# USMS Open Water Guide to Operations

***Part 2: Open Water Safety Guidelines***
***Revision Date: February 2015***

## Addendum A: Open Water Safety Plan Application

When applying for a USMS sanction, event hosts are required to submit their safety plan for review and approval by the Open Water Compliance Coordinator (OWCC). For 2015, any event not sanctioned in 2014 shall use the Safety Plan Application and events sanctioned in 2014 may use it. In 2016 all events are required to use this application to submit their safety plan (OWGTO Part 1: Sanction Guidelines, Article OW-102.4).

Maps shall be uploaded using the additional documents upload capability of the sanction system, including a Google Earth Map (or equivalent) of race course. Indicate on the map the locations of the start/finish, turn buoys, intermediate buoys, all safety craft, Lifeguard/First Responders, onsite medical care, feeding stations, evacuation points, etc.

## Event Information

| **Basic Information** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Name of Host: | NYC H2O | | |
| Name of Event: | Riis Park Ocean Mile | | |
| Event Location: | Riis Park, Rockaway NY | | |
| Event Dates: | 8/9/2015 through 8/9/2015 | | |
| City: | Rockaway Park | State: NY | LMSC: Metro |
| Length of Race(s): | 1-mile | | |

| **Key Event Personnel** | | |
|---|---|---|
| Director(s): Matt Malina | | |
| Phone: 917-656-2984 | E-mail: matt@nych2o.org | |
| Referee: Steve Shtab | Phone: 000-000-0000 | E-mail: sshtab@aol.com |
| Safety Director: Sandy Main | Phone: 000-000-0000 | E-mail: Click to enter e-mail address |
| Ind. Safety Monitor: Robert Sorensen | Phone: 646-772-7023 | E-mail: Robert.sorensen@nyu.edu |

About U.S. Masters Swimming
U.S. Masters Swimming, founded in 1970, is a membership-operated national governing body that promotes health, wellness, fitness and competition for adults through swimming. It does so by partnering with more than 1,500 adult swim programs across the country; promoting information via the bimonthly member magazine, SWIMMER, monthly e-newsletters, STREAMLINES, and website, usms.org; and by sanctioning and promoting pool, open water and virtual events and competitions. More than 55,000 adults are registered members of U.S. Masters Swimming.

| **Water Quality** |
|---|
| It is recommended that one week prior to the event, check water quality. If results returned are inconsistent with the local governing body's standards, notify swimmers who participated in the event of any known exposures post-race. If an exceptional event such as heavy rain or flooding affects the water quality, the Referee or the Meet Director shall have the authority to postpone or cancel the race. It is recommended to take and retain water samples on race day and retain for reference. |

The NYC Department of Environmental Protection monitors the water quality and will advise NPS if there is any cause for concern.

**Pre-Race Officials Meeting (required)** all **officials and safety personnel must attend**

Tentative date: 7/31/2015 Time: 10 am

Tentative agenda: Discuss race course, equipment and buoys; water conditions – tides, currents, weather. Safety plan – number of lifeguards monitoring the course on paddle boards and on shore. Volunteer kayakers helping to monitor the course.

**Pre-Race Swimmer Meeting (required) all swimmers must attend to participate in race**

Tentative date: 8/9/2015 Time: 8am

Tentative agenda: 1-mile swim parallel to the shore.

## Event Conditions

**If water temperature is potentially less than 64° F, complete the Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims section of this form.**

**Race Day conditions**

Expected air temp: 80 Expected water temp: 70 Wetsuits:Optional

Body of water: Ocean Water type: Salt Water Water depth from: 5 to: 12

Course: Closed. Only event watercraft allowed

If open course, please indicate the agency used to control the traffic while swimmers are on the course.

Agency name: Click here to enter agency. How to contact during event: Phone # or radio channel

Expected water conditions for the swimmers: (marine life, tides, currents, underwater hazards) Moderate surf, possible easterly or westerly current, submerged jetties from bay1 to bay 6

How is the course marked?

Turn buoy - Height(s) 4' Color(s) orange Shape(s) round

Guide buoy - Height(s) 4' Color(s) orange Shape(s) round

Approximate distance between Guide buoys: ¼ mile

| **Feeding Stations** |
|---|
| Designated area that nourishment may be passed on to swimmers. It is recommended that the feeding station be a boat, series of boats, or barge. |

Number of Feeding Stations: 0

Type of structure(s) used as feeding station(s): Click here to describe feeding stations

Number of people the structure(s) can safely hold: Click here to enter number.

## Event Safety

**Medical Personnel**

Lead medical personnel (emergency trained) on site: Riss ParkFirst Aid Personell, FDNY, EMT

Experience in extreme events (Marathon, Triathlon, Open water swim, etc.): Yes

Will medical personnel be located on the course? Yes

The number of medical personnel will be dependent on the course layout, number of swimmers in the water, expected conditions, etc. How many medical personnel do you plan to have on site?2

**First Responders/Lifeguards**

Indicate the qualifications of the first responders: Equivalent water certified first responders

Number on course: 7 Number on land: 3

Indicate their location on the Race Plan Map.

