ADPA Dive Best Practices

This document presented is a list of current best practices for diving in the zoo and aquarium industry. In the process of the AZA Safety Committee creating the zoo and aquarium Example Safety Practices document, The Association of Dive Program Administrators (ADPA) was asked to help develop the dive best practices for inclusion into the AZA document.

These current best dive practices were formulated from surveys of the professional members of the ADPA. At that time the ADPA included over 50 institutions and over 100 dive safety professionals from the United States and Canada and membership has since grown dramatically. These best practices were created to provide consensus minimum guidelines for institutions that immerse staff or visitors in water using either compressed gas or snorkels.

A preliminary survey was sent on a broad scope of topics. ADPA members responded with how they were currently running their dive programs. For these survey results, a consensus best practice was considered to achieve a minimum of 75% agreement with at least of 50% of institutions responding on each topic. After reviewing the results from the first survey, responses realizing the 75% consensus were then resent to the ADPA membership for a second review. All came through at a minimum 75% consensus during this second iteration.

These best practices should not (does not) contradict any applicable Federal OSHA Occupational diving guidelines that can be referenced in 29 CFR Part 1910 Subpart T - Commercial Diving Operations or the applicable state OSHA guidelines found in California, Michigan, Washington, and Oregon.

Organizations that need help developing their dive program or need to evaluate their diving practices can visit www.adpa.org for more information.

OSHA Commercial Diving Standards (CFR 1910 Subpart T)

OSHA Commercial Diving Directive
ADPA Dive Best Practices

Minimum prerequisite for entering a dive program

Entry level recreational scuba or equivalent
Pass a basic scuba skills evaluation
Pass a swimming evaluation
Medically Screened
Trained in CPR, First Aid, AED and Emergency Oxygen use
Complete facility specific rescue training
  Response to an unconscious diver underwater
  Response to an unconscious diver at the surface
  Emergency Scene Management (Topside response)

Prerequisite to stay current in a dive program

Periodical Medical rescreening
Current in CPR, First Aid, AED and Emergency Oxygen use
Participate in one dive drill annually which simulates response to unconscious diver underwater

Institution Dive Program

Has a standalone budget
Is under the direction of a dive control board
Develops and maintains a manual for dive safety
Has a Dive Safety Officer
  Individual that oversees dive program
  Paid staff member
  Certified recreational scuba instructor or equivalent
  Devotes the majority of their time to the dive safety program
Has a Designated Person in Charge (DPIC) at the facility while diving is being conducted

www.adpa.org
Maintains training records and dive logs for each diver
Maintains records of equipment maintenance, modification, repair, test and calibration
Have specific training for diving with hazardous marine life
Have specific training for diving with sharks
Have protocols for diving in medicated water
Have protocols for diving in contaminated water
Oversee snorkeling or free-diving
First Aid, Emergency Oxygen Kit, and AED are available
Has written Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for:
  Exhibit Dive Plans
  Pre and Post dive checklists
  Emergency Procedures

**Guest Immersion Programs**

Follows WRSTC guidelines

Require in-water guides to be certified to level of recreational Divemaster (or higher)

Post a topside observer during in-water activities