

Camp Aquatics Policies and Procedures

ALL PERSONS USING AQUATICS FACILITIES AT CAMP MUST COMPLY WITH BSA AND GULF RIDGE COUNCIL AQUATICS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AT ALL TIMES.

All persons must follow Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat requirements and procedures at all times. Additional information concerning Safe Swim Defense and Safety Afloat, as well as other aquatics topics such as kayaking, sailing, and snorkeling, can be found in the Aquatics Supervision Guide, available from the Council Service Center.

Gulf Ridge Council has established requirements and procedures applicable for use of its waterfronts and/or aquatics equipment. In some cases the requirements established for its own properties and equipment are stricter than the standards that BSA National imposes on unit activities generally. This is because of the additional liability that Gulf Ridge Council could be exposed to through the use of its facilities and equipment. In addition, Gulf Ridge Council, and also in order to protect and preserve its facilities and equipment for the use of future Scouts.

GENERAL PROCEDURE FOR WATERFRONT USE

Upon arrival units should contact the Campmaster/Ranger to schedule their times for use of a waterfront and/or equipment, including length of use. The Campmaster/Ranger should check the Camp Use Permit to find out whether the units have already requested use of a waterfront and/or equipment. If the waterfront and/or equipment has not already been requested by a unit, their use is not guaranteed. The Campmaster/Ranger should make reasonable efforts to accommodate each of the requesting units as long as units that properly reserved the facilities are not unduly inconvenienced in order to provide each Scout with a great camp experience.

The Campmaster/Ranger should make sure that any fees imposed for the use of a waterfront and/or equipment have been paid, and if not, should collect the fees prior to the unit's use of the facilities.

Preferably at the time of scheduling, and in any event before using the waterfront and/or equipment, units must show the Campmaster/Ranger copies of their credentials demonstrating compliance with Qualified Supervision, as required by Safe Swim Defense and/or Safety Afloat, and as required by Council policy. This is described below.

At or before the scheduled usage times, the Campmaster/Ranger should make all necessary equipment available to the unit leader. At the swimming waterfront, this means the safety equipment such as reach poles, life rings, rescue tubes, and backboards. At the boating waterfront, this means paddles, oars, kayak hatches, or other appropriate equipment, and includes life jackets.

The units are responsible for all equipment, and should be reminded of this by the Campmaster/Ranger. The unit leader should be instructed to contact the Campmaster/Ranger for

any problems with or damage to any equipment, including bringing to the Campmaster/Ranger's attention any problems with the equipment that existed before the unit got there. The units should be instructed that they are not to turn over equipment to another unit and that they are to return the equipment to its storage location unless otherwise agreed with the Campmaster/Ranger.

Units should be asked to contact the Campmaster/Ranger if they have a change in schedule, including any early termination of the activity.

SWIMMING

Safe Swim Defense. All requirements of Safe Swim Defense **MUST** be followed at all times. Please see the text of Safe Swim Defense contained in this Handbook.

Qualified Supervision and Related Requirements

Under Gulf Ridge Council Policy, units that are swimming must be supervised by an adult (21+) currently trained in BSA Lifeguard or Swimming and Water Rescue. This standard is higher than the ordinary Safe Swim Defense certification requirement because the unit is using Council property and the Council may have greater liability.

During a District or Council event, an even higher level of supervision requirement may apply. Compliance with the appropriate supervision requirement should have been assured by the professional and the volunteer responsible for the event.

Leadership by rescue personnel (lifeguards) is required in a ratio of 1 to every 10 participants, with a minimum of 2. These can be BSA Lifeguards, persons holding the Swimming & Water Rescue certification, or strong swimmers trained in rescues. They need not be adults but can be older youths.

There must be one lookout. This person must have a good understanding of Safe Swim Defense. The lookout can be a youth and does not need to be trained in rescues.

For Cub Scouts: The required leadership ratio is 1 to every 5 participants rather than 1 to every 10 participants.

Safe Swim Defense Requirements include:

Participants are to swim in designated areas (or lower) according to their ability groups - Swimmer, Beginner, or Non-Swimmer. Participants must have been swim-tested within the last 12 months, preferably at the beginning of the season. It is best if they are tested during the week of the swim.

