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# UW -Madison Police Department

**Policy: 48.1**

**SUBJECT: LAKE RESCUE AND SAFETY PROGRAM**

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**STANDARD(S):**

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## **POLICY:**

The UW- Madison Police Department Lake Rescue and Safety Unit is committed to, and exhibits, the UW- Madison Police Department core values of Reaching *HIGHER*. The Lake Rescue and Safety Unit's policy guides the unit's personnel as they deliver effective and efficient lake rescue capabilities for users of Lake Mendota and University of Wisconsin - Madison campus affiliates. This service is provided while emphasizing safety, best practices, and modern, well-maintained equipment.

## **DEFINITIONS:**

"Instructor" is an individual who is a subject matter expert and able to teach the topic assigned.

"NOAA Weather Radio" is the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration radio that broadcasts weather information directly from a nearby National weather service office, providing local weather forecasts and severe weather alerts that require action to be taken on the part of the listener.

"Personal Floatation Device" is a Device that provides buoyancy to a body partially or completely submerged in a fluid is buoyed up by a force equal to the weight of the fluid displaced by the body

"Rescue Watercraft Operator" is an Individual certified to operating the rescue watercraft while watercraft is in motion

"Rescue Watercraft" is a Specialty watercraft utilized for rescue functions as part of the UW- Madison Police Department Lake Rescue and Safety program on Lake Mendota.

"Auxiliary Watercraft" is a power-driven watercraft, less than 26 feet, utilized for training, patrol, and rescue assistance. The auxiliary watercraft shall be equipped with a lanyard-type engine cut-off switch.

"Situational Awareness" is the Constant awareness of surroundings such as but not limited to: general building environment, Rescue Watercraft direction and control, as well as Lake Mendota environment from land or Rescue Watercraft. Awareness of hazards in the environment, monitoring of boats, hazards, water conditions, and weather.

"Watch Tower" is the Area within the Lake Rescue and Safety Building that provides views of Lake Mendota.

## **PROCEDURE:**

### **48.1.1 LAKE RESCUE AND SAFETY UNIT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The following shall govern the procedures associated with the roles and responsibilities of the Lake Rescue and Safety Personnel:

- A. Lake Rescue and Safety personnel shall comply with all State of Wisconsin Boating Laws as defined by State Statute Chapter 30 - Subchapter V - Regulation of Boating.

- B. Lake Rescue and Safety personnel shall comply with all training, guidelines, directives, and operational procedures outlined in the Lake Rescue and Safety Operations Training Guide, which is maintained electronically on the internal share drive. A paper copy is maintained at the Lake Rescue and Safety Lifesaving Station.
- C. Lake Rescue and Safety personnel shall comply with all UW-Madison Police Department policies and shall review and electronically sign policy changes on a monthly basis immediately prior to, and during, the Lake Rescue and Safety season.
- D. Due regard shall be given to all dangers of navigation and collisions and to any special circumstances, including the limits of the vessels involved, which may make a departure from these rules necessary to avoid immediate danger. This shall be achieved by the following:
  - a. Proper Lookout: Every Lake Rescue and Safety Rescue Watercraft Operator shall, at all times, maintain a proper look-out by sight and hearing as well as by all available means appropriate in the prevailing circumstances and conditions so as to make a full appraisal of the situation and risk of collision
  - b. This is accomplished at the direction of the Rescue Watercraft Operator training and assigning crew members the duties of constant scanning of the environment to maintain a 360-degree situational awareness.
  - c. Safe Speed: Every vessel shall at all times proceed at a safe speed so that it can take proper and effective action to avoid collision and be stopped within a distance appropriate to the prevailing circumstances and conditions.
  - d. Risk of collision: Lake Rescue and Safety Rescue Watercraft shall use all available means appropriate to the prevailing circumstances and conditions to determine if a risk of collision exists. If in doubt, such risk shall exist.
  - e. Avoiding collision: Action taken to avoid collision shall be decisive, made in ample time, and with due regard, to good seamanship. Any alteration of course or speed shall be readily apparent to another boat/vessel observing visually. If necessary to avoid collision, Lake Rescue and Safety Rescue Watercraft shall slacken speed, stop or reverse.
  - f. Environmental Awareness: Lake Rescue and Safety Rescue Watercraft Operators shall be able to observe changes in wind, weather, waves, and current to be able to handle the watercraft safely, under changing conditions.
  - g. Rescue Watercraft and Equipment: All Rescue Watercraft mechanical systems shall be working properly and equipment on board shall be checked daily prior to departure. UWPD policy and directives regarding use of vehicles applies to watercraft.
- E. Lake Rescue and Safety Staff shall stand watch in the tower as part of daily duties and maintain proper watch by visual and auditory observations, as well as by all available means, including, but not limited to: Radar, NOAA Weather Radio, Lightning Detector, Optics, University of Wisconsin – Madison Center for Limnology Lake Mendota Buoy, telephonic communications with Hoofers, Outdoor UW, and the Dane County Communication Center, and the UWPD Infrastructure Security Camera System, to make a full appraisal of situational awareness for safe boating conditions and boaters in distress. This shall include the status of Lake Rescue and Safety Rescue Watercraft during deployment.
- F. Lake Rescue and Safety Staff standing watch in the tower shall communicate via radio with Lake Rescue and Safety Rescue Watercraft and UW-Madison Police Department Communications Center on assigned channels.

