

June 23, 2009

<b>DIRECTIVE:</b> JOB CORPS INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 08-54
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**TO:**                    ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF  
                          ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF  
                          ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS  
                          ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS  
                          ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS  
                          ALL OUTREACH, ADMISSIONS, AND CTS CONTRACTORS

**FROM:**               ESTHER R. JOHNSON, Ed.D.  
                          National Director  
                          Office of Job Corps

**SUBJECT:**            Water Safety

1.     Purpose. To inform Job Corps centers about the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act (Pool and Spa Safety Act) and to remind centers of the importance of establishing effective water safety plans.
2.     Background. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 3,582 fatal, unintentional drownings occurred in the United States in 2005. One in four victims were children aged 14 and younger. Most of the unintentional drownings involving teens aged 15 and over occurred in natural waters. Alcohol was involved in a substantial proportion (up to 50%) of adolescent and adult deaths associated with aquatic recreation. Congressional research conducted in 2004 suggests that the proper use of barriers or fencing, adequate adult supervision at all aquatic venues, and installation of unblockable drain covers could reduce the number of childhood swimming-pool drownings or near drownings.

The purpose of the Pool and Spa Safety Act is to prevent unintentional drownings in pools or spas due to drain entrapment. All public pools and spas in the United States were required to be equipped with specific anti-entrapment devices or systems by December 19, 2008. Closed pools must be in compliance on the day the pool reopens. The Pool and Spa Safety Act applies to public pools, members-only pools, residential or multi-family recreational facilities, hotels, pools operated by the federal government located on military installations for use by civilian and military personnel and their dependents, and department/agency facilities. State laws have been enacted to ensure that all outdoor recreational pools and spas install effective barriers and the required systems and devices to prevent entrapment in spa or pool drains. Job Corps center-operated pools must comply with state and federal requirements.

3. Action. Job Corps centers are reminded to develop and implement effective recreational safety programs in accordance with PRH Chapter 5, Section 5.20, R5. Students and staff must adhere to all posted safety guidelines during all on-center and off-center aquatic activities. Students must complete all required water safety training and/or swimming instruction in accordance with Chapter 3, Section 3.18, R5 prior to participating in center-sponsored aquatic activities. Recreational safety staff are encouraged to complete initial or refresher training in first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and basic rescue techniques prior to the opening of center swimming pools or center participation in off-center aquatic activities. Job Corps center swimming pool and spa safety guidelines should include at least the following:

- a. Prohibit the use of alcohol or medications while supervising aquatic activities.
- b. Evacuate the pool and suspend all aquatic activities at the first sign of thunder or lightning.
- c. Identify weak or non-swimmers with colorful wrist bands.
- d. Restrict weak or non-swimmers to the shallower end of the pool.
- e. Prohibit diving in the shallow end of the pool. Water levels in the pool should be highly visible inside and outside of the pool.
- f. Prohibit running and horseplay around the pool's edge.
- g. Establish a maximum number of students and/or staff per lifeguard on duty in the pool at one time.

Centers that have not met state and federal Pool and Spa Safety Act requirements must do so as soon as possible. The following resources are provided to assist you with compliance requirements and locating certified manufacturers of safety equipment:

- a. Guide to Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act compliance, <http://www.cpsc.gov/poolspacomply.pdf>
- b. Consumer Product Safety Commission list of certified equipment, <http://www.cpsc.gov/whatsnew.html#pool>

4. Expiration Date. Until superseded.

5. Inquiries. Direct all inquiries to Marsha Fitzhugh at (202) 693-3099 or [fitzhugh.marsha@dol.gov](mailto:fitzhugh.marsha@dol.gov), Kelley Clark at (202) 693-3089 or [clark.kelley@dol.gov](mailto:clark.kelley@dol.gov), or Heather Edmonds at (202) 693-3774 or [edmonds.heather@dol.gov](mailto:edmonds.heather@dol.gov).