk County aquatic staff seized additional meaningful opportunities to collaborate with local students and parents. By intentionally planning Water Smart activities during public swims on PA Days, and presenting at the Parent Involvement Committee meeting for the Grand Erie District School Board, they successfully reached and educated their target audiences.

This great work earned Norfolk County the Lifesaving Society Ontario's Water Smart Award at this past AGM, and there are now plans underway to replicate this initiative across Ontario. This is a textbook example of how a great idea can evolve into something powerful and how no affiliate is too small to come up top of their class.

APPLY FOR THE 2025 WATER SMART AWARD

Applications for the 2025 Water Smart Award are due January 13, 2026. Start documenting your water safety initiatives and hard work now! [Learn more here.](#)

New Prestan Ultralite 12-Pack

Transport a complete classroom of CPR Training Manikins in one complete package. Easy setup, lightweight and convenient. Training on-the-go!



Order through

**Lifeguard
Depot.com®**

LifeguardDepot.com is the online store of the Lifesaving Society. All proceeds from LifeguardDepot.com support drowning prevention and the development of young leaders through Lifesaving Sport.