

HQUSACE National Water Safety Program 2013 Spring Report

1. National Operations Center for Water Safety (NOC):

- A. Pam Doty became the new National Water Safety Program Manager in September of 2012. Pam works for HQUSACE managing the NOC based out of the Fort Worth District Office.
- B. Rachel Garren, National Water Safety Program Assistant Manager will be retiring at the end of June 2013. Rachel has been a tremendous asset to the Corps of Engineers and to the National Water Safety Program. Her dedication and hard work will be missed.
- C. Two new division representatives have been selected to serve on the National Water Safety Committee. Each committee member will serve a three-year term. Roseana Burick replaced Tanya Grant as the South Atlantic Division Representative and Andy Steele replaced Adam Thompson as the South Pacific Division Representative on the committee. A big thank you goes out to Tanya and Adam for your work on the committee over the past three years and welcome from the committee goes to Andy and Roseana.
- D. You are encouraged to contact your division representative on the National Water Safety Committee for any needs you might have associated with the National Water Safety Program. Please contact your division representative if you would like to be added to their email group to receive information from the NOC and other valuable water safety information that is distributed throughout the year.

Division Representatives include:

North Atlantic Division (NAD): Steve Sporer

South Atlantic Division (SAD): Roseana Burick

Great Lake and Ohio River Division (LRD): Jim O'Boyle

Mississippi Valley Division (MVD): Pam Samuels

Southwestern Division (SWD): Louie Holstead

Northwestern & Pacific Ocean Divisions (NWD & POD): Kelly Thomas

South Pacific Division (SPD): Andy Steele

2. Public Recreation Fatality Trends:

- A. There was a 20% reduction in public fatalities from FY11 (197) to FY12 (157). FY11 total number of fatalities is the baseline for the 50% Public Fatality Reduction Initiative that was signed by MG Walsh in May 2012 and runs until the end of FY14. Fatality trends remain generally the same with 89% male, 89% were not wearing a life jacket, 39% were 18-35 years old, and 24% were ages 36-53. The primary activity is swimming in non-designated areas at 47% and the second highest is falls at 19%. Various reports summarizing public recreation fatalities will be made available on the NRM Gateway in the water safety section at <http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/watersafety/stats.cfm>
- B. Stand up paddle boarding is becoming very popular and in FY12 we started to see fatalities with these vessels for the first time at Corps of Engineers facilities. The 3 fatalities associated with paddle boarding were not wearing life jackets or a leash connecting them to their boards. The NOC is working on obtaining information regarding paddle boarding from organizations such as the American Canoe Association that we can use to educate the public on how to safely paddleboard.
- C. The NOC requests that when a public recreation fatality is being entered into EngLink that information such as type and length of vessels be entered in the PAN report so we will have that information to identify and address fatality trends.

- D. If information concerning a public recreation fatality such as alcohol, drugs, language, etc is not available at the time the PAN report is entered into EngLink, and it becomes available after the PAN is released, it is critical that project-level personnel provide their district or division Safety Officer with that information when it becomes available. Only a district or division safety officer can make changes to a PAN report in EngLink once it has been released.
- E. If a public fatality is a suspicious activity (murder, suicide, assault etc) or medical incident (heart attack etc) it is not recordable in EngLink and should NOT be checked as recordable. However, the fatality can be reported in EngLink. Vehicle accidents may also fall into this category of reportable but not recordable, if those involved were determined to not be recreating or if none of our facilities possibly contributed to the incident. See ER 385-1-99, Appendix B for more details on any questionable recordable incidents.

3. Strategic Campaign Plan for Reducing Public Fatalities associated with the DCG-CEO MG Walsh’s 50% Public Fatality Reduction Initiative:

- A. Projects are encouraged to use the USACE Strategic Campaign Plan for Reducing Public Fatalities as a tool to identify successful ideas that have minimized fatalities throughout USACE. This is the link to the strategic campaign plan.
<http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/watersafety/pdfs/Strategic%20Plan%20for%20Reducing%20Public%20Fatalities.pdf>. If you have successes that are not in this plan share those with your Division Representative on the National Water Safety Committee so they can send them to the NOC so they can be placed in the Good Enough to Share water safety section on the NRM Gateway.
- B. USACE is a partner in implementing the Strategic Plan of the National Recreational Boating Safety (NRBS) Program for 2012-2016. That plan is incorporated into our USACE Strategic campaign plan so we should use both in creating successful water safety campaigns.
http://www.uscgboating.org/assets/1/workflow_staging/News/489.PDF
- C. When addressing our campaign plan, there is sometimes a mindset out there that “folks do foolish things and drown”, which is similar to saying “we can’t fix stupid” when it comes to public fatalities. Something that MG Walsh said recently is that this leads to complacency and our mindset needs to change to creating “an accident or incident free visit to our recreation sites.”

