



# **Open Water Safety Plan**

## **Application Instructions**

- Before applying for a USMS open water sanction, event hosts must review their event information and safety plans with their LMSC Sanctioning Officer. Upon approval from the LMSC Sanctioning Officer, the event host is then ready to apply for sanction.
- When applying for a USMS open water sanction, event hosts are required to submit their safety plan for review and approval by the Open Water Compliance Coordinator (OWCC) **ON THIS APPLICATION** through the online sanction process. We welcome additional supporting information—after all, many event hosts have developed extensive safety plans over years of hosting events—but everyone must submit this completed application to ensure that all pertinent points are covered in safety planning.
- Using a Google Earth map or equivalent, event hosts are also required to upload a map of the venue and course with the safety plan application. Maps must include locations of start & finish, guide & turn buoys, feeding stations, safety craft, lifeguards/first responders, on-site medical care, and evacuation points.
- In the best scenario, the Safety Director should assist the event host in the developing the event safety plan. If the Safety Director did not take part in developing of the safety plan (usually in the case of appointment after the sanction request or in the case of a substantially unchanged safety plan developed over years of experience), the event host must give the Safety Director a copy of the approved safety plan.
- Upon request, USMS OWCC David Miner will send you a copy of the approved safety plan. Contact David at [openwateradvisor@usmastersswimming.org](mailto:openwateradvisor@usmastersswimming.org) or 941-545-9709.

# Open Water Safety Plan Application

## Event Information

### General Information

Name of Host: Sarasota Sharks Inc.  
Name of Event: Tropical Splash  
Event Location: Nokomis Beach  
City: Nokomis State: FL LMSC: FL  
Event Dates: 5/2/2020 through 5/2/2020  
Length of Swim(s): 1K, 2K, 4K  
Dual Sanctioned with USA-Swimming: Yes

### Key Event Personnel

Event Director: Rick Walker Phone: 941-586-7833 E-mail: [rwalker@sarasotasharks.org](mailto:rwalker@sarasotasharks.org)  
Referee: Gary Sanderson Phone: 717-330-0950 E-mail: [Click to enter e-mail address](#)  
Certified Safety Director: Steve Butler Phone: 941-376-3524 E-mail: [Steve@triathlonrocks.com](mailto:Steve@triathlonrocks.com)

### Pre-Race Safety Meeting (required): all officials & safety personnel must attend

Tentative date: 5/2/2020 Time: 6am  
Tentative agenda: Discuss our safety plan, the race course, and the starting procedure.

### Pre-Race Swimmer Meeting (required): all officials & swimmers must attend to participate in race

Tentative date: 5/2/2020 Time: Just prior to the race starting  
Tentative agenda: Safety on the water, starting procedure, what to do if they drop out of the race, the course, etc.

## Course & Event Conditions

### The Course

**Body of water:** Ocean      **Water type:** Salt Water      **Water depth** from: 2 to: 15 feet

**Course:** Open - non-event watercraft allowed near swim course

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

**Agency name:** Sarasota County Sheriff's office How to contact during event: Private radio channel or cell phone

**Expected water conditions for the swimmers: (marine life, tides, currents, underwater hazards):** No underwater hazards, incoming tide, possible jellyfish, dolphins, fish, birds, etc.

## How is the course marked?

- Turn buoy(s): Height(s) 5'      Color(s) Red      Shape(s) Tetrahedron
- Guide buoy(s): Height(s) 5'      Color(s) Yellow      Shape(s) Tetrahedron
- Approximate Distance between Guide buoys: 200 meters

## Number of Feeding Stations: 0

Type of structure(s) used as feeding station(s): N/A

Number of people the structure(s) can safely hold: N/A

## Water & Air Temperatures

Expected air temp range: 78-85 F      Expected water temp range: 81 F      Wetsuits: Not allowed

### **USMS Water Temperature Index for sanctioned open water events:**

- Below 57°F (Very Cold) – heat retaining swimwear and a Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims is **REQUIRED**
- 57°F-60°F (Cold) - heat-retaining swimwear is required or a Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims is **REQUIRED**
- 60°F-66°F (Quite cool) - Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims is **RECOMMENDED**
- 66°F-72°F (Fairly cool) - Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims is **ENCOURAGED**
- 72°F-78°F (Cool) - No Thermal Plan required
- 78°F-82°F (Optimal) - Heat-retaining swimwear & neoprene caps are not permitted above 78°F.
- 82°F-85°F (Warm) - Thermal Plan for Warm Water Swims is **RECOMMENDED**
- 85°F-87.8°F (Very warm) - Thermal Plan for Warm Water Swims is **REQUIRED**
- 87.8°F-95°F (Hot) - Sanctioned open water swims cannot be held
- Over 95°F (Extremely hot) - Any swimming is ill-advised

**USMS Water Temperature Measurement Procedure:** 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.

## Water Quality

It is recommended that one week before 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 Event Director, Referee, or Safety 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.

