



PROCEDURE - POOL EMERGENCY ACTION

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the action to be taken in the event of an emergency within the pool and poolside areas.

This procedure supports the Crisis Management Plan as outlined in Procedure ref: SLQP007 – Risk and Crisis Management and should be read in conjunction with Procedures ref: SLQP036 – Pool Normal Operating and SLQP050 – Centre Emergencies.

In Centres where certain features or activities exist which present specific risks requiring action differing from that outlined in this procedure, the Contract Manager will include the process for dealing with emergency action in Appendix 1.

It should be noted that Senior Recreation Assistants may carry out duties normally carried out by Duty Managers, particularly on larger sites. The Contract Manager will ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities in respect of this procedure.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility for carrying out emergency action rests with Recreation Assistants and other pool staff.

The Duty Manager / Senior Recreation Assistant is responsible for controlling the incident / accident and for taking the decision to evacuate the pool (unless it is an extreme emergency).

3. PROCESS

3.1 Raising Alarms

The procedures for raising alarms on poolside are contained in Procedure ref: SLQP036 – Pool Normal Operating. The method of communication using a whistle is as follows:

- 1 Whistle Blast – attracts the attention of the pool users
- 2 Whistle Blasts – attracts the attention of other pool staff.
- 3 Whistle Blasts – indicates that the lifeguard is about to take emergency action



- 1 Long Whistle Blast – attracts the attention of the pool users to prepare for an evacuation

Whistles will be used sparingly and will be followed by relevant verbal or visual instruction, e.g. hand signals. Consideration will be given, where possible, to the timeliness of the whistle in relation to the activities being carried out in order to ensure users, e.g. divers, are not unduly distracted.

3.2 Minor Emergencies

Minor incidents or emergencies, if handled properly, will not result in a life threatening situation. Examples of incidents of this nature include a bather slipping on poolside, a minor cut or bruise and a simple reaching rescue. Whilst these may be routine, they may result in increased risk of a more serious incident if proper processes are not followed. In order to ensure an appropriate response, the Recreation Assistant, on becoming aware of the incident will follow the process below:

- Notify other pool staff that they have to respond to an incident by blowing three whistles
- Other pool staff will move to cover area or request additional assistance if necessary
- Recreation Assistant involved will administer aid or provide appropriate assistance
- Casualty will be referred to appropriate location
- Duty Manager / Senior Recreation Assistant informed of incident and action taken
- Accident / Incident Report completed as necessary
- Recreation Assistant will return to duty

3.3 Major Emergencies

A major emergency is where an incident occurs resulting in a serious injury or life threatening situation. In most cases, more than one member of the pool staff will be involved and in extreme situations, all members of the team will be required to provide support. The process for dealing with major emergencies is as follows:

- The Recreation Assistant / Lifeguard will raise the alarm by using the pool alarm, blowing three whistles and/or use of hand signals
- If the poolside drown alarm has not been activated, the nearest member of staff to the incident will activate it
- Reception staff will alert the Duty Manager and support staff, either by radio or use of the PA system, who will report to poolside
- Recreation Assistant(s) will initiate rescue / first aid and remove casualty from the area



- The support team members will cover the area vacated, assist the Recreation Assistant and evacuate the pool if necessary
- The Duty Manager will ensure an ambulance is requested, supply specialist equipment and take control of the situation, including managing and assisting other bathers, relatives and friends
- A member of staff will be assigned to meet the ambulance crew to brief them and escort them to the scene of the incident
- Responsibility is assigned to the ambulance crew once they start to treat the casualty
- The Duty Manager will ensure that safe levels of supervision are maintained for the duration of the incident and subsequent action
- The Duty Manager will ensure that all Accident / Incident Reports are completed and the necessary follow up action is taken in accordance with the Major Incident Pack.

Action to be taken in the event of specific emergencies are detailed in 3.4 to 3.10 below.

3.4 Discovery of a Casualty in the Water

The first response to a casualty in the water will be to consider performing a rescue by reaching with a pole or rope. Whenever possible, hand to hand contact will be avoided until the casualty is under control and the possibility of being pulled into the water is reduced.

The pool will only be evacuated if necessary and is if this is unlikely to be traumatic or a danger to other bathers

The Recreation Assistant will only enter the water to effect a rescue if other alternatives will not work.

