

2024 Diving Board and Equipment Safety and Maintenance Memorandum to Dive Team Representatives

As the NVSL Safety Coordinator, I'm sending out my annual message about diving boards and diving equipment to facilitate meeting safety, installation, and maintenance standards. First off, please read paragraph 1.h. contained in the Dive Rules section and of last year's NVSL Handbook. Also review the Recommended Safety Reminders for NVSL Dive Teams in the Handbook right after the 1-meter DD Table. Paragraph 1.h. indicates that pool organizations are responsible for setting standards of care regarding safety at pools where dive meets are held. Second, become familiar with the Duraflex International website found at: <https://duraflexinternational.com/> for maintenance, refurbishment, and installation procedures and performance standards for Duraflex products (diving boards and stands). A wealth of valuable instructional materials is found there. Also, consult <http://www.thefulcrumguy.com/> for additional information.

Safety and Maintenance Emphasis Items:

Taking Care of Worn-out Board Surfaces:

When your boards are taken out of storage and cleaned for installation and surfaces are found to have a smooth surface (lack of a rough surface for traction) on the diving end of the board, or show extensive surface cracking, crazing, or peeling, **take them out of service immediately.** **Avoid the notion that you can get by for one more season before taking corrective action by continuing to use a worn-out board.** Either purchase a new exact model diving board or arrangement to return the old board to Duraflex for resurfacing. Check the Duraflex website (shown above) for instructions on returning boards for resurfacing, especially the inspection criteria for old boards. If the old board doesn't meet these criteria, then it is necessary to purchase of a new replacement board. **Only Duraflex resurfacing is acceptable.** Resurfacing by another vendor or self-resurfacing by the pool organization or the pool management company must be avoided. Otherwise, the board will become unacceptably slippery again in a short time and, in some cases, the board surface will prematurely experience surface peeling.

Cleaning Slippery Diving Boards:

This emphasis item still remains a concern, i.e. divers slipping on diving boards with surfaces that were coated with dark discolored algae, mold and mildew. Weather continues to be a strong factor with many hot days and rain along with high humidity. These environments are ripe for making board surfaces slippery. It also highlights the need that frequent cleaning of diving boards is essential to remedy the situation and to ensure safe conditions are being maintained for divers as well as members and guests at your pool. Consult the Duraflex International website above for simple and easy-to accomplish maintenance procedures for remediating slippery board conditions. The procedures specify daily maintenance to hose down boards with fresh water. Additionally, monthly (or more often if needed), scrub boards with detergent or chlorine, hot water and bristle brushes. **Hard bristle brushes are acceptable to use if soft bristle brushes are unable to remove stains or to remedy slippery conditions.** Muriatic acid may be used to treat hard-to-remove algae or stains. Inspect diving board surfaces afterwards to ensure the surface of the board is not worn out. **IMPORTANT: Do not use power washers to clean a board. Otherwise, board surfaces will be damaged necessitating replacement of the board.**

Tightening Nuts/Bolts on Diving Boards during Installation:

On-site consultations are conducted on at least ¼ of NVSL diving pools during a given season. Many diving facilities had insufficiently tightened bolts attaching the boards to the stands. Facilities maintained by several competent professional diving equipment specialists were found not to have acceptably tightened the bolts. In a few cases, the bolts were able to be loosened by

hand or one of the two bolts found not to be tightened to factory specifications. This is an easy problem to remedy. Pool organizations and companies should be instructed to review and follow board installation procedures found on the Duraflex International website. Investment in a torque wrench is highly recommended. **All that has to be done is to set the wrench to 110 foot-pounds, see that the board is centered on the stand, and tighten the bolts to the setting on the wrench.** Many facilities' nuts/bolts exhibited claw marks. Pls don't use vise grips, pliers, or channel locks, or similar tools to tighten nuts/bolts. It's not possible to get the proper tightness with these tools – and the nuts/bolts will be damaged by these tools.

Storage of Diving Boards:

To get the best lifetime out of diving boards, avoid storing them in the pump room on their sides. Pump rooms, even after seasonal use, continue to retain a residual caustic chemical environment even if chemicals are not stored there. It could result in premature failure of the board surface. Storing of the boards on their sides promotes warpage across the width of the board. If severe enough, it could affect whether the board is an acceptable candidate for resurfacing. Boards should be stored bottom-side up supported at two points, for example on saw horses, table surfaces, etc. They can be stored inside in a chemical free environment or outside as long as the boards are kept out of the rain, freezing rain, or snow.

Information:

Diving boards do not last forever and require periodic upkeep depending on how much your boards are used. The surfaces of boards at pools with average dive team activity last an average of 6 - 7 years. Very active dive team pools could experience a 3 - 4 year board surface lifetime; less active pools 7 - 10 years or more.

Other Things to Pay Attention to:

- Metal contact between board and roller can damage diving equipment; replace shredded rubber runners to prevent damage to the dive stand
- Creaking noises when the board is flexed by a heavy diver can indicate hard to visualize structural damage, i.e. cracks, requiring board replacement
- Broken, ready-to-break, and missing bolts on dive stands must be replaced; use stainless steel nuts, bolts, and washers
- Corroded channel at mounting end of the board might mean the board requires replacement. See pictures on the Durafirm website
- When boards are replaced, the new board must be the same make and model as the old board to remain compliant with County Health Department codes. Go to the Durafirm website to compare with pictures of boards to identify correct make and model.

Other Helpful Information: Other useful services for dive stand maintenance, board installation, or stand installation are available from Dennis Ceppia (609-828-9250) of The Fulcrum Guy at <http://www.thefulcrumguy.com/> or from Jeff Allen (571-921-7287) at Jeff Allen Enterprises, Inc. jeffallenenterprises@yahoo.com; fax 540-636-7482. There are other service entities or companies that can perform this work too. It is recommended that you ask for references to be able to assess quality performance and customer satisfaction before selection.

Please call me or email me if you have questions, 703-593-5075 or mikejudy@cox.net. Remember that safety comes first.

Mike Schaeffer, NVSL Diving Safety Coordinator

Information validated May 2024