4. DCG-CEO MG Walsh’s Life Jacket Mandatory Wear Policy Selective Expansion Initiative:

If you have not already done so please check out the results of the Life Jacket Mandatory Wear Study on the NRM Gateway at <http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/watersafety/ljms.cfm>. You may be surprised how successful the mandatory wear efforts have been when they are properly communicated to the public and within reason for what is happening in the area. For example, in 2012 Carlyle Lake within the St. Louis District started requiring those boating alone in vessels 21’ and less to wear a life jacket while under main propulsion. Also, the state of Pennsylvania implemented a new state law requiring life jacket wear during cold weather months. It states “Beginning November 1 until midnight April 30 of the following year, persons shall wear a Coast Guard approved Type I, II, III, or V PFD while underway or at anchor on boats less than 16 feet in length or any canoe or kayak”. These types of requirements are undoubtedly saving lives. Plus, they are easily understood by the public so they generate very little negative feedback. The Vicksburg District efforts on their Mississippi lakes to mandate life jacket wear since the NOC study began continues to be successful.

5. National Water Safety and NRM Products:

- A. National water safety product orders can only be placed once a year after the catalog/order form is distributed in December. The national products are intended to supplement your local and regional water safety campaigns so be sure to plan ahead for your local and regional events that take place throughout the year.
- B. Utilize our partners to get products as well. For example the National Safe Boating Council provides free resources that are available at this link <http://www.boatingorders.com/freeproducts.html>.
- C. Annual pass hangtags and monthly stickers and warning citation books can be ordered through your District NRM POC directly to Antoinette Jones at the publications depot.
- D. 2014 Annual Pass Books will be distributed towards the end of this year to District Accountable Forms Managers. The quantity issued to each field site project will be based on the information provided in OMBIL.
- E. User permit books (Form 4457) are not being printed nationally, only locally. The artwork is available to the local districts that are still using this form by contacting Pam Doty, National Water Safety Program Manager.

6. National Water Safety Program Target Audience Campaign and Products:

- A. The “Are You Next?” campaign continues to be the NOC’s focus to reach the target group of 18-35 year old males. You will see the sub-theme of “Expect the Unexpected” on promotional materials. Valuable water safety tips are available by clicking on the “Are You Next” banner on this website <http://watersafety.army.mil> and campaign materials on that same website includes “Are You Next” poster, billboard, banner and rack card that are all downloadable for your use.
- B. “Lost on the Lake” Video Testimonial/PSA. This is a seven-minute testimonial water safety video from a grandfather that recounts the loss of his son and grandson who were not wearing life jackets while boating. The video targets mature audiences and is available for viewing on the USACE Water Safety YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/user/USACEwatersafety. The video can also be downloaded from the Defense Video Imagery Distribution Site (DVIDS) at <http://www.dvidshub.net/video/287905/lost-lake-water-safety-video#.UXhPHYKMD6Q>
A promotional poster and news release have been developed to accompany this thought-provoking production that is geared to influence males to wear life jackets. Short PSAs around this same topic will also be developed. You are encouraged to utilize this video in visitor centers and as part of water safety presentations provided to various groups and organizations.
- C. Public Service Announcements - When creating PSAs think big so they can be shared nationwide and don’t brand them with lake specific signatures. At least produce two versions of the same PSA, one with your signature and one without. The NOC has created a media fact sheet that is attached to this report and will be made available on the NRM Gateway in the waters safety section. Photos promoting water safety effectively should be of people wearing life jackets not holding them. Use other agencies PSAs to supplement your water safety campaign i.e. Boat US Foundation has PSA on how to fit a life jacket, National Safe Boating Council has PSAs at <http://www.boatus.com/foundation/> and <http://www.safeboatingcouncil.org/>.

7. Bobber the Water Safety Dog Campaign Update:

- A. Be sure to check out the Bobber web site www.bobber.info on a regular basis because the NOC will be providing a different promotional product on a monthly basis that can be

downloaded including e-cards, posters, coloring sheets, etc. Your division representative will be sending out an ad that will go in conjunction with the monthly promotional product that can be used on websites, Facebook, printed off, etc to promote the new product available on the Bobber website.

- B. The NOC is in the process of adding more graphics that you can use in your water safety campaigns to the NRM Gateway water safety section. The plan is to have all of the existing graphics that have been developed by the NOC on the NRM Gateway by mid-May if not sooner and after that add graphics as they are developed. If by chance you cannot find the water safety graphics that you need on the NRM Gateway contact Pam Doty, National Water Safety Program Manager defining your needs and your request for developing new graphics will be taken under consideration.