#### **48.1.2 LAKE RESCUE AND SAFETY UNIT EXPECTATIONS**

- A. Under normal daily operations, Lake Rescue and Safety shall maintain a daily shift minimum staff that fulfills the mission and scope of the Lake Rescue and Safety Program. Minimum staff consists of one supervisor and three additional Lake Rescue and Safety personnel.
- B. Exceptions to staffing levels may change at the discretion of the supervisor, in consultation with the Specialty Services Lieutenant, for times when less or more staff may be needed.

- C. Rescue Watercraft shall be staffed with the following Lake Rescue and Safety staff; one watercraft operator and at minimum one other Lake Rescue and Safety staff member. Exceptions as noted above.
- D. Auxiliary Watercraft shall be staffed with one qualified Lake Rescue and Safety Auxiliary Boat Operator. The lanyard-type engine cut off switch must be attached to their person, clothing, or PFD when operating above slow no wake speeds.
- E. The Watch Tower shall be staffed with one Lake Rescue and Safety staff member during hours of operation.
- F. Lake Rescue and Safety staffing levels may increase to maintain the mission of Lake Rescue and Safety for planned and unplanned events in which Lake Rescue and Safety has been asked to assist community First Responder partners. These situations may include times when Lake Rescue and Safety is incorporated into a written Incident Action Plan for any reason.

#### **48.1.3 STAFF CERTIFICATIONS AND REQUIRED TRAINING**

- A. All Lake Rescue and Safety staff shall wear a department approved uniform, provided by the UW-Madison Police Department Lake Rescue and Safety Unit.
- B. All Lake Rescue and Safety staff shall wear a department approved and operational Personal Floatation Device when on, or preparing, rescue watercraft in the water and while on piers/docks during the course of their duties.
- C. All Lake Rescue and Safety staff shall complete the approved Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Boater's Safety Course, regardless of age or position within the unit.
- D. All Lake Rescue and Safety Staff shall complete a certified watercraft operator program selected by the UW-Madison Police Department Lake Rescue and Safety Unit as a condition of employment. The certified program shall include open water and close quarters maneuvering as a standard for performance.
- E. The training and certification of watercraft operator program shall be conducted by a certified watercraft instructor from the Lake Rescue and Safety program. Certification of new employee shall occur as on the job training if employee does not already hold the required certificate.
- F. All Lake Rescue and Safety staff shall successfully complete and work to the level of basic first aid and CPR/AED. Training shall be provided at Department expense. A valid, basic first aid and CPR/AED certification is required prior to first day on the Rescue Watercraft as crew, or within one month of employment.
- G. All Lake Rescue and Safety staff shall complete the Non-Sworn Employee training provided by the UW- Madison Police Department during the onboarding process. This shall include the signing off on all applicable Policy, Directives, and Documents relevant to personnel falling within this category.
- H. All Lake Rescue and Safety Staff shall complete mandatory Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Training offered via Canvas during the onboarding process on site at Lake Rescue and Safety building, and annually thereafter.
- I. All Lake Rescue and Safety Staff shall complete mandatory Hazard Communication-Identifying Chemical Hazards Training offered via Environmental Health and Safety website during the onboarding process on site at Lake Rescue and Safety building, and annually thereafter.
- J. Training required by the Lake Rescue and Safety Unit as a condition of employment shall be conducted on site by a qualified staff member and annually thereafter as a refresher.
  - a. Occupant Emergency Plan Exercises
  - b. Severe Hemorrhage Control using tourniquet – including a demonstration of required skills
  - c. Lake Rescue and Safety Operations Training Guide
- K. Additional training required by the Department as a condition of employment shall be conducted in accordance with a special order determined by the Specialty Services Lieutenant, or their designee, and as directed by the Chief of Police.

