

GLOSSARY

Abandonment – Ending care of an ill or injured person without that person’s consent or without ensuring that someone with equal or greater training will continue that care.

Abdomen – The middle part of the trunk (torso) containing the stomach, liver and other organs.

Abrasion – A wound in which skin is rubbed or scraped away.

Active drowning victim – A person exhibiting universal behavior that includes struggling at the surface in a vertical position and being unable to move forward or tread water.

Agonal breaths – Isolated or infrequent breaths in the absence of normal breathing in an unresponsive person.

AIDS – When an infected person has a significant drop in a certain type of white blood cells or shows signs of having certain infections or cancers caused by an HIV infection.

Airway adjunct – A mechanical device to keep a victim’s airway clear.

Anaphylactic shock – A severe allergic reaction in which air passages may swell and restrict breathing; a form of shock. See also anaphylaxis.

Anaphylaxis – A severe allergic reaction; a form of shock. See also anaphylactic shock.

Anatomic splint – A part of the body used to immobilize an injured body part.

Anatomical airway obstruction – Complete or partial blockage of the airway by the tongue or swollen tissues of the mouth or throat.

Antihistamine – Drug used to treat the signals of allergic reactions.

Aquatic environment – An environment in which recreational water activities are played or performed.

Aquatic safety team – A network of people in the facility and emergency medical services system who can plan for, respond to and assist in an emergency at an aquatic facility.

Area of responsibility – The zone or area in which a lifeguard conducts surveillance.

Ashen – A grayish color; darker skin often looks ashen instead of pale.

Assess – To examine and evaluate a situation carefully.

Asthma – A condition that narrows the air passages and makes breathing difficult.

Asystole – A condition in which the heart has stopped generating electrical activity.

Atrioventricular node (AV) – The point along the heart’s electrical pathway midway between the atria and ventricles that sends electrical impulses to the ventricles.

Automated external defibrillator (AED) – An automatic device used to recognize a heart rhythm that requires an electric shock and either delivers the shock or prompts the rescuer to deliver it.

Avulsion – A wound in which soft tissue is partially or completely torn away.

Backboard – A standard piece of rescue equipment at all aquatic facilities used to maintain in-line stabilization while securing and transporting a victim with a suspected head, neck or back injury.

Bag-valve-mask (BVM) resuscitator – A handheld breathing device used on a victim in respiratory distress or respiratory arrest. It consists of a self-inflating bag, a one-way valve and a mask; can be used with or without supplemental oxygen.

Bandage – Material used to wrap or cover an injured body part; often used to hold a dressing in place.

Benchmarks – A set of standards used as a point of reference for evaluating performance or level of quality.

Blind spots – Areas within a lifeguard’s area of responsibility that cannot be seen or are difficult to see.

Bloodborne pathogens – Bacteria and viruses present in blood and body fluids that can cause disease in humans.

Bloodborne pathogens standard – A federal regulation designed to protect employees from exposure to bodily fluids that might contain a disease-causing agent.

Body substance isolation (BSI) precautions – An approach to infection control that considers all body fluids and substances to be infectious.

Bone – A dense, hard tissue that forms the skeleton.

Buddy board – A board with identification tags used to keep track of swimmers and reinforce the importance of the buddy system.

Bulkhead – A moveable wall placed in a swimming pool to separate activities or water of different depths.

Buoy – A float in the water anchored to the bottom.

Buoyancy – The tendency of a body to float or to rise when submerged in a fluid.

Buoyant – Tending to float, capable of keeping an object afloat.

Bystanders – People at the scene of an emergency who do not have a duty to provide care.

Carbon dioxide – A colorless, odorless gas; a waste product of respiration.

Carbon monoxide – A clear, odorless, poisonous gas produced when carbon or other fuel is burned, as in gasoline engines.

Cardiac arrest – A condition in which the heart has stopped or beats too ineffectively to generate a pulse.

Cartilage – An elastic tissue in the body; in the joints, it acts as a shock absorber when a person is walking, running or jumping.

Catch pool – A small pool at the bottom of a slide where patrons enter water deep enough to cushion their landing.

Chain of command – The structure of employee and management positions in a facility or organization.

Chemical hazard – A harmful or potentially harmful substance in or around a facility.

