

Aquatics Update

Lifeguard Shortage

Rec centres seek ways to deal with lifeguard shortage

The biggest barrier right now is a lack of instructors certified to run lifeguard programs, a Canada-wide problem

Michael John Lo
Jun 11, 2023 5:25 AM

City of Nanaimo's parks and rec scheduling suffering from staff shortages

High costs of Island living hinder recruitment for lifeguard and aquatic instructor jobs

Lifeguard not on duty: Popular Mactaquac beach won't be supervised this summer

Lifesaving society says lack of lifeguards will make beach west of Fredericton less safe



Canada

Across Canada, a shortage of lifeguards raises concern about the next generation of swimmers



Municipalities forced to scale back pool hours and cancel lessons this summer

Sink or swim: Abbotsford drowns in demand for swimming lessons due to lifeguard shortage

Waitlist demand for swimming lessons increases from 7 to 12,000 from 2021 to 2022

BEN LYPKA / Apr. 13, 2023 5:05 a.m. / LOCAL NEWS



City shifts Calgary pool schedules to combat lifeguard shortage

Scale back hours so leisure centres can offer more to families



Canadian towns and cities try creative ways to recruit lifeguards amid shortage

Pool and beach staffing can be somewhat challenging at the best of times

The Canadian Press

Fewer swimming lessons and lifeguard shortages make swimming even riskier this summer

Published: May 15, 2023 2:01pm EDT

Swimming pool closures at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic led to millions of people losing their swimming lessons.

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Recreation centres scramble to attract lifeguards to region's pools

We're just one illness away from being in trouble

Canada has a shortage of lifeguards

Younger recruits are being dragooned in to help



Rec centres seek ways to deal with lifeguard shortage

The biggest barrier right now is a lack of instructors certified to run lifeguard training programs, a Canada-wide problem

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Steps Taken to Rebuild Capacity

- Ongoing Recruitment
- Focus on Advanced Aquatic Courses
- Reduced Cost Training and Recruitment Programs



Steps Taken to Rebuild Capacity

- Ongoing Recruitment
 - Since January recruited and on-boarded 41 new lifeguards.
 - 32 departures for various reasons such as school program/semester completion, mental health, other City assignments.
 - Goal to hire 20+ new lifeguards through September/October (including 10 from *To the Rescue*).



Steps Taken to Rebuild Capacity

- Focusing on advanced aquatic courses



Steps Taken to Rebuild Capacity

- Reduced cost training and recruitment programs
To the Rescue Program and SD68 Training



Program Impacts and Rebuilding

- Swimming Lessons
 - Fall 2023 added an addition 226 swimming lessons seats; room to add additional seats based on waitlists and staff recruitment.
- Aquatic Fitness
 - Fall 2023 resuming therapy aquatic fitness sessions at NAC and Beban



Program Impacts and Rebuilding

- Public Drop in Sessions
 - Fall 2023 Restoring Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning swim sessions at Beban Pool and early bird sessions on Tuesdays/Thursdays.
- Westwood Lake
 - Waterfront Training being offered in September 2023 to prepare for Summer 2024.



Aquatic Success and Community Outreach

- Hosted –7 competitions to date; 4 in the Fall
 - Regional Competitions– 7 events multi-day events
 - Provincial Competitions – 4 events multi-day events



Aquatic Success and Community Outreach

Forty-Five Advanced Aquatic Course including:

- Bronze Medallion (94 candidates)
- Bronze Cross (53 candidates)
- National Lifeguard (81 candidates)
- Swim Instructor (83 candidates)



Aquatic Success and Community Outreach

- 4802 children participated Learn-to-Swim lessons
- Swim to Survive Drowning Prevention Program
 - 1080 Grade 3 students from SD68
 - 1180 Grade 7 students from SD68



Aquatic Success and Community Outreach

- Spring 2023 - 11 free swim sessions sponsored by Lions club.
- Hosted booth a Nanaimo Night Market with water safety information.
- Hosted a booth at National Indigenous Peoples Day in June.
- Participated in PRC Job Fair.
- Participating in VIU Connect Fair to provide water safety info to International students.



Aquatic Success and Community Outreach

- Water Safety Programs



The Water Safety Education Team

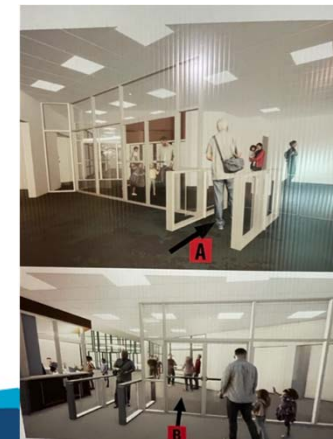
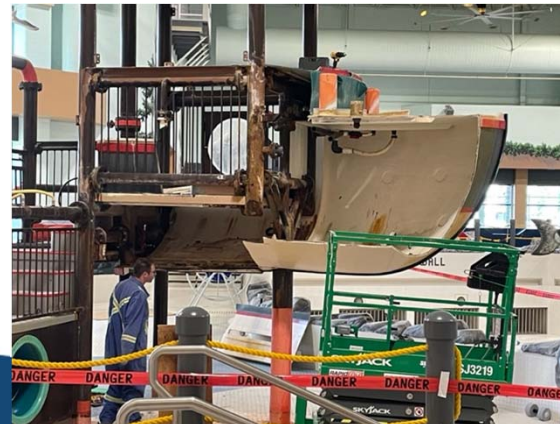
Coming to a park near you this summer!



Additional Information

Facility Upgrades:

- Play structure (Boat) removed from NAC leisure pool. Replacement planned for 2024-2025 in phased entry.
- Steam room repairs completed at Beban.
- Safety and accessibility upgrades coming to NAC:
 - Increasing accessibility parking in the front
 - Access gates from lobby to change rooms
 - Improved signage



What's Next

- Continue to increase capacity for aquatic programs and services to meet current and future community needs :
 - Ongoing recruitment of certified lifeguards.
 - Providing regularly scheduled advanced aquatic training opportunities to the community.
 - Identifying community partnership opportunities for advanced aquatic training and other aquatic programs.
 - Adapting and developing program and service to best meet changing community need.

Questions?