If entry into the pool is necessary, the process to be applied is as follows:

- Attract the attention of another Recreation Assistant and additional support by using the pool alarm and blowing the whistle loudly three times
- If the poolside drown alarm has not been activated, the nearest member of staff to the incident will activate it
- If the Recreation Assistant is carrying a radio, it will be placed on poolside prior to entry if possible
- The Recreation Assistant will enter the water in a safe manner, recover the casualty and land them at the nearest suitable landing point



- The Recreation Assistant(s) will follow resuscitation protocols in accordance with NPLQ training. These will be followed until the ambulance crew take over
- The Duty Manager will follow the process outlined in 3.3 above

3.5 Serious Injury to a Bather

General

The process for dealing with major emergencies as detailed in Section 3.3 will be followed in the event that a member of the pool staff notices a bather with a serious injury. The Recreation Assistant(s) will follow resuscitation protocols in accordance with NPLQ training. These will be followed until the ambulance crew take over. In cases of serious injury, unconsciousness or suspected broken bones, patients will not be moved until first aid has been given.

Head Injuries

All head injuries will be treated as serious injuries and Recreation Assistants will follow resuscitation protocols in accordance with their NPLQ training. In addition to following the major emergency process outlined in Section 3.3, the following action will be taken:

- Casualties with face / head injuries will not be allowed to return to the pool
- An ambulance will be called if the injury appears serious. If the injury appears less serious, the casualty will be made to dress and will be supervised by a responsible person whilst doing so
- If there is any doubt as to the severity of the injury an ambulance will be called as there is possibility of delayed concussion/loss of consciousness occurring
- Assistance will be given to the casualty and persons accompanying them including use of telephone and supervising children

Aquatic Spinal Injury

All suspected spinal injuries will be treated as serious injuries and Recreation Assistants will follow rescue / resuscitation protocols in accordance with their NPLQ training. In addition to following the major emergency process outlined in Section 3.3, the following action will be taken:

- On entering the water, the lifeguard must shout, "***Lifeguard entering the water, suspected spinal***"



- All other pool users will be carefully directed away from the casualty in order not to disturb the water or the casualty. Once away from the casualty all bathers must clear the pool and will be directed away from the incident.
- A minimum of 4 trained staff are required to recover a casualty using a spinal board.
- If possible, a relative or friend of the casualty will be informed of the incident. This must happen if a child is involved.
- Assistance will be given to the casualty and persons accompanying them including use of telephone and supervising children

3.6 Accidents/Incidents Involving Flumes and Water Features

In the event that an accident or incident involving flumes and other water features occurs, the features will be stopped immediately and the appropriate panic button activated.

Emergency action will be taken as outlined in 3.2 and 3.3 above. In addition, if it is necessary to carry out a recovery from inside the flume, this will be undertaken in accordance with site specific instructions relating to the design of the features and these will be attached in Appendix 1.

3.7 Disorderly Behaviour

Processes for dealing with the above are outlined in Procedure Ref: SLP050 – Centre Emergencies. It should be noted that incidents of this nature within the pool or around poolside may detract the attention of pool staff away from their primary duties of pool supervision. Assistance from the Duty Manager / Senior Recreation Assistant will be requested as soon as Recreation Assistants feel their attention is being drawn away from their primary duties.

3.8 Lack of Water Clarity

It is vital that all pool staff can clearly see the bottom of each pool in order that a bather can be seen in the event of an emergency. The following process will be followed in the event of poor water clarity:

- If the pool water becomes cloudy, the Duty Manager will be informed immediately
- A water test will be undertaken and plant will be checked for correct functioning. Appropriate remedial action will be undertaken



- The remedial action is not possible or is not effective soon enough, the Duty Manager will inform reception and advise them to stop admissions to the pool and will determine if it is safe for the pool to remain open.
- The Duty Manager will take action as necessary including drafting in extra staff to supervise the pool, roping off areas affected and clearing areas or evacuating altogether
- If clarity worsens, the Duty Manager will advise Reception to stop further admissions (if this has not already been done), assess the situation (which may be to use a diving brick to check the visibility of the bottom of the pool) and evacuate the pool as necessary
- Bathers will only be allowed back in the pool once the water quality has improved sufficiently to enable staff to clearly view the pool bottom and a satisfactory chemical balance has been confirmed.

3.9 Overcrowding

From time to time, pool capacities may approach the maximum bather loads for various pools/activities as outlined in Procedure ref: SLQP036 – Pool Normal Operating. In such instances, the following procedure will be applied:

- On realising the maximum bather capacity is being approached, the Recreation Assistant will inform the Duty Manager
- The Duty Manager will inform the Receptionists to prevent further admissions
- The Duty Manager will instruct additional qualified staff to the poolside to assist in the supervision of the overcrowded areas
- Once numbers have declined, the Duty Manager will advise the receptionist to start admitting customers
- In the event that the Recreation Assistant requires assistance due to the nature and number of users in the pool (even if capacity has not been reached), he/she will request assistance from the Duty Manager.
- At busy times, the Duty Manager may apply a session control system to keep numbers below the maximum.