Chest – The upper part of the trunk (torso) containing the heart, major blood vessels and lungs.

Chronic – Persistent over a long period of time.

Closed wound – An injury that does not break the skin and in which soft tissue damage occurs beneath the skin.

Cold-related emergencies – Emergencies, including hypothermia and frostbite, caused by overexposure to cold.

Concussion – A temporary impairment of brain function.

Confidentiality – Protecting a victim's privacy by not revealing any personal information learned about a victim except to law enforcement personnel or emergency medical services personnel caring for the victim.

Consent – Permission to provide care given by an ill or injured person to a rescuer.

Convulsions – Sudden, uncontrolled muscular contractions.

CPR – A technique that combines chest compressions and rescue breaths for a victim whose heart and breathing have stopped.

Critical incident – Any situation that causes a person to experience unusually strong emotional reactions that interfere with their ability to function during and after a highly stressful incident.

Critical incident stress – The stress a person experiences during or after a highly stressful emergency.

Cross bearing – A technique for determining the place where a submerged victim was last seen, performed by two persons some distance apart, each pointing to the place such that the position is where the lines of their pointing cross.

Current – Fast-moving water.

Cyanosis – A blue discoloration of the skin around the mouth and fingertips resulting from a lack of oxygen in the blood.

Daily log – A written journal kept by lifeguards, the head lifeguard and management containing a daily account of safety precautions taken and significant events.

Deep-water line search – An effective pattern for searching in water that is greater than chest deep.

Defibrillation – An electrical shock that disrupts the electrical activity of the heart long enough to allow the heart to spontaneously develop an effective rhythm on its own.

Diabetes – A condition in which the body does not produce enough insulin or does not use insulin effectively enough to regulate the amount of sugar (glucose) in the bloodstream.

Diabetic – A person with the condition called diabetes mellitus, which causes a body to produce insufficient amounts of the hormone insulin.

Diabetic emergency – A situation in which a person becomes ill because of an imbalance of sugar (glucose) and insulin in the bloodstream.

Direct contact transmission – Occurs when infected blood or body fluids from one person enter another person's body at a correct entry site.

Disability – The loss, absence or impairment of sensory, motor or mental function.

Dislocation – The movement of a bone away from its normal position at a joint.

Disoriented – Being in a state of confusion; not knowing place, identity or what happened.

Dispatch – The method for informing patrons when it is safe to proceed on a ride.

Distressed swimmer – A person capable of staying afloat, but likely to need assistance to get to safety. If not rescued, the person becomes an active drowning victim.

Dressing – A pad placed on a wound to control bleeding and prevent infection.

Drop-off slide – A slide that ends with a drop of several feet into a catch pool.

Droplet transmission – Transmission of disease through the inhalation of droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze.

Drowning – Death by suffocation in water.

Drug – Any substance other than food intended to affect the functions of the body.

Duty to act – A legal responsibility of certain people to provide a reasonable standard of emergency care; may be required by case law, statute or job description.

Electrocardiogram (ECG) – A graphic record produced by a device that records the electrical activity of the heart from the chest.

Emergency – A sudden, unexpected incident demanding immediate action.

Emergency action plan (EAP) – A written plan detailing how facility staff are to respond in a specific type of emergency.

Emergency back-up coverage – Coverage by lifeguards who remain out of the water during an emergency situation and supervise a larger area when another lifeguard must enter the water for a rescue.

Emergency medical services (EMS) personnel – Trained and equipped community-based personnel dispatched through a local emergency number to provide emergency care for injured or ill people.

Emergency medical technician (EMT) – A person who has successfully completed a state-approved emergency medical technician training program; paramedics are the highest level of EMTs.

Emergency stop button – A button or switch used to immediately turn off the waves or water flow in a wave pool, water slide or other water attraction in the event of an emergency.

Emphysema – A disease in which the lungs lose their ability to exchange carbon dioxide and oxygen effectively.

Engineering controls – Safeguards intended to isolate or remove a hazard from the workplace.

Epilepsy – A chronic condition characterized by seizures that vary in type and duration; can usually be controlled by medication.

Epinephrine – A form of adrenaline medication prescribed to treat the symptoms of severe allergic reactions.

Exhaustion – The state of being extremely tired or weak.