8. National Recreation Brochure Status:

This brochure is downloadable at www.CorpsLakes.us as one publication and as individual state pages when you click on each state's section. It was decided not print this brochure at this time due to budget reductions and the possibility of changes in recreation areas. There is a possibility that a CD will be produced with the brochure on it that can be distributed to the public. If a CD is produced it will be made available by the NOC through an ordering system.

9. National Water Safety Photo Contest:

The National Water Safety Program photo contest is being revived in 2013. Photos taken in 2012 or 2013 can be submitted through your division representative on the National Water Safety Committee by 31 October 2013. Be sure to obtain photo releases for close-up photos of people, especially children. Contest categories include USACE Employee in Action, USACE Partners in Action, Commercial Boating, Boating Mishaps and Playing It Safe. Regarding the Playing it Safe category an emphasis will be placed on entering pictures that show our target audience (18-35 year old males) and role models playing it safe while on or around the water. First place winners of each category will receive a certificate along with a token of appreciation; second place winners will receive a certificate. For contest guidelines that include the forms needed to submit a photo will be located on the NRM Gateway at

<http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/watersafety/photos.cfm>.

10. Student Conservation Association (SCA) Public Safety Interns:

- A. The NOC is funding 16 SCA Public Safety Interns this year. Projects selected to receive these interns scored highest in a ranking that took into account the feasibility of self-recruiting, hiring an intern locally and on-site lodging to minimize costs. Other factors taken into consideration during the selection process included trends in the number of park rangers, interpretive contacts made and water-related fatalities.

Field site projects that will receive a NOC funded SCA intern this year include:

- Alum Creek Lake
- Lake Cumberland
- Saylorville Lake
- Enid Lake
- Lake Shelbyville
- Wappapello Lake
- Tioga Hammond Cowanesque
- The Dalles, Bonneville & John Day combined
- Truman Lake

- NWK Multiple Projects
- Hartwell Lake
- J. Strom Thurmond Lake
- John H. Kerr Lake
- Conchas Lake
- Whitney & Aquilla Lakes combined
- Table Rock Lake

B. Interpretive and Water Safety Training. A two-day training was developed by the NOC to present to SCA interns or any newly-hired employees to teach them the basics of interpretation and water safety. An instructor's and student's handbook and two PowerPoint presentations are available for your use at <http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/partners/sca/interntraining.cfm>.

11. Government Vehicle Vinyl Wraps:

Policies and regulations regarding vehicle wraps are interpreted in a variety of ways, so clarification is needed regarding installing transparent window sheeting, vehicle decals and wraps that are the removable vinyl non-sticky or static-cling type on GSA vehicles. HQUSACE ULA (Logistics) has been supportive of vehicle vinyl wraps on GSA vehicles in the past, so a guidance memo and staff action summary have been drafted by the NOC for Commanding General (CG) approval.

12. Bass Pro MOU Partnership Events:

If Corps employees are available they will present the water safety seminars during the following events by utilizing materials created by the NOC. If not, then a Bass Pro Shops store associate will present the seminars utilizing the materials created by the NOC. Presentation materials and handouts for these events will be developed and provided by the NOC to the Bass Pro Shops to distribute to their stores.

- A. The National Go Outdoors Event and Sale is May 17-27 (2 weekends only). The NOC has developed presentation materials and provided existing products as handouts that will be utilized during the seminars. The first weekend will be focused towards an adult audience and "Wear It Right" seminars will be presented. The second weekend will be focused on kids and "Safe Passage" seminars will be presented.
- B. Family Summer Camp Event is June 8 through July 14 (Tues, Thurs, Sat and Sun). The focus during this event will be on kids and Bobber the Water Safety Dog materials will be used during this event. The NOC will work with Bass Pro special event coordinators to develop a water safety PowerPoint presentation that will be used to present the seminars during the event.

13. International Boating and Water Safety Summit (IBWSS):

Unfortunately, attendance to the IBWSS this year by Corps employees utilizing government funds was not approved by the Secretary of the Army. Due to attendance being disapproved Corps employees that were registered speakers and national water safety subject matter experts including DCG-CEO MG Walsh that was scheduled to be the keynote speaker were not authorized to attend the conference utilizing government funds.

14. Other National Events:

- A. National Boy Scout Jamboree: Participation by the Corps of Engineers to staff the water safety interactive areas through a partnership with the Sea Scouts and staffing the area in the

conservation area has been cancelled due to the high cost associated with this event and the timeframe to get attendance approval from the Secretary of Army to meet coordination deadlines was not feasible. This event will be conducted 15-24 July 2013 at Bechtel Reserve near Beckley WV. The US Coast Guard will not be able to participate in this event either like they have in the past.