**Ambulance/Emergency Transportation**

Ambulance(s) onsite: Breezy Point Volunteer Fire Department On Call: 718-634-7967

Have you spoken with local emergency response agency regarding potential emergencies? No

**On Site Medical Care**

Describe the onsite set up for medical care, such as medical treatment tent, heating or cooling tent or facility. And indicate the location on the Race Plan Map. Riis Park First Aid Personell

**Medical Facilities**

Closest medical facility: St John's Episcopal Hospital Phone: 718-869-7000

Type of medical facility: (eg. urgent care, hospital) hospital

Distance to closest medical facility: 2 to 5 miles Approximate transport time: 10

**Water Craft**

Number of motorized craft to cover the course: 0

List safety craft:

Motorized 1st Responders Non-motorized 1st Responders 7

Motorized 2nd Responders Number Non-motorized 2nd Responders Number

Additional water craft for Officials (not counted as safety craft): Number

Other water craft for race supervision: (Boats, Jet Skis, Kayaks, paddle boards, etc) 5 kayaks, 3 paddle boards

Water craft for feeding stations 0

Additional water craft for escorted events: 0

Emergency Signal Flag Color for all water craft: Enter color

**Swimmer Accountability**

Describe method of swimmer body numbering: Click Numbers will be marked on one arm

Describe method of electronic identification of swimmer (Recommended):Chips for timing will be distributed

Describe different cap colors for the various divisions (Recommended): blue for first heat and green for second heat

Describe method of accounting for all swimmers before, during and at conclusion of race(s): We will have a list of swimmers who actually do the race and check off that each of them finishes or is accounted for.

Describe method of accounting for swimmers who do not finish: Click Swimmers who are unable to finish the course will be accounted for. Swimmers who are registered and do not compete will also be accounted for.

Swimmers who do not compete but are registered will be accounted for.

**Warm-up/Warm-down Plan**

Describe safety plan for warm-up/warm-down. Swimmers will have the opportunity to warm up in the ocean 15 minutes prior to the race start.

**Communications**

Primary method between Meet Officials: Radio Secondary method: Cell Phone

Primary method for communicating between medical personnel, first responders & safety craft:
Radio (different channel than officials) Secondary method: Cell Phone

**Swimmer Management**

Maximum number of swimmers on course at a time: 200

If more swimmers show up on race day, what is the procedure for adjusting the safety plan to accommodate the increased number of entries? There will be enough life guards present to safely monitor up to 200 swimmers

How are the lifeguard staff and safety crafts distributed to supervise this event to maximize the recognition, rescue and treatment of any swimmer? Life guards will be stationed on paddleboards and kayaks every ¼ mile

How is the safety staff deployed to maximize the rapid response to a troubled swimmer? Life guards will be stationed on paddleboards and kayaks every ¼ mile

How will the event be altered if insufficient safety personnel/craft are available race day? Race will be capped at 200 swimmers

Describe your missing swimmer plan: As per Riis Park Life Guard operations

**Severe Weather**

Is a lightning detector or weather radio available on site? Yes

Describe your severe weather plan: Race is cancelled in the event of lightning and hurricane or dangerous surf

Describe your course and site evacuation plan: Participants can walk to bath house or their vehicles for shelter.

# Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims

| **General Information** |
|---|
| Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims: USMS Rules for Open Water Swims state: (1) A swim shall not begin if the water temperature is less than 60° F. (15.6° C.), unless heat-retaining swimwear is required of all swimmers or a USMS-approved thermal plan is in place.<br>(2) A swim in which heat retaining swimwear is required of all swimmers shall not begin if the water temperature is less than 57° F. (13.9° C.), unless a USMS-approved thermal plan is in place. |
| Remember the average masters swimmer does little or no acclimatization to cold water, so even a small drop in water temperature—especially in the colder ranges—dramatically increases the odds of thermal issues (1 Cold Shock Response, 2 Cold Incapacitation, 3 Hypothermia and 4 Circum-rescue Collapse) and hypothermia. Be Prepared! |
| If your swim has a remote chance of having water temperature less than 60° F., you are **REQUIRED** to complete the thermal plan below, showing your specific commitment to increased swimmer preparation before the event, reduced swimmer exposure during the event, and maximize mitigation & treatment of thermal issues during & after the event. |
| If your swim has a chance of having water temperature on the course less than 64° F., you are **URGED STRONGLY** to complete the thermal plan. |

| **To increase swimmer preparation before the event, we will...** | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Emphasize & stress cold water swim conditions. | No |
| 2. | Require prior cold water swim experience. | No |
| 3. | Require swimmer cold water preparation plan. | No |

Specify details for the above responses: Click here to enter text.

| **To reduce swimmer exposure to thermal issues, we will...** | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Cancel the swim(s). | No |
| 2. | Shorten swim(s). | No |
| 3. | Encourage wetsuits for all swimmers. | No |
| 4. | Require wetsuits for all swimmers. | No |

Specify details for the above responses: Click here to enter text.

| **To mitigate & treat symptoms of thermal issues, we will...** | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Bring in more emergency trained medical personnel and/or ambulances. | No |
| 2. | Bring in more volunteers to assist medical personnel. | No |
| 3. | Bring in more emergency craft & first responders on the course. | No |
| 4. | Increase warm beverages before the swim and at feeding stations. | No |
| 5. | Have special procedures for removing swimmers from the water and venue (different than normal trauma rescues). | No |
| 6. | Increase warm beverages after the swim. | No |
| 7. | Increase thermal treatment gear (e.g. blankets, hot water bottles, etc.) | No |
| 8. | Make hot showers available on-site. | No |
| 9. | Make warming facilities (buildings, tents, vehicles, etc.) available on-site. | No |

10. Other #1: Specify
11. Other #2: Specify

Specify details for the above responses: Click here to enter text.

**To understand event thermal issues we will...**

Complete recommended thermometer readings as follows: Yes

Using an accurate thermometer, the event host should take three to five measurements at various places on the course—12 to 18 inches below the water surface and no closer to the shore than 25 meters (if possible)—within one hour before the start of an open water swim. The host should average these measurements, post and/or announce the resulting average temperature at least 30 minutes before the start of the swim, and announce it during the pre-race staff safety and swimmers' meetings.

If you answered No above, describe how and where water temperature will be measured: Click here to enter text.