Facility surveillance – Checking the facility to help prevent injuries caused by avoidable hazards in the facility's environment.

Fainting – A temporary loss of consciousness.

Fibrillation – A quivering of the heart's ventricles.

Forearm – The upper extremity from the elbow to the wrist.

Fracture – A chip, crack or complete break in bone tissue.

Gasp reflex – A sudden involuntary attempt to "catch one's breath," which may cause the victim to inhale water into the lungs if the face is underwater.

Heat cramps – Painful muscle spasms that usually occur in the legs and abdomen.

Heat exhaustion – An early indicator that the body's cooling system is becoming overwhelmed. Signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion include cool, moist, pale, ashen or flushed skin; headache, nausea and dizziness; weakness and exhaustion; and heavy sweating.

Heat stroke – A life-threatening condition that develops when the body's cooling mechanisms are overwhelmed and body systems begin to fail.

Heat-related illnesses – Illnesses, including heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat stroke, caused by overexposure to heat.

Hemostatic agents – A substance that stops bleeding by shortening the amount of time it takes for blood to clot. They usually contain chemicals that remove moisture from the blood.

Hepatitis B – A liver infection caused by the hepatitis B virus; may be severe or even fatal and can be in the body up to 6 months before symptoms appear.

Hepatitis C – A liver disease caused by the hepatitis C virus; it is the most common chronic bloodborne infection in the United States.

HIV – A virus that destroys the body's ability to fight infection. A result of HIV infection is referred to as AIDS.

Hull – The main body of a boat.

Hydraulic – Strong force created by water flowing downward over an obstruction and then reversing its flow.

Hyperglycemia – Someone experiencing symptoms of high blood sugar.

Hyperventilation – A dangerous technique some swimmers use to stay under water longer by taking several deep breaths followed by forceful exhalations, then inhaling deeply before swimming under water.

Hypoglycemia – Someone experiencing symptoms of low blood sugar.

Hypothermia – A life-threatening condition in which cold or cool temperatures cause the body to lose heat faster than it can produce it.

Hypoxia – A condition in which insufficient oxygen reaches the cells, resulting in cyanosis and changes in responsiveness and in breathing and heart rates.

Immobilize – To use a splint or other method to keep an injured body part from moving.

Implied consent – Legal concept that assumes a person would consent to receive emergency care if they were physically able to do so.

Incident – An occurrence or event that interrupts normal procedure or brings about a crisis.

Incident report – A report filed by a lifeguard or other facility staff who responded to an emergency or other incident.

Indirect contact transmission – Occurs when a person touches objects that have the blood or body fluid of an infected person, and that infected blood or body fluid enters the body through a correct entry site.

Inflatables – Plastic toys or equipment that are filled with air to function as recommended.

Inhaled poison – A poison that a person breathes into the lungs.

Injury – The physical harm from an external force on the body.

In-line stabilization – A technique used to minimize movement of a victim's head and neck while providing care.

In-service training – Regularly scheduled staff meetings and practice sessions that cover lifeguarding information and skills.

Instinctive drowning response – A universal set of behaviors exhibited by an active drowning victim that include struggling to keep the face above water, extending arms to the side and pressing down for support, not making any forward progress in the water and staying at the surface for only 20 to 60 seconds.

Intervals – A series of repeat swims of the same distance and time interval, each done at the same high level of effort.

Jaundice – Yellowing of the skin and eyes.

Joint – A structure where two or more bones are joined.

Laceration – A cut.

Laryngospasm – A spasm of the vocal cords that closes the airway.

Life jacket – A type of personal floatation device (PFD) approved by the United States Coast Guard for use during activities in, on or around water.

Lifeguard – A person trained in lifeguarding, CPR and first aid skills who ensures the safety of people at an aquatic facility by preventing and responding to emergencies.

Lifeguard competitions – Events and contests designed to evaluate the skills and knowledge of individual lifeguards and lifeguard teams.

Lifeguard team – A group of two or more lifeguards on duty at a facility at the same time.

Ligaments – A tough, fibrous connective tissue that holds bones together at a joint.

Mechanical obstruction – Complete or partial blockage of the airway by a foreign object, such as a piece of food or a small toy, or by fluids, such as vomit or blood.

Muscle – Tissue in the body that lengthens and shortens to create movement.

