SGE Client Update for COVID-19 – March 17th, 2020

The team at StarGuard ELITE has closely followed the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak and its potential impact to our clients and the aquatic industry. Many clients have reached out with requests for information about how the virus may impact future trainings, water quality, and their daily operations. Safety is at the core of everything we do at SGE, and the safety & well-being of our clients is a top priority. Should you have any concerns that we can assist with, please reach out to your Client Partner or contact us at info@starguardelite.com.

StarGuard ELITE's company mission is to provide aquatic safety solutions that are objective-driven, client-focused, and innovative. Over the past few weeks, SGE has been focused on methods to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission during lifeguard training and instructor courses, as well strategize for potentially lengthy facility closures. As of Monday March 16, 2020, the Centers for Disease Control now recommends gatherings not to exceed ten (10) persons. With an ever-changing operational landscape, the team at SGE is working on solutions to evolve current training and operations prepare in these uncertain times.

It is currently expected that by the time social distancing expectations subside and summer preparations resume, many clients may have 30 days or less to get their facilities ready and train their staff for the 2020 season. With this thought in mind, SGE would like to offer the following suggestions to help expedite courses and allow for maximum attendance in each course

This memo contains information in the following pages:

As an additional resource, our partners at Starfish Aquatics Institute developed an outstanding online learning course in coordination with the SGE/SAI Medical Directors specific to the COVID-19. Click here to access the course.

SGE Certification Extension Options for Lifeguards & Lifeguard Instructors

<u>Lifeguard Certification Extension Process:</u>

- Any person that currently maintains a StarGuard Lifeguard or ELITE Dispatch certification that expires between **3/1/2020 - 5/1/2020** will be <u>extended to 5/15/2020</u>.
- To take advantage of this and maintain an active lifeguard certification, lifeguards must still complete their monthly in-service training. Inservice must be maintained in the Lifeguard Portal so an official record of the training is on file.
- Instructors need to make sure that workplaces and training equipment are clean and properly disinfected before and during all trainings.

<u>Lifeguard Instructor Extensions:</u>

- IDC cancellations may be required in certain areas or employers may limit the ability to travel or participate.
- If you're registered for an IDC as a renewal instructor and your course is canceled, or you are not able to participate, you will have an opportunity to complete the following steps to receive an extension to a certification:

  1. Complete the IDC Online Pre-Course Training
  2. Complete a one-time webinar led by SGE Faculty
  3. Pass the Lifeguard Instructor exam with an 80 percent or higher.

All completed information must be sent to your Client Partner. Instructor Certifications will be extended in the Lifeguard Portal to allow the instructor to continue teaching courses in the immediate future. For seasonal operations, Lifeguard Instructor certifications will be extended to 9/1/2020. For year-round operations, Lifeguard Instructor certifications will be extended to 11/1/2020.

New Lifeguard Instructors will have to attend an in-person IDC. Contact your Client Partner for more information.   **Additional Regional IDCs are being evaluated for May 2020.** More information will be provided as soon as possible.

SGE Online Learning Courses

In 2019, SGE completely revamped the Online Learning module within the Lifeguard Portal. If you have not yet explored this module, now is a great time to do so. In 2020, a complete revamp of the Online Lifeguard Training Course was released. The new course is much more interactive and allows for greater knowledge retention with the restructured content. Through the Lifeguard Portal, Instructors can monitor student progress and see final scores when completed. The Document Repository has User Guides to help guide new instructors through this process.

Take advantage of this resource! When used correctly it can be a great advantage to your students and cut down on the amount of teaching time needed. The course on average takes approximately 6-8 hours for a student to complete all 10 modules and the final exam.

Additionally, the course has been developed by SGE, but that does not mean you can't add to it for site-specific protocols or other training opportunities. We encourage all Lifeguard Instructors to take the course to become familiar with the newest content. Instructors can then develop additional training materials for at home trainings or tests for students prior to their courses to ensure course content is being learned.

Virtual Training Options & Considerations

As the ability to conduct courses in traditional ways could be impacted in the coming months, SGE isIn addition to utilizing SGE's Online Learning tool mentioned earlier, SGE encourages clients to explore virtual training options. These training options can include some portions of the SGE curriculum, as well as potential staff onboarding for new or re-hires that relates to site-specific training. Examples of these options will be discussed further below.

