



Circular 142:17

Date: 2nd November 2017

Subject: SafeSwim Programme

Attention: All members

Action: For information

Circulars are available at: <http://lifesaving.org.nz/lifesaving/lifesaving-operations-circulars/>

What is it?

During the last 6 months, Surf Life Saving Northern Region has been working closely with Auckland Council, Watercare and Auckland Regional Public Health Service to re-develop their SafeSwim water quality programme. It is being re-launched this coming Saturday 4th November and will encompass both water quality **and** beach safety information. SafeSwim provides beach users with water quality forecasts and up-to-date information on risks to their health and safety at 84 beaches and 8 freshwater locations around Auckland. The new SafeSwim website www.safeswim.org.nz visually displays all these sites, the water quality and can have dangerous beach conditions or other hazards, such as large surf or shark sightings, added by our SurfCom operators. The Club Lifesaving Officers have been briefed about the programme at the recent Lifesaving Forum, but this Ops Circular provides a full update to all the membership.

Which clubs and beaches are involved?

Whilst all of the Auckland Clubs will be involved in the SafeSwim programme, Muriwai, Kariaotahi and Pakiri Beach will not have water quality forecasts produced by the predictive model until the 2018/19 season. However, all Lifeguarded beaches in Auckland still appear on the website and SurfCom have the ability to add hazard information for these beaches which do include Muriwai, Kariaotahi and Pakiri Beach.

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SURF LIFE SAVING
NORTHERN REGION

3 Solent Street, Mechanics Bay, Auckland 1010
PO Box 2195, Shortland Street, Auckland 1140
T 09 303 0663
www.lifesaving.org.nz

What do I need to do?

Before this weekend each club will receive several SafeSwim signs, SafeSwim posters and waterproof pockets cards. Here's what we want you to do with them;

SafeSwim signs

These signs need to be placed at key access point to your beach at the beginning of the patrol. When the Patrol Captain radios into SurfCom at the start of the patrol they will be told what the water quality is for the morning and the arrow should be set accordingly. Similarly, around lunchtime during a regular check-in with SurfCom, PC's will be given the water quality status for the afternoon, which may change depending on rainfall, tide etc.



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SafeSwim cards

Each club will be issued with a batch of waterproof, rip proof 'business cards', printed in multiple languages. These are for patrol members to carry round and either give out to the public who ask about the scheme, or to refer to and suggest they visit the website or call the Auckland Council Helpline for more information.



SafeSwim posters

Each club will be issued with an A3 size [SafeSwim information](#) poster to put up on the Club noticeboard. This contains all the facts and info about the scheme so members are fully briefed. The club will also receive some [A2 and A3 posters](#) advertising the SafeSwim scheme which can be displayed wherever the club feels the public would read them. Please click on the pictures below to see the full versions of the posters;



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What do we do if the water quality is 'Orange' or 'Red' at our beach?

Most of the beaches SLSNR Lifeguard will have good (**Green**) water quality throughout the summer, although after heavy rain, there may be episodes of poor water quality, especially on the North Shore beaches.

If your beach is showing '**Orange**' then please advise the public that whilst the water quality is still 'acceptable', it is not advisable for very young, very old or those who have open wounds to swim. This advice also applies to club members too. The more someone is exposed to water where the level of contaminants are higher than normal, the greater the risk of infection so the recommendation is to limit repeated exposure by not swimming as often.

If your beach is showing '**Red**' then please advise the public that swimming is not recommended. In addition, please ensure the standard SLSNZ 'No Swimming' Red Flag is flown and the red/yellow patrol flags are taken down. It is recommended that rescues only take place using craft/IRBs if required when the water quality is '**Red**'.



How do we get a 'safety alert' added to the SafeSwim website?

If the Patrol Captain wishes to provide the public with an alert, then they simply need to call it in to SurfCom who can add it to the SafeSwim website. Before SurfCom log off for the evening they will remove all the alerts unless directed otherwise by the Duty Officer. Club Lifesaving Officers will be provided with a full list of Alerts that can be added which range from large surf, stinging jellyfish to Sharks.

Questions or Concerns?

If you or your club have any questions relating to this programme then please contact [Dan Lee](#), Lifeguard Supervisor – Volunteer Services or myself.

Adam Wooler
Operations Manager

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