Myocardial infarction – A heart attack.

Nasal cannula – A device used to deliver oxygen to a breathing person; used mostly for victims with minor breathing problems.

Negligence – The failure to follow the standard of care or to act, thereby causing injury or further harm to another.

Nonfatal drowning – To survive, at least temporarily, following submersion in water (drowning).

Non-rebreather mask – A mask used to deliver high concentrations of oxygen to breathing victims. Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) – A government agency that helps protect the health and safety of employees in the workplace.

Open wound – An injury to soft tissue resulting in a break in the skin, such as a cut.

Opportunistic infections – Infections that strike people whose immune systems are weakened by HIV or other infections.

Oxygen – A tasteless, colorless, odorless gas necessary to sustain life.

Oxygen delivery device – Equipment used to supply oxygen to a victim of a breathing emergency.

Paralysis – A loss of muscle control; a permanent loss of feeling and movement.

Partial thickness burn – A burn that involves both layers of skin. Also called a second-degree burn.

Passive drowning victim – An unresponsive victim face-down, submerged or near the surface.

Pathogen – A disease-causing agent. Also called a microorganism or germ.

Patron surveillance – Maintaining a close watch over the people using an aquatic facility.

Peripheral vision – What one sees at the edges of one's field of vision.

Personal floatation device (PFD) – Coast Guard approved life jacket, buoyancy vest, wearable floatation aid, throwable device or other special-use floatation device.

Personal water craft – A motorized vehicle designed for one or two riders that skims over the surface of the water.

Pier – A wooden walkway or platform built over the water supported by pillars that is used for boats to dock, fishing or other water activities.

Poison – Any substance that causes injury, illness or death when introduced into the body.

Poison Control Center (PCC) – A specialized kind of health center that provides information in cases of poisoning or suspected poisoning emergencies.

Policies and procedures manual – A manual that provides detailed information about the daily and emergency operations of a facility.

Preventive lifeguarding – The methods that lifeguards use to prevent drowning and other injuries by identifying dangerous conditions or behaviors and then taking steps to minimize or eliminate them.

Primary responsibility – A lifeguard's main responsibility, which is to prevent drowning and other injuries from occurring at an aquatic facility.

Professional rescuers – Paid or volunteer personnel, including lifeguards, who have a legal duty to act in an emergency.

Public address system – An electronic amplification system, used at an aquatic facility so that announcements can be easily heard by patrons.

Puncture – An open wound created when the skin is pierced by a pointed object.

Rapids ride – A rough-water attraction that simulates white-water rafting.

Reaching assist – A method of helping someone out of the water by reaching to that person with your hand, leg or an object.

Reaching pole – An aluminum or fiberglass pole, usually 10 to 15-feet long, used for rescues.

Refusal of care – The declining of care by a victim; the victim has the right to refuse the care of anyone who responds to an emergency.

Rescue board – A plastic or fiberglass board shaped like a surf board that is used by lifeguards to paddle out and make a rescue.

Rescue tube – A 45- to 54-inch vinyl, foam-filled tube with an attached tow line and shoulder strap that lifeguards use to make rescues.

Respiratory arrest – A condition in which breathing has stopped.

Respiratory distress – A condition in which breathing is difficult.

Respiratory failure – When the respiratory system is beginning to shut down, which in turn can lead to respiratory arrest.

Resuscitation mask – A pliable, dome-shaped device that fits over a person's mouth and nose; used to assist with rescue breathing.

RID factor – Three elements—recognition, intrusion and distraction—related to drownings at guarded facilities.

Ring buoy – A buoyant ring, usually 20 to 30 inches in diameter; with an attached line, allows a rescuer to pull a victim to safety without entering the water.

Risk management – Identifying and eliminating or minimizing dangerous conditions that can cause injuries and financial loss.

Roving station – When a roving lifeguard is assigned a specific zone, which also is covered by another lifeguard in an elevated station.

Runout – The area at the end of a slide where water slows the speed of the riders.

Safety check – An inspection of the facility to find and eliminate or minimize hazards.

Safety Data Sheet (SDS) – A form that provides information about a hazardous substance.

Scanning – A visual technique used by lifeguards to properly observe and monitor patrons participating in water activities.

