

Special Alert Summer 2011

Issue 17

Falling Accidents from Diving Boards and Slide Ladders

Over the past few weeks, we have seen a number of falls from diving board ladders and pool slide ladders. Most of the injuries from these falls were sustained by children under the age of 10.

As you may know, injuries from diving boards and slides have created enough concern over the past few years that some swim clubs have eliminated them entirely and insurance companies (that insure swim clubs) have decided not to insure clubs with high dives.

We hope this sudden uptick in falls and injuries is not a trend. And, we hope that with proper controls in place and the vigorous enforcement of pool rules and regulations, most swim clubs can avoid serious accidents and injuries from diving boards and slides.

With the 2011 swim season in full swing, now may not be the best time to re-visit your club's rules and regulations. However, it is always a good time to consider new and better ways to prevent serious accidents from occurring at your swim club and to ensure the safety of both members and guests. In this spirit, we encourage you to consider the following, both now and for the future:

- ~ Regular visual safety inspections of all diving boards and slides should be performed by the pool manager or staff. If, in the course of these inspections, any defects or maintenance issues are discovered, this equipment should not be used (closed) and placed out of service until all necessary repairs are made.
- ~ Pool managers, guards and other staff should be encouraged to strictly enforce all pool rules related to diving boards and slides and be given the authority to regulate the activity of all persons using this equipment.
- ~ Some swim clubs require children 12 years old and younger to attend a diving safety session and pass a deep water swim test, before they are permitted to use the diving boards.
- ~ Some clubs have a minimum height requirement of 48" and/or be at least 10 years old in order to be permitted to use high dives or slides.
- ~ Some clubs have instituted a 250 or 300 lb maximum weight limit for persons using diving boards and slides.

No two swim clubs are alike; some have slides and high dives, while others do not. For this and other reasons, it is impossible to institute a single set of rules or standards which can govern behavior enough to prevent all accidents and injuries from occurring at swim clubs.

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WWW.SWIMCLUBINSURANCE.COM

(800) 220-3434



So, as we move into the "dog days" of Summer, we simply ask you and others entrusted with the governance of your club to take just a few minutes to consider these important issues with the idea that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure when it comes to diving board and pool slide safety.

Thank you.

For more information regarding this topic or to explore other ways your swim club can be as safe as it can be this swim season contact

[Curt Dumbleton](#) or [Theresa Soernssen](#) at 800-220-3434.

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