3.10 Dealing with Blood, Vomit and Faeces

In the event that blood, vomit and faeces are discovered in the pool or on poolside, the following procedure will be applied:

Blood

- If substantial amounts of blood are spilled into the pool, it will be temporarily cleared of people to allow the pollution to disperse and any infectious particles within it to be neutralised by the disinfectant in the water.
- The Duty Manager will be informed if the pool is to be evacuated.
- The Duty Manager will inform Receptionists if the pool area is to be temporarily closed in order that this information is passed onto customers.
- When clearing blood, the correct personal protective equipment, i.e. disposable gloves must be worn.
- Spillages of blood on poolside will be contained, covered in paper towels to enable the towels to soak up the blood and wiped up immediately. Blood will not be washed into the pool or poolside drains. Soiled towels will be disposed of properly in clinical waste bins, e.g. nappy bins. The area will then be disinfected.

Vomit

- If substantial amounts of vomit are spilled into the pool the affected pool will be closed to bathers in order to allow for its removal.
- The Duty Manager will be informed if the pool is to be evacuated.
- The Duty Manager will inform Receptionists if the pool area is to be temporarily closed in order that this information is passed onto customers.
- The vomit will be removed from the water using a scoop and placed in a bucket, the contents of which will be flushed down the toilet.
- A minimum of “three turnover periods” of the affected pool will elapse to ensure the removal of any bacteria.
- Prior to the pool re-opening a water quality test to ensure that chlorine levels and TDS levels are within the agreed parameters and a visual inspection will be carried out.



- When clearing vomit, the correct personal protective equipment, i.e. disposable gloves must be worn.
- Spillages of vomit on poolside will be contained, covered in paper towels to enable the towels to soak up the vomit as much as possible and wiped up immediately. Vomit will not be washed into the pool or poolside drains. Soiled towels will be disposed of properly in clinical waste bins, e.g. nappy bins. The area will then be disinfected.
- Any equipment that has been used to scoop up the vomit must be thoroughly disinfected before it is stored away

Diarrhoea

- If diarrhoea is discovered in the pool, the affected pool will be closed to customers immediately, in order to allow for its removal.
- The procedure for removing diarrhoea will be the same as for removing vomit. However, a minimum of “six turnover periods” to the affected pool will elapse to ensure the removal of bacteria.
- Prior to the pool re-opening a water quality test to ensure that chlorine levels and TDS levels are within the agreed parameters and a visual inspection will be carried out.

Solid Stools

- If a solid stool is reported to be in the pool, it must be immediately retrieved from the pool using a scoop. The stool will be placed into a bucket and flushed down the toilet.
- The decision to close the pool for a short period, e.g. to maintain customer care standards, rests with the Duty Manager
- A careful visual check will be undertaken to ensure that no particles remain and a water test carried out to ensure that the quality of water is within defined parameters.
- Any equipment that has been used to scoop up the stool must be thoroughly disinfected before it is stored away.



4. REFERENCES

Ref:	Item:
Appendix 1	Emergency Action – Flumes & Water Features (Site Specific)
SLQP007	Procedure – Risk and Crisis Management
SLQP036	Procedure – Pool Normal Operating
SLQP050	Procedure – Centre Emergencies
-	Major Incident Pack
-	Managing Health & Safety in Swimming Pools
	RLSS / ISRM The Lifeguard Training Document



APPENDIX 1

1. **Leisure Lagoon** – In the event of either a minor or major pool emergency all pool features will be turned off using the panic stop button on Pool Control. If in the event that the lifeguard on Pool Control is making the rescue and has not hit the panic stop button, then the nearest lifeguard will do so.
2. **Toddler Pool** – In the event of an incident in the Toddler Pool and it is necessary for the water feature to be stopped, then the Senior Recreation Assistant or designated person will turn off the water.
3. **Dive Pit** – In the event of an incident in the Dive Pit, the lifeguard must ensure that all bathers stop diving immediately to ensure the casualty and the rescuers safety.
4. **Pool Inflatable** – In the event of an incident arising from the use of the Pool Inflatable, the lifeguard controlling the entrance must stop any further admissions to the inflatable until the casualty has been dealt with.
5. **Flume** – In the event of an incident in the flume and it is necessary for the water feature to be stopped, then the Senior Recreation Assistant or designated person will turn off the water. Staff are trained in how to deal with incidents in the trough.