There are numerous video-conferencing platforms potentially available that could be used to host virtual trainings. These platforms also allow for screen-sharing where an Instructor can share PowerPoint, videos, documentation, or other media that could aid in student's learning. Only videoconferencing should be used, not teleconferencing. Videoconferencing creates greater engagement for any training. **Recommended ratios should not exceed 6 students per Instructor when conducting any of the SGE curriculum** mentioned below. During a virtual training, it is critical that Instructors monitor each student and allow for engagement throughout the training.

Potential free websites and platforms that allow for these types of virtual videoconferencing include:
1. Google Hangouts Meet
2. Skype
3. Zoom
4. FreeConferenceCall.com
5. GoToMeeting

SGE Curriculum for Virtual Training

Depending upon the availability of equipment and a student's ability to "check-out" or borrow equipment, the activities listed below could be conducted in a virtual setting. There would have to be minor modifications made to conduct most activities.   The virtual training for ALL activities would be for skill or knowledge introduction only.   Competency and Performance Assessments (CAPs) cannot be completed in a virtual setting. However, virtual training could offer a great opportunity to reduce in-person course time later and create the foundation for learning the material.

From the StarGuard Instructor Guide Block Plans for both Renewal Courses and Initial Training for Blended-Learning:

- Block 1
  - Student equipment needed: Gloves, CPR Facemask, Adult/Infant Manikin
  - Instructor equipment needed: Gloves, CPR Facemask, AED Trainer, Manikins
  - Potential Activities: All
- Block 2
  - Instructor equipment needed: Manikins, Visual representations of the pool(s) and deck(s)
  - Potential Activities: 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9

- Block 3
  - Instructor Equipment needed: AED Trainer, Emergency Oxygen
  - Activities: 4, 8
- Block 4
  - Instructor equipment needed: First Aid Cards (available to student & Instructor); Visuals for good, bad, and ugly
  - Activities: 1, 3, 4

<u>Site-Specific Curriculum for Virtual Training</u>

Are there areas of site-specific training at your facility that can be virtually taught? This may allow for additional time later for in-person trainings such as a lifeguard course or other on-the-job training that cannot be completed virtually.

Examples might include site-specific Emergency Action Plan reviews, rotation plans & procedures, attendance policy, scheduling policy, Lifeguard Zone Maps, and more.   Can this information be put into a PDF format and be viewed by the lifeguard ahead of time? Or perhaps into a PowerPoint presentation that is conducted remotely? Rotations training for various pools and attractions is a great example of something that can be reviewed virtually and cut down on training time needed in May/June. Pictures or videos of various attractions can be taken and shared with staff with brief outlines of expectations, and guidelines for that attraction.

Signing documents or training acknowledgements may be able to be completed digitally using a service like DocHub, HelloSign, DocuSign, or any number of other virtual resources available.

It is of course critical to always make sure critical items of site-specific training such as emergency equipment locations, emergency evacuation procedures, First Aid locations, and other key elements of the operation are reviewed in person as well prior to the start of the first shift.

Conducting Larger Course Best Practices

Once the current restrictions are eased and larger in-person trainings can be conducted, many clients will be forced to consolidate their training schedule and will likely result in courses with more students than traditionally conducted.

1. **Utilize your veteran staff in classes to facilitate the learning process**
   Veteran staff can help lead demonstrations and review different concepts, so long as certified Instructors are signing off on the skill being mastered. Instead of having an Instructor setup and run all drills, utilize veteran staff to conduct skills practice with new candidates. These staff can often provide basic feedback for skills and share their own experience to help the new candidates learn.   Using experienced lifeguards can drastically decrease the amount of instruction time needed, while still maintaining the standard teaching times for each skill and allowing the instructors to focus on skills introductions and assessments.

2. **Set classes up into stations to maximize the efficiency of available equipment**
   If you have multiple instructors teaching or you decide to use veteran staff, set the course up that minimizes equipment needs by instructors at the same time. For example, one group might be working on spinals while another group is working on water rescues. The only equipment that would need to be shared between the groups are rescue tubes for the group working on spinals. Teaching extrications and spinals at the same time between two different instructors would require the facility to have additional backboards, or only a small number of groups would be able to practice at a given time. Be creative and setup your courses with efficiency in mind.