We check locally with Mote Marine about water quality. We'll check the week leading up to the race and the day before.

# Event Safety

## Medical Personnel

**Lead medical personnel (emergency trained) on site:** EMT, EMT

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

**Will medical personnel be located on the course?** No

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

Medical personnel, two EMTs, will be located on the beach.

### First Responders/Lifeguards & Monitors

**Indicate the qualifications of the first responders: USLA**

**Number on course: 5**

**Number on land: 2**

Indicate their location on the Race Plan Map.

### Onsite Medical Care & Facilities

**Describe onsite set up for medical care, such as medical treatment tent, heating/cooling tent or facility. etc., and indicate locations on the Race Plan Map.** The public beach has a large pavilion that we use for the race. It will also be used for any medical attention needed.

### Ambulance/Emergency Transportation & Nearby Medical Facilities

**Ambulance(s) onsite:** No ambulance on site      **On Call:** 911

**Have you spoken with local emergency response agency regarding potential emergencies? Yes**

**Closest medical facility:** Venice Regional Bayfront Health      **Phone:** 941-485-7711

**Type of medical facility (urgent care, hospital, etc.):** Hospital

**Distance to closest medical facility:** 2-5 miles      **Approximate transport time:** 8 minutes

### Watercraft

Motorized Watercraft:

- Owned/operated by government agencies (Coast Guard, police, fire & rescue, etc.): One
- Owned/operated by volunteers or hired individuals: Two

Will all motorized watercraft with a propeller owned/operated by volunteers or hired individuals be equipped either with a propeller guard or a swimmer monitor? Yes

Other motorized watercraft:

- With propellers fore of the rudder: Zero
- With impeller motor (jet ski, jet boat): Two
- Anchored from start to finish: Zero

Allocation of Watercraft:

- Safety Watercraft:
  - 1st Responders: Motorized: Two Non-motorized: 15+
  - 2nd Responders: Motorized: Zero Non-motorized: Two
- Watercraft for race officials: Motorized: Zero Non-motorized: Zero
- Watercraft for race supervision: Motorized: One Non-motorized: Zero
- Watercraft for feeding stations: Motorized: Zero Non-motorized: Zero
- Watercraft for escorted events: Motorized: Zero Non-motorized: Zero

- Other event watercraft: [Click here to enter text.](#)

**Emergency Signal Flag Color for all watercraft:** Orange vests

## Communications

**Primary method between event officials: Radio Secondary method:** Cell Phone

**Primary method between medical personnel, first responders & safety craft:** Radio (separate channel from Meet Officials)

**Secondary method:** Cell Phone

## Swimmer Counting & Accountability

**Describe method of swimmer body numbering:** Each swimmer will be body marked with their race number.

**Describe method of electronic identification of swimmer (Recommended):** Each swimmer will wear a timing chip

**Describe different bright cap colors for various divisions (Recommended):** 1K, 2K, and 4K swimmers will each have a different color cap

**Describe method of accounting for all swimmers before, during and after swim(s):** Before race starts each swimmer will check in by crossing a timing pad. All swimmers must either cross the finish timing pad or if they drop out of the race, check in at the timing tent so that we know they are not in the water.

**Describe method of accounting for swimmers who do not finish:** See above.

## Warm-up/Warm-down Safety Plan

**Describe safety plan for warm-up/warm-down, include number and location of lifeguards and designated watercraft.** We will have some personnel on the beach if folks get in to warm up.

## Swimmer Management

**Maximum number of swimmers on course at a time:** 400

**If more swimmers show up on the day of the swim(s), how will you adjust the safety plan to accommodate the increased number of entries?** No race-day entries

**How will you deploy the safety staff and crafts distributed to supervise this event to ensure swift recognition, rescue, and treatment of any swimmer?** First responder will get to swimmer, then blow their whistle and wave their paddle over their head to get assistance. A jet ski will come to their aid, assessing the situation. If needed, the jet ski will bring the swimmer back to the beach where personnel will be waiting to help them.

**How will you deploy the safety staff to maximize rapid response to a troubled swimmer?** See above

**How will you alter the event if insufficient safety personnel/craft are available on the day of the swim(s)?** We would have to shorten the course

**Describe your missing swimmer plan:** Work with water safety personnel and the Sarasota PD to locate swimmer in the water. At the same time, have staff on the beach calling the person's name and calling them and their emergency contact number to see if they finished but didn't check in. Continue this process until the swimmer is found or heard from. Call in more police support if needed.

## Severe Weather Plan

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

**Describe your plan for severe weather or natural disaster:** Monitor weather pattern and conditions and adjust the race as necessary by either canceling it, having a later start time, or shortening distances of race.