L. All training shall be documented with the UW-Madison Police Department's Training Unit.

#### **48.1.4 MUTUAL AID**

- A. The UW- Madison Police Department Lake Rescue and Safety Unit may provide Rescue Watercraft and trained personnel to assist when requested for mutual aid on Lake Mendota, surrounding shoreline, beaches, piers, docks, and other adjacent terrain / structures by Public Safety/First Responder Community Partners, in accordance with the program's scope and mission. Mutual Aid requests shall include, whenever feasible, a description of the situation creating the need for assistance, the number of personnel requested, the location to which Lake Rescue and Safety personnel and equipment are to be dispatched, and any other units-in-charge at that location.
- B. When multiple agencies are responding to an incident, the agency with primary law enforcement and/or medical / fire rescue jurisdiction shall maintain jurisdictional authority and command over the incident. The UW-Madison Police Department's Lake Rescue and Safety team may, when requested or upon arriving on scene, serve in a support role to the agency of primary jurisdiction within the scope and mission of the program. Under Wisconsin State Statute 59.27(11), the Dane County Sheriff's Office is directed to have the primary authority to ... " *conduct operations within the county and, when the board so provides, in waters of which the county has jurisdiction under s. 2.04 for the rescue of human beings and for the recovery of human bodies...* "
- C. The Lake Rescue and Safety Supervisor on duty will determine the appropriate level of response to the mutual aid request based on personnel / equipment training and capabilities, weather conditions, and whether or not the request fits within the overall scope and mission of the Lake Rescue and Safety program.

#### **48.1.5 RECORDS ADMINISTRATION**

- A. All Lake Rescue and Safety Unit communications while on duty and in an official capacity are subject to open records law. Communications include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - a. All paper and electronic log documentation.
  - b. All electronic correspondence sent using state owned property, including all UW-Madison electronic programs and accounts.
  - c. Any electronic message sent or received using a department-issued phone
- B. Employees shall reference UWPD Policies 82.1 – Records Administration and 82.2 – Field Reporting and Management for further information regarding open records law and records retention.
- C. Staff communications shall be conducted in accordance with UWPD Policy 26.1 - Performance Procedures.

#### **48.1.6 EXTERNAL REFERENCES**

- A. UWPD Lake Rescue and Safety Operations Training Guide
- B. National Safe Boating Council (NSBC) Boat Control On-Water Training Modules 1-4: Introduction to Powerboating, Precision Docking and Boat Handling, Open Water Boat Handling, and Open Water Advance Maneuvering
- C. UWPD Policies (all policies are required to be followed – selected specific policies listed below)
  - a. 1.5 – Officer Involved Death and Other Officer Involved Critical Incident
  - b. 2.1 – Jurisdiction and Mutual Aid
  - c. 21.1 – Position Descriptions
  - d. 22.1 – Compensation and Benefits
  - e. 33.1 – Training Administration
  - f. 41.1 – Patrol Administration
  - g. 82.1 – Records Administration
  - h. 82.2 – Field Reporting and Management
- D. Wisconsin State Statute (all laws are required to be followed – selected specific statutes listed below)
  - a. Chapter 30 – Navigable Waters, Harbors, and Navigation
  - b. Chapter 59 – Counties
- E. The Handbook of Wisconsin Boating Laws and Responsibilities

**48.1.7 LAKE RESCUE AND SAFETY UNIT RIDE ALONGS**

- A. Authorization for a boat-along must be cleared in advance by the on-duty Supervisor who is working that day. Exceptions to this may be cleared by the Specialty Unit Lieutenant
- B. All persons riding on the watercraft shall wear appropriate personal flotation device
- C. Boat-along waiver shall be completed prior to being on the watercraft. This shall be filed for record keeping.