Secondary responsibilities – Other duties a lifeguard must perform, such as testing the pool water chemistry, assisting patrons, performing maintenance, completing records and reports, or performing opening duties, closing duties or facility safety checks. Secondary responsibilities should never interfere with a lifeguard's primary responsibility.

Seizure – A disorder in the brain's electrical activity, marked by loss of consciousness and often by convulsions.

Shepherd's crook – A reaching pole with a large hook on the end. See also reaching pole.

Shock – A life-threatening condition in which the circulatory system fails to deliver blood to all parts of the body, causing body organs to fail.

Sighting – A technique for noting where a submerged victim was last seen, performed by imagining a line to the opposite shore and estimating the victim's position along that line. See also cross bearing.

Soft tissue – Body structures that include the layers of skin, fat and muscles.

Spa – A small pool or tub in which people sit in rapidly circulating hot water.

Spasm – An involuntary and abnormal muscle contraction.

Speed slide – A steep water slide on which patrons may reach speeds in excess of 35 mph.

Spinal cord – A bundle of nerves extending from the base of the skull to the lower back and protected by the spinal column.

Splint – A device used to immobilize body parts; applying such a device.

Spokesperson – The person at the facility designated to speak on behalf of others.

Sprain – The stretching and tearing of ligaments and other tissue structures at a joint.

Standard of care – The minimal standard and quality of care expected of an emergency care provider.

Standard precautions – Safety measures, such as body substance isolation, taken to prevent occupational-risk exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials, such as body fluids containing visible blood.

Starting blocks – Platforms from which competitive swimmers dive to start a race.

Sterile – Free from germs.

Stern – The back of a boat.

Stoma – An opening in the front of the neck through which a person whose larynx has been removed breathes.

Strain – The stretching and tearing of muscles or tendons.

Stress – A physiological or psychological response to real or imagined influences that alter an existing state of physical, mental or emotional balance.

Stroke – A disruption of blood flow to a part of the brain, causing permanent damage.

Submerged – Underwater, covered with water.

Suctioning – The process of removing foreign matter from the upper airway by means of manual device.

Sun protection factor (SPF) – The ability of a substance to prevent the sun's harmful rays from being absorbed into the skin; a concentration of sunscreen.

Sunscreen – A cream, lotion or spray used to protect the skin from harmful rays of the sun.

Superficial burn – A burn involving only the outer layer of skin, the epidermis, characterized by dry, red or tender skin. Also referred to as a first-degree burn.

Surveillance – A close watch kept over someone or something, such as patrons or a facility.

Thermocline – A layer of water between the warmer, surface zone and the colder, deep-water zone in a body of water in which the temperature decreases rapidly with depth.

Throwing assist – A method of helping someone out of the water by throwing a floating object with a line attached.

Tornado warning – A warning issued by the National Weather Service notifying that a tornado has been sighted.

Tornado watch – A warning issued by the National Weather Service notifying that tornadoes are possible.

Total coverage – When only one lifeguard is conducting patron surveillance for an entire pool while on duty.

Universal precautions – Practices required by the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration to control and protect employees from exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials.

Universal sign for choking – When a responsive person is clutching their throat due to an airway blockage.

Vector-borne transmission – Transmission of a disease by an animal or insect bite through exposure to blood or other body fluids.

Ventricles – The two lower chambers of the heart.

Ventricular fibrillation (V-fib) – An abnormal heart rhythm characterized by disorganized electrical activity, which results in the quivering of the ventricles.

Ventricular tachycardia (V-tach) – An abnormal heart rhythm characterized by rapid contractions of the ventricles.

Waterfront – Open water areas, such as lakes, rivers, ponds and oceans.

Waterpark – An aquatic theme park with attractions such as wave pools, speed slides or winding rivers.

Wheezing – The hoarse whistling sound made when inhaling and/or exhaling.

Work practice controls – Employee and employer behaviors that reduce the likelihood of exposure to a hazard at the job site.

Wound – An injury to the soft tissues.

Zone coverage – Coverage in which the swimming area is divided into separate zones, with one zone for each lifeguard station.

Zone of surveillance responsibility – Also referred to as zones, these are the specific areas of the water, deck, pier or shoreline that are a lifeguard's responsibility to scan from a lifeguard station.

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- 2015 American Heart Association Guidelines Update for CPR and ECC

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