3. **Cut down on any stagnant times in courses.**
   Set up courses so that students have very little downtime and are always participating in something. Make your drills as efficient as possible with groups as small as possible so there isn't much waiting at any point of the course. A great example is the swimming pre-requisites for the course. Rather than having everyone swim together, and then doing the brick together, and then the treading, break the class up into groups, and have one group swim, while one group treads, and the other group retrieves the brick. Make sure your lines in the drills make sense and allow for quick turnover of the drill. An example here would be the front and rear rescue. Have multiple lines along the pool deck (as many as your rescue tubes will allow for). Have someone in the water in front of each line as the guest. Have the first person in line jump in as the lifeguard and complete the rescue. When the rescue is complete, have the rescuer turn around and immediately become the guest in the water, so the next participant in line can jump in immediately.

Additional Operational Preparation Ideas

While restrictions are in effect, clients should revisit operational preparations, procedures, and guidelines. Below is a list of additional recommendations to help prepare once operations return to normal.

1. **Get Creative with Recruiting**
   Make yourself stand out with non-traditional media with a video or podcast. Creating recruiting media is something you can do from home or your facility. This could be a fun video on YouTube or TikTok showing how awesome it is to be an employee/lifeguard at your facility, or something like a recorded podcast describing the operation, positions your hiring for, and all the great benefits. This type of forward thinking can help when traditional job fairs are not possible.
2. **Review Emergency Action Plan and Operating Guidelines**
   Review content and take advantage of the SGE document templates available from the Document Repository. These are designed to guide clients with content.
3. **Review Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Daily Checklists**
   When reviewing existing SOP's, you have likely learned much from the operation that could help adjust now before the peak summer season. This is a great time to implement these changes. As with above, a template is available in the Document Repository.
4. **Zone Documentation**
   Review your zone documentation and take advantage of SGE's new Zone Management module within the Lifeguard Portal. These zones can be sent out to incoming staff as a PDF to help with site-specific training in advance.
5. **Equipment Inventory**
   Take stock of your equipment, make repairs if needed, get orders in, and ensure everything you need to start trainings and the season is ready.
6. **Scheduling & Rotations**
   Prepare your season schedules for staff and rotations, these can also be sent out to staff so they are fully prepared when it is time to open.

All the above points are some of many ideas that can be done in the current time. These are designed to help and guide you to streamlining your hiring, training, and onboarding of staff.

Safely Conducting Training Courses

The American Heart Association (AHA) released guidelines for minimizing risk during training courses. SGE supports these standards for minimizing physical contact, using gloves, adequate spacing of students, and thorough sanitation. The AHA memo can be found here for reference.

Basic Protective Measures and Best Practices:

1. Brief your lifeguards that if COVID-19 starts spreading in your community, anyone with even a mild cough or low-grade fever needs to stay at home.
2. All participants should practice good hygiene, including handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after the course, and before and after snack or meal breaks
3. Each student should have their own CPR facemask in class. CPR facemasks should be used on themselves when they are a simulated guest, and breaths should be simulated by the rescuer with no direct contact to the facemask by the rescuers mouth.
4. Instructors should ensure proper disinfection of manikins & equipment after each student practices or tests on the manikin. Use an alcohol-based solution per CDC recommendations.
5. Participants should wear gloves when using shared equipment, such as BVM's and AED trainers. Equipment should be cleaned and disinfected between drills with an alcohol solution based on CDC recommendations
6. Based on WHO guidance for social distancing, manikins should be placed a minimum of 3 feet apart during training.
7. There is currently no evidence that COVID-19 can be transmitted using swimming pools or hot tubs according to Centers for Disease control and prevention. Best practice is to ensure chemicals are at proper levels during all portions of a course.
8. It is strongly recommended that individuals over the age of 60, or individuals with known health issues should refrain from participating in lifeguard courses for the time being.

CDC, WHO, and Aquatics Industry Updates

The recommendations of the SGE and Starfish Aquatics Institute Medical Directors for handling COVID-19 is consistent with the recommendations provided by the Centers for Disease Control, World Health Organization, and American Heart Association. We strongly recommend you adhere to the guidelines below and that of your local health authorities to help minimize potential risks.

Basic Protective Measures

World Health Organization (WHO) Recommendations:
https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public

Water Quality

Per the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC):
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/water.html

Per the WHO:
https://www.who.int/publications-detail/water-sanitation-hygiene-and-waste-management-for-covid-19

Additional Aquatics Industry Updates

International Association of Amusement Parks & Attractions (IAAPA):
https://www.iaapa.org/iaapa-member-resources-coronavirus

World Waterpark Association (WWA):
https://www.waterparks.org/web/Tagged_Content/Hot_Topics/Coronavirus.aspx