- B. NASCAR Camping World Truck Races. The contract that was used in the past to provide exhibit space at these events was not awarded this year due to lack of interest based on budget and staff reductions. Due to past involvement some Corps of Engineers project sites have been successful in obtaining exhibit space free of charge at certain NASCAR events.

15. Bilingual Subcommittee Report:

- A. Completed Wear It Right poster translation. Translation will be used to create Wear It Right poster similar to English version and poster will be made downloadable on the NRM Gateway water safety section.
- B. The bilingual subcommittee would like to conduct a saturation event at a field site project sometime this year during the recreation season over a two or three day time periods focusing on promoting water safety to Spanish speaking visitors. It would be ideal to tie this in with an already existing event but it doesn't have to be. Could possibly conduct a saturation event at multiple projects if they are close enough to each other. If you are interested in having this saturation event conducted at your project let your division representative on the National Water Safety Committee know by 31 May 2013.
- C. Spanish Water Safety PSAs – Scripts for three PSAs that can be utilized to promote water safety to the Spanish speaking communities will be created by the bilingual subcommittee. Then these can be recorded locally as audio PSAs, or if possible that will be done by the NOC and shared out nationwide.

16. Involvement with Military:

- A. Fort Worth District's Train the Trainer program continues to be very successful. The program is utilized to train military instructors on how to teach soldiers the basics of boating and swimming safety. Information regarding this program will be requested so that it can be shared out on the NRM Gateway.
- B. NOC is exploring ideas with Kathy Perales of ERDC regarding creating some kind of promotional item such as a poster or rack card that will promote the Warriors in Transition program, along with water safety, to soldiers that are returning from overseas. Fort Worth District Safety Office created a warrior water safety poster that might be useful in some way regarding this initiative.

17. Proposed Legislation:

There has been a lot of public pushback concerning the restrictions being imposed around dams in Nashville District on the Cumberland River. The "Freedom to Fish Act" has been proposed in Congress. It would prohibit the Corps of Engineers from creating any new restricted areas around dams that would inhibit public access for fishing. In the past four decades around the dams on the Cumberland River, 14 people have died, including three since 2009, from boating too close to the dam's spillways, so the Nashville District's plan is to protect the public and to increase their security posture around those dams. There is an excellent testimonial video on the Nashville District website. The testimony is from a gentleman who got in trouble and almost drowned when his boat lost power in one of the areas around a dam on the Cumberland River. Even though this incident happened within

the Nashville District this testimonial video can be used by any Corps of Engineers project to help educate people on what can happen if you get too close to a dam.

<http://www.lrn.usace.army.mil/About/Organization/Operations/RestrictedAreasAroundDams.aspx>.

18. Partnerships:

- A. As outlined in our Strategic Campaign Plan for Reducing Public Fatalities, section H, the NOC and the Partnership Advisory Committee (PAC) continue to work together on several partnerships that provide great benefits to promoting water safety. For example, some of you may have benefited from receiving a free boat ramp interpretive sign from a partnership with Oh Ranger and Allstate Insurance. Other initiatives are in the works as the PAC expands their efforts with these partners.
- B. Be sure to check out the Strategic Campaign Plan for more partnership ideas that you could use locally. Share your partnership success stories with your NOC division representatives on the National Water Safety Committee and PAC so they can be included on NRM Gateway, especially if you are doing something that is not in mentioned in our strategic plan.
- C. BoatU.S. Foundation: Life Jacket Loaner Program. BoatU.S. Foundation is developing a loaner station map that will include all life jacket loaner stations nationwide regardless of who manages the stations or provides the life jackets. All field project sites that have loaner stations are encouraged to send the BoatU.S. Foundation information regarding their stations. If you are interested in having your location included on this map, please complete the survey at this link www.boatus.com/Foundation/Survey. Just complete the survey once for your lake or river project, not for each individual life jacket loaner station.
- D. National Safe Boating Council: Wear It Campaign – you can request customized Wear It logos with your state or project name on it by emailing sidekicks@boatingsidekicks.com. If you have or receive a customized Wear It logo please email it to Pam Doty, National Water Safety Program Manager and she will consolidate them and have them placed on the NRM Gateway. Your “Wear It” initiatives can be sent in to be placed on the “Wear It” website <http://www.safeboatingcampaign.com/showcase.htm>. National Safe Boating Week is May 18-24, 2013. To kickoff National Safe Boating Week May 17, 2013 is Wear Your Life Jacket to Work Day and May 18, 2013 Ready, Set, Wear It events will take place across the nation. For more information regarding these events visit www.safeboatingcampaign.com.
- E. NASBLA: Operation Dry Water is scheduled on June 28-30, 2013. Corps of Engineers field projects that participate in this event with law enforcement partners are encouraged to register and download resources at www.operationdrywater.org.