

Safety Tip of the Month – February 2006
VSI Safety Committee

“What about the First Aid Station?”

Did you ever wonder where the First Aid Station is at your pool? Many coaches and pool managers keep the first aid kit within plain view of the pool workers, so that it can be visualized and retrieved quickly for use. Better yet, some club managers paint a bright “glow in the dark” stripe on the first aid box, so that if the electricity goes out one can easily spot the box. Backboards may be conveniently stored on the wall in the same area, along with cervical neck collars. There should be a telephone on deck or immediately adjacent to the deck entrance for emergency calls. More facilities are adding an automatic external defibrillator (AED) to the first response equipment at the pool.

Do you know what is in your pool’s first aid kit? Most basic Aquatic Center’s first aid kits have roller gauze bandages, sterile gauze, scissors, tape, adhesive bandage strips, antiseptic spray, ice packs that can be easily activated, hydrogen peroxide, several cravats (to use as slings for the arm), a mask for mouth to bag/valve respiratory resuscitation, a flashlight, and non-sterile gloves. Antibiotic ointment should also be kept in the first aid kit.

Do you know who periodically checks the first aid kit contents and replaces any outdated materials? This job should be designated to one person. For small pools without a full time facility manager, this task may be delegated by the Head Coach or the Swimming Club Safety Officer.

One word of caution..... Do not put too much into your first aid kit! Remember, the items in the box are “FIRST” response only, and are not intended to replace subsequent treatment by a rescue squad and the receiving Emergency Room. During a meet, even though you may have excellent, highly trained Life Guards, go ahead and show the Marshals where the First Aid Station is at your pool. This is one more way to ensure an efficient and timely response for any injury during the meet. Although Marshals should not be expected to provide first aid to an injured swimmer, the Marshal may facilitate the response by carrying first aid materials to the scene of the injury.