- A participant who has not passed either the Beginner or Swimmer swim test is classified as a Non-Swimmer. Non-Swimmers may go into the water, but their designated area must be no more than waist to chest deep.

- Beginners may go no deeper than just over the head.
- Swimmers may go no deeper than 12 feet.

Response personnel should equip the waterfront with rescue equipment (life rings, rescue tubes, reach poles, assembled backboard).

Access to the waterfront should be controlled (by buddy board or otherwise). Scouts and Scouters are not to enter the waterfront area at any time without Qualified Supervision and without being accounted for on the buddy board or other control mechanism.

It is the responsibility of the units to properly return all rescue equipment to its storage location (unless otherwise agreed with the Campmaster/Ranger) and to leave the waterfront in good order.

BOATING

Safety Afloat. All requirements of Safety Afloat **MUST** be followed at all times. Please see the text of Safety Afloat contained in this Handbook.

Qualified Supervision and Related Requirements:

Under Gulf Ridge Council policy, units using the boating waterfront **MUST** be supervised by an adult (21+) currently trained in Paddle Craft Safety. This standard is higher than the ordinary Safety Afloat requirement because the unit is using Council property and the Council may have greater liability.

During a District or Council event, an even higher level of supervision requirement may apply. Compliance with the appropriate supervision requirement should have been assured by the professional and the volunteer responsible for the event.

Leadership by trained adults (or youth camp staff members) holding current Safety Afloat certification and who are skilled in the craft, accident prevention, and emergency, is required in a ratio of 1 to every 10 participants (usually 5 canoes). The old requirement for a minimum of 2 has been dropped for boating.

At least 1 leader must be trained in First Aid including CPR.

BSA Lifeguard is not relevant to boating supervision and should not be required as a matter of course or accepted as a substitute for the Paddle Craft Safety certification.

For Cub Scouts: The required leadership ratio is 1 to every 5 participants rather than 1 to every 10 participants. Cub Scouts, whether or not Swimmers, may only boat while at Council or District events that do not include moving water or float trips (expeditions). If the Cub Scouts have not been classified as Swimmers, please refer also to the requirements and limitations below for participants who have not been classified as Swimmers.

Safety Afloat and Boating Requirements Include:

Swimming done in connection with a boating activity must be supervised in accordance with requirements for swimming and comply with Safe Swim Defense. However, Safe Swim Defense does not apply to boating activities covered by Safety Afloat, such as waterskiing or swamped boat drills.

For participants who are not Swimmers: Under Safety Afloat requirements, participants who have not been classified as Swimmers, whether Beginner, Non-Swimmer, or not tested, may only boat as follows:

- They can boat only in multi-person craft on calm water with little likelihood of capsizing or falling overboard.
- They may row a fixed-seat rowboat if an adult swimmer skilled in that craft is a buddy and in the rowboat.
- They may ride (not paddle) in a canoe with an adult swimmer skilled in that craft as a buddy to do the paddling.
- They may not paddle or ride in solo kayaks.
- They may ride as part of a group on a motorboat or a sailboat operated by an adult skilled in that craft.
- They may not ride on the small sailboats at camp because those boats do not meet the requirement that there be little likelihood of capsizing.

All participants must WEAR properly fitted and buckled lifejackets (PFDs) at all times while on the water.

The buddy system should be used, including buddy boats. Solo kayak trips across the lake, for example, should not be permitted.

Participants must be instructed in basic safety procedures prior to launch and allowed to proceed only after they have demonstrated the ability to control the boat adequately to return to shore at will.

Motorboats may be operated by youth only when accompanied in the boat by an experienced leader or staff member.

Games involving potential damage to equipment are not allowed.

Kayaks may only be used with all hatches in place, because the hatches provide the seal for the bulkhead flotation. Otherwise the kayaks could sink.

Sprayskirts may not be used in connection with the kayaks unless the participants have practiced wet exits using sprayskirts.

It is the responsibility of each unit to properly return the equipment to their storage location (including the canoes and kayaks) (unless otherwise agreed with the Campmaster/Ranger) and to leave the waterfront in good order.

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