**Describe your course and site evacuation plan, including accounting for all swimmers and other participants:** Evacuate swimmers from the beach to the public pavilion areas or to their cars in the parking areas.

## Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims

### General Information

Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims: USMS Rules for Open Water Swims state:

302.2.2A (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.

302.2.2A (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 that 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: Cold Shock Response, Cold Incapacitation, Hypothermia, and Circum-rescue Collapse). Be Prepared!

- If your swim course has a remote chance of 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 course has a chance of water temperature between 60° F & 66° F., a thermal plan is **RECOMMENDED**.

- If your swim course has a chance of water temperature between 66° F & 72° F., a thermal plan is **ENCOURAGED**.

### How will you assist swimmer preparation before the event:

**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Emphasize & stress on entry information of possible cold water swim conditions.
2. Require prior cold water swim experience.
3. Require swimmer cold water preparation plan.
4. Refuse entry if swimmer is not acclimated to cold water swimming.

What method(s) of swimmer preparation will you take: [Click here to enter text.](#)

### What action will you take to reduce swimmer exposure to thermal issues:

**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Cancel the swim(s).
2. Shorten swim(s) or institute/shorten time limits.
3. Encourage wetsuits for all swimmers.
4. Require wetsuits for all swimmers.

Explain your plan of action: [Click here to enter text.](#)

### What extra medical care will you provide to mitigate & treat symptoms of thermal issues:

**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Bring in more emergency trained medical personnel and/or ambulances.
2. Bring in more volunteers to assist medical personnel.
3. Bring in more emergency craft and first responders on the course.
4. Increase warm beverages before the swim and at feeding stations.

5. Have special procedures (different than normal) for removing swimmers from the water & venue.
6. Increase warm beverages after the swim.
7. Increase thermal treatment gear (blankets, hot water bottles, etc.)
8. Make warm showers available on-site.
9. Make warming facilities (buildings, tents, vehicles, etc.) available on-site.
10. Other: [Specify](#)

Specify what extra listed items you will provide: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Comment on how you will be prepared to care for multiple medical issues: [Click here to enter text.](#)

**If the water temperature is below 72° F, will you be prepared to deal with cold water medical issues:**  
[Click here to enter text.](#)

## Thermal Plan for Warm Water Swims

<b>General Information</b>
Thermal Plan for Warm Water Swims: USMS Rule 302.2.2A(3) for Open Water Swims states: “A swim of 5K or greater shall not begin if the water temperature exceeds 29.45° C. (85°F.). A swim of less than 5K shall not begin if the water temperature exceeds 31° C. (87.8°F.).”
Remember that the average masters swimmer does little or no acclimatization to warm water, so even a small increase in water temperature—especially in the warmer ranges—dramatically increases the odds of thermal issues: Dehydration, Heat Stroke, and Hyperthermia. Be Prepared!
- If your swim course has a chance of water temperature from 85° F to 87.8° F, you are <b>REQUIRED</b> 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 course has a chance of water temperature between 82° F & 85° F., a thermal plan is <b>RECOMMENDED</b> .

<b>How will you assist swimmer preparation before the event:</b>
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**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Emphasize & stress on entry information of possible warm water swim conditions.
2. Require prior warm water swim experience.
3. Require swimmer warm water preparation plan.

**What method(s) of swimmer preparation will you take:** Discuss with swimmers at safety meeting

<b>What action will you take to reduce swimmer, official, and staff exposure to heat-related issues:</b>
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**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Cancel the swim(s).
2. Shorten swim(s) or institute/shorten time limits.
3. Remind all participants to stay well hydrated.
4. Remind swimmers to select appropriate pace.
5. Make swim caps optional or use Lycra swim caps.

**Explain your plan of action:** All of the above.

<b>What extra medical care will you provide to mitigate &amp; treat symptoms of heat-related issues:</b>
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**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Bring in more emergency trained medical personnel and/or ambulances.
2. Bring in more volunteers to assist medical personnel.
3. Bring in more emergency craft and first responders on the course.

4. Increase cool beverages before, during and after the swim (for swimmers and staff, including extra cool beverages on watercraft and feeding stations)
5. Increase heat exhaustion and heat stroke treatment gear (iced water, ice chips, cold water bottles, misting tents/fans, etc.)
6. Make cool showers available on-site.
7. Make shade and cooling facilities (buildings, tents, etc.) available on-site.
8. Other: [Specify](#)

**Specify what extra listed items you will need to provide:** All of the above.

**Comment on how you will be prepared to care for multiple medical issues:** Multiple EMTs on site. Fresh-water showers available at venue with cooling swimmers. Cold water drinks will be provided.

**If the water temperature is above 82° F, will you be prepared to deal with heat-related medical issues:**  
Yes. If the water temperature is 85F or above, the race will be canceled.