

MAKING GOOD LIFEGUARDS BETTER



What's new for NLS Instructors?

The Lifesaving Society's National Lifeguard certification is Canada's professional lifeguard standard. Since it was formed, the National Lifeguard training program has undergone periodic revision. The latest update – introduced in June 2012 – features revised test items and performance standards and incorporates the most recent international resuscitation guidelines.

The updated National Lifeguard curriculum is grounded in important lifeguard competencies – judgment, knowledge, skill, fitness – and is guided by the following principles:

- demonstrated need
- research evidence
- consistency with regulations in Canada
- consistency with international standards (e.g., ILS, ILCOR)
- Lifesaving Society values

The result is a comprehensive, Canada-wide, professional lifeguard training standard.

Many knowledgeable and thoughtful Canadians have helped shape and improve the National Lifeguard training program since its inception. The most recent revision builds on their outstanding legacy.

Key changes

The main changes to the NLS training program are:

Prerequisites: A candidate must hold the National Lifeguard Pool certification prior to earning NLS Waterpark certification. Similarly, a candidate must hold the Waterfront certification before earning NLS Surf certification. National Lifeguard Pool and Waterfront prerequisites remain unchanged – a minimum 16 years of age and Bronze Cross and Standard First Aid or AEC certification.

Lifeguard fitness: Fitness is a cornerstone of lifeguards' job responsibilities, enabling them to remain vigilant, attentive and alert to signs of potential trouble, and to respond safely and confidently in an emergency. The physical standards have been updated in the revised NLS curriculum to ensure NLS lifeguards have the strength and endurance required for their jobs. New fitness items include:

Pool	Waterpark	Waterfront	Surf
Underwater swim	Spinal carry	Rescue sprint	Run-swim-run
Sprint challenge	Approach and carry	Victim carry	Victim carry
Rescue drill			
Endurance challenge			

Our thanks to the hundreds of NLS Instructors, Examiners and Trainers, Lifesaving Society Affiliate Members, and the over 2,000 candidates across Canada who enthusiastically piloted the revised NLS program.



Updated first aid and CPR protocols: The NLS resuscitation and first aid evaluation criteria reflect the most recent international guidelines.

Emphasis on supervision skills: The primary role of the lifeguard is the prevention of emergency situations. The revised NLS curriculum places renewed emphasis on scanning and observation skills and lifeguard positioning and rotation.

Revised “Must Sees”: Some items have not changed but their “Must Sees” have been updated or refined for accuracy, clarity and achievability.

Mandatory items on all NLS recertifications: The revised NLS training program requires certain items to be evaluated on every recertification – all victim “management” items, lifeguarding situations and specific physical standards. For details, see *NLS Recertification Notes for Instructors*.

New support materials

The revised National Lifeguard training program features:

- New *National Lifeguard Award Guide* for NLS Instructors
- Updated *Alert* with an *Alert Insert* featuring new or newly emphasized technical content. The *Alert Insert* is available separately so NLS Instructors and recertifying NLS lifeguards can update their current *Alert*.
- New National Lifeguard test sheets
- New National Lifeguard award descriptions and camera-ready artwork – including a new NLS logo – for brochures and websites

Programming

NLS revisions should not affect programming (e.g., pool option is still a minimum of 40 hours). On an NLS Recertification, allot a minimum of 4 hours for 12 candidates (in surf option, 4 hours for 9 candidates). Schedule additional time for additional candidates. See *NLS Recertification Notes for Instructors*.

Equipment

In addition to the equipment currently required, the revised NLS program requires the use of a CPR manikin for the practice of compressions/breaths.

What now?

NLS Instructors need to be updated before teaching the new NLS training program. Consult your Lifesaving Society office (see page 3) for information regarding the transition to the revised training program and how to obtain the revised support materials.

NLS Instructors will need to update their course plans to accommodate the changes.

See also

What’s new for recertifying NLS lifeguards?

What’s new for Affiliates?

NLS Recertification Notes for Instructors



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