

THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO  
**REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL**

DATE ISSUED: June 5, 2008 REPORT NO: 08-087

ATTENTION: Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee  
Agenda of June 11, 2008

SUBJECT: San Diego Lifeguard Services - Outreach and Education

REFERENCE:

REQUESTED ACTION: This is an informational item only. No action is required on the part of the Committee or the City Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Accept the Report.

SUMMARY:

The San Diego Lifeguard Service has a long-standing goal to educate the public about aquatic safety and help those in need. While working at the beach and Mission Bay, lifeguards are in constant contact with the visiting public. However, not all San Diegans have the opportunity to visit the beach regularly or are comfortable in and around the water environment.

Due to this fact, the Lifeguard Service utilizes many outreach programs in order to educate the public in drowning prevention. We also utilize these programs to recruit potential lifeguards from all communities in San Diego. Our philosophy is to make contact with all youth so they will have the opportunity to help others by being prepared for ocean lifeguarding.

One of the most successful education programs is the Junior Lifeguard Program. The San Diego Lifeguard Service officially began its own Junior Lifeguard Program in 1991. The program offers two sessions, each four weeks long, for 3½ hours every morning or afternoon. The program is filled to maximum capacity every year and over 1,000 children (ages 9-17) attend, many on scholarship. The program is self-sustaining by its fees and receives no City of San Diego financing.

Lifeguard outreach efforts have resulted in hundreds of beach safety lectures over the last five years. The Learn-to-Swim for Free programs, Bridge to the Beach, school visits, safety talks to the military, San Diego Junior Olympic Kayak Team, career fairs and parades are just a few examples of the types of programs and outreach we utilize to educate San Diegans.

The Need to Act

As is the case with many outreach programs, raising money to support our drowning prevention programs is an on-going challenge and our efforts to raise money have been improving. We have strengthened our private-public relationships by partnering with the City of San Diego Park and Recreation Department, Jackie Robinson YMCA, City Heights Recreation Aquatic Program, San Diego County Aquatic Council, Safe Kids Coalition, Rady Children’s Hospital, San Diego Unified School District, and all county lifeguard agencies.

These relationships will help solidify the message of drowning prevention. The need to reinforce that message is paramount because drowning is the leading cause of accidental death in the U.S. among children ages 14 and under. In San Diego County, it is the leading cause of accidental death of children 4 and under.

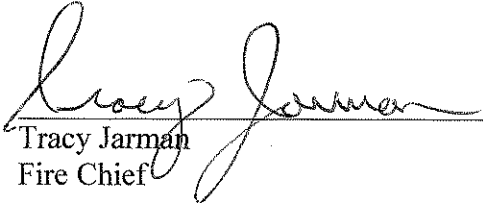
The Community Vision

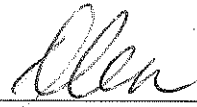
San Diego can and will be the leader in educating the public about the dangers associated with the aquatic environment. Recently, we launched a community initiative to help raise awareness called “Waterproofing San Diego”. The initiative brings together a community vision that allows all San Diegans the opportunity for aquatic safety information and education, exposure to basic water survival skills, the opportunity to become proficient in an aquatic environment, and, potentially, to work in the aquatic safety profession. “Waterproofing San Diego” will transcend across all economic barriers and will target all ages from infants to adults.

In order to create a successful community vision, all interested partners will work together to form a ‘one-stop’ shop. This shop will offer information for all skill levels and all ages. It will be vital to create opportunities for all to engage in order to maintain long-term viability and success. Currently, most of the programs required to fulfill this vision, are already in existence. Our goal will be to facilitate the teaming of all committed partners in order to deliver a consistent message that will resonate throughout San Diego.

We are a community that takes pride in our beaches and ideal climate and many San Diegans interact with the aquatic environment. It is our mission to continue to offer a rewarding and safe aquatic experience for all San Diegans.

FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS: None

  
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Tracy Jarman  
Fire Chief

  
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Jill Olen  
Deputy Chief Operating Officer  
Public Safety/Homeland Security

# ***A Strategic Vision for Outreach and Education***

San Diego Lifeguard Service

June 11, 2008



## **Why It Matters**

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- Drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death in the US among children ages 14 and under.
  
- In San Diego County, drowning is the leading cause of accidental death of children age 4 and under.

## Outreach Programs

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- Junior Lifeguards (JG)
- Bridge to the Beach
- Learn to Swim programs
- School visits & safety talks to military
- Career fairs & parades

## Outreach & Junior Lifeguards

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### MISSION STATEMENT:

We are a team of aquatic professionals providing a fun and safe aquatic education to the youth of San Diego through:

- Developing confidence
- Mental and physical fitness and
- Respect for one another and the coastal environment.

## **Junior Lifeguard Facts**

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- The program is filled to maximum capacity every year and over 1,000 children (ages 9-17) attend, many on scholarship.
- The program is self-sustaining by its fees and receives no City of San Diego financing.
- Each year, over 10% of all Junior Lifeguards receive scholarships.

## **JGs and Outreach**

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- Scholarships are a major component of the Junior Lifeguard Program.
- Fundraising events are used to help educate the community with drowning prevention.
- Engaging the community is a year-round effort.

Swim-Paddle-Run



Hawaii Day

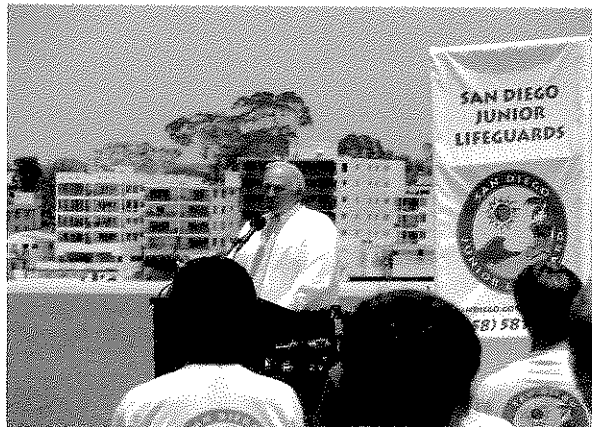


"SKILLS FOR LIFE"

## JG "Hawaii Day" FUNraiser

- Goal: Raise money for four specific drowning prevention and aquatic programs
- Partners:
  - Jackie Robinson YMCA – Learn to Swim
  - City Heights - Learn to Swim
  - Muirlands Middle School 6<sup>th</sup> grade swim class
  - Junior Lifeguard Scholarships

## We Raised \$24,000



## **Other Yearly Accomplishments**

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- Average of 60 presentations per year
- Over 1,200 school children each year have participated in drowning prevention programs
- Beach Safety presentations to over 5,000 military personnel



## **“Waterproofing San Diego”**

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- Our community initiative
- Provides drowning prevention education and opportunity
- Available to San Diegans of all ages

