

Major Incident Management Checklists

The implementation of these checklists will require a full plan identifying members of a team responsible for:

- Pre-planning
- Implementation
- Training
- Decision-making
- Developing a safety management plan
- Deciding who does what, when
- Providing clear roles and responsibilities

The use of the Lifesaving Society's *Are You Ready?* resource will help with this.

Preparedness

- Facility inspection
 - Lifesaving Society inspection checklist, accreditation done every two years for indoor and once a year for outdoor or comprehensive safety audit done annually, more commonly done once every five years
- Policy and procedure manual reviewed annually
- Emergency procedures training seasonally
- Major incident kit prepared and available in a sealed envelope, box, container, etc.
 - Pens
 - Paper
 - Contact list
 - On call supervisors
 - Management (including legal dept.)
 - The Lifesaving Society

- Reports including:
 - Timeline Flow Chart
 - Emergency Call List
 - Other Aquatic Supervisory Call list
 - Phone Log
 - Accident Report
 - Staff Incident Report
 - Witness Log
 - Witness Statement
 - Summary Report
 - Staff Responsibilities during a Critical Incident
 - Employee Assistance Program (EAP) information
 - EMS Log
 - Media and Communication
 - Records – Training and Inspections
 - Legal Assistance Guidance Policy
- Disposable camera
- An analysis of past major incidents at the facility and/or similar facilities
- An analysis of the procedures prior to the incident that contribute to accident prevention include:
 - Staff qualifications and training
 - Emergency procedures (This may require discussion with your legal counsel before it is undertaken.)
 - When and where possible, in-service training with EMS personnel to familiarize all with one another's roles

During and Immediately Following a Major Situation

- Secure areas for personnel to rest away from the media, bystanders and family members and provide proper dietary control for extended incidents.
- Secure pool or waterfront area.
- Complete facility major incident form.
- Complete staff statements.
- Witness names and contact info, statements if possible.

- Photograph scene.
- EMS and firefighter responders' info, names and numbers.
- Police responders and contact info for investigating officers, names and numbers.
- Contacts for management and legal department.
- Appoint one official spokesperson to speak with media and to prepare subsequent media as appropriate:
 - Ensure that the individual is knowledgeable of the operation and informed on the situation.
 - Education is required for initial statement.
 - The designated spokesperson will prepare a statement, controlling the message by confirming the facts without compromising any ongoing investigations. Remember everything is on record. In case of an aquatic incident such as a drowning, effective media relations deliver three consistent messages:
 1. Safety is important to our organization and we offer safe swimming opportunities.
 2. Always keep children “within arms’ reach” anytime they are around water. Parents and caregivers have a significant role to play in the safety of children around the water.
 3. All Canadians should learn how to swim.
 - What to say when you know very little or nothing about what just happened?
 - We are cooperating with the police and other authorities.
 - Our thoughts are with the family at this time.
- Inform all staff at the facility and related facilities of the incident outlining the basic facts, and directing that all requests for information from outside sources should thereafter be referred to the official spokesperson.
- Make critical incident stress counselling available to staff involved in the incident and others within the facility who were on/off duty:

Defusing session: Held within six to eight hours of the incident, a defusing session is a brief confidential, non-judgmental group meeting of workers affected by the incident. It should include a letter or information for the parents of the staff to explain: what has happened; the signs and symptoms of critical incident stress that their child might experience following the incident, and; numbers to contact for your Employee Assistance Program if it is available.

Debriefing session: A debriefing session is ideally held within 24 to 72 hours after an incident. It is a confidential, non-judgmental discussion of the continuing effects of a traumatic incident on workers.

Critiquing session: A critiquing session is held a few weeks after the incident. Employers, supervisors, and workers review all aspects of the incident to uncover deficiencies in the handling of the incident, and provide corrective solutions.

- Keep management informed.
- Contact your legal department.
- Keep the Lifesaving Society and the Drowning Prevention Research Centre Canada informed where possible.

Items to Obtain Post-Incident

- Your major incident forms from the event.
- Staff notes and reports regarding event. Reports need to be:
 - Complete
 - Consistent
 - According to facility policy
 - Signed

Report writing: Be specific (Where, When, How). Don't guess. Don't assume. Don't point fingers. Don't make recommendations. Don't include what you saw others do.

Follow your organization's position on report writing. In the absence of a position, it is recommended that individual reports be written prior to the group sharing information and opinions about the incident.

- Facility log books for day of event:
 - Record weather, lighting and all environmental conditions on the day of the event.
 - Obtain records of all facility maintenance reports which deal with water clarity, chemistry, equipment repairs, etc.
- Obtain a copy of all Ministry of Health inspection reports.
- Any corporate news releases or statements.
- Copy of all internal correspondence relating to event.
- Police Event details and Incident Report were possible.
 - Obtain copies of the witness reports from the Police.
- Copy of medical report if possible.

- Copy of all employment records of employees involved in the event including qualifications, job descriptions and contracts.
- Copies of all policy and procedure manuals.
- Copies of all training manuals and attendance at all training sessions.
- All training resources.
- Program and public promotional material may also be required.
- Copies or photos of all signs relating to event.
- Note all equipment available and used in situation.
- Any photographs taken at the time or near the time of the incident.
- Collect all media reports of the incident. Both in print and video.
- Keep a log of all telephone conversations and minutes of all meetings connected with the incident.

Follow-Up and Normalization

- Immediately re-open, or close the facility? If close, for how long? A day? An hour? If remain open, do you need to change the staff complement? Criteria to guide such decisions should be prepared and documented in the planning stage.
- Provide support for staff to answer questions from returning swimmers, media, and general public.
- Inform staff at associated facilities of the situation to limit rumours.
- When do you allow staff involved to return to regular duties?
- Conduct an evaluation, which should be prepared in two parts:
 1. An analysis of the procedures prior to the incident that contribute to accident prevention:
 - staff qualification and training
 - emergency procedures
 - staff deployment (number on duty, positioning of staff)
 - facility design
 - equipment availability and condition
 2. An analysis of the procedures employed in handling the incident:
 - recognition and response of lifeguards / instructors
 - first-aid treatment

- contact with EMS
- follow-up reports
- Consider the Lifesaving Society's help through its Major Incident Management Service and its Incident Review Audit Service.
- Work with your local legal counsel to ensure that:
 - the focus is on the issues central to the incident.
 - a true and balanced perspective will be presented, negative publicity will be minimized, and positive aspects of the program are presented.

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