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# ASCIP

## RISK ALERT!

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**Date:** *August 22, 2013*

**Attention:** *ASCIP Members*

**Subject:** *Pool Safety Guidelines and Best Practices*

ASCIP has received numerous inquiries with regards to pool safety and guidelines for preventing injuries and illnesses from swimming related activities. ASCIP has reviewed this matter at length. This information bulletin provides a summary of best practices for swimming activities as a part of physical education (PE) classes and during district sponsored events such as field trips.

### **PERSONAL GUIDELINES:**

- Shower thoroughly with soap before entering pool.
- Do not swim if you have an upset stomach, diarrhea or open sores.
- Pin up long hair.
- Do not swallow pool water.
- Avoid contact with pool drains.

### **SWIM TESTING PROTOCOLS: \***

All facilities that offer swim programs should have protocols for establishing swimmer abilities. Following is a swim testing policy.

#### **1. FACILITY USE AGE REQUIREMENTS:**

- Youth may not access the facility without an adult present.
- Youth non-swimmers, as determined by the swim test, must have a responsible adult with them in the water (within arm's reach).
- Any child under seven (7) years of age must have an adult (at least eighteen [18] years of age) with them in the water (within arm's reach).

## 2. SWIM TESTING PROCEDURE:

A shallow water competency test consists of the following:

- Swimmer is placed in a horizontal position on their back by the testing guard.
- Swimmer must then stand up (regain a vertical position).
- Swimmer is then placed in a horizontal position on their front by the testing guard.
- Swimmer must then stand up (regain a vertical position).
- If a person cannot regain a vertical position from either a back or front floating position, they are considered a non-swimmer.

A deep water competency test consists of the following:

- Swim across the shallow end of the pool. If successful, move to the deep end.
- Jump into the water that is over the subject's head and return to the surface.
- Swim one pool length (25 yards) unassisted and without rest. Swimmer must maintain positive body position (legs should not drop past 45 degree angle) for the entire distance. Start swimmers at the deep end and travel to the shallow end (if they tire, they may be able to stand).
- Tread water for one minute, turn on their back, float briefly, then swim (either on front or back) to the side and exit the pool.

## 3. SWIMMER IDENTIFICATION:

It is prudent to identify swimmers based on their ability to swim/skill level. Different colored swim caps, necklaces or wristbands can be used to identify skill levels. For example:

- Green—deep water competent.
- Yellow—shallow water competent.
- Red—non-swimmer.

## 4. POOL USE RESTRICTIONS:

- Deep water competent swimmers may access all parts of the pool.
- Shallow water competent swimmers must stay in water that is armpit deep or less.
- Swimmers who do not pass the shallow water competency test are considered non-swimmers.
- Swimmers who decline to take the test are considered non-swimmers.
- Non-swimmers must stay in water that is armpit deep or less and require active adult supervision.
- Active supervision means the adult must be in the water within arm's reach at all times.

## 5. POOL SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS:

- Pools should be sectioned off with the use of buoy lines to create deep-water, shallow-water and non-swimmer zones.
- Diving areas should be sectioned-off with buoy lines to control access by deep-water competent swimmers.

\*Acknowledgement to Safe-Wise Consulting and American Red Cross