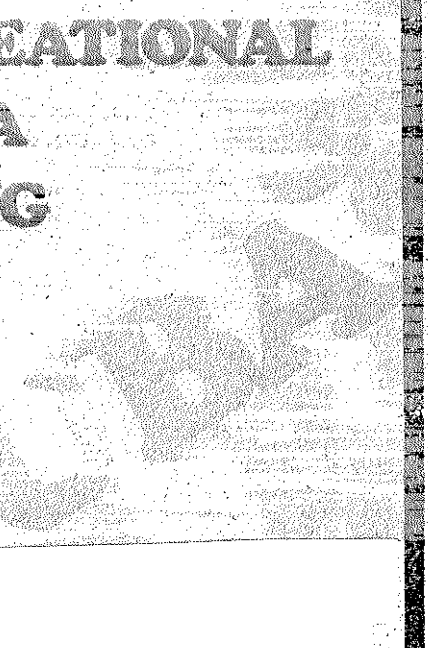


RECREATIONAL SCUBA DIVING



REMINDERS FOR SAFETY

Safe scuba diving depends upon good health, knowledge, and equipment. This pamphlet will serve as a reminder to the occasional diver to review standard safety procedures and more detailed texts on diving.

Physical condition

Know your limits -- both physical and mental. You are safe in the water only to the extent of your abilities.

A complete medical examination every year is recommended.

Your body must be capable of meeting physical and mental extremes possible during a dive. It is vital that you avoid alcohol and narcotics prior to diving. Don't dive if you feel below par.

Training

Safe diving depends on your obtaining proper training and knowledge:

Be a good swimmer

Attend an approved diving course with a certified instructor. Such courses are sponsored by NAUI (National Association of Underwater Instructors), PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors), and NASDS (National Association of Skin Diving Schools). The basic course will not turn you into an expert diver, but it will teach you proper technique and safety.

Review periodically all course books and notes, and attempt to keep current through diving publications available at most diving shops.

Diving

Before diving, observe the area from the beach. Note the wind, sea, current, tide, fishermen, boat activity, and piers or structures. Don't dive if conditions are unfavorable.

Plan your dive with your buddy. Discuss all signals and plans, and check equipment. To avoid underwater hassles, decide in advance who is the dive leader. Display the diving flag.

When heading out, observe the current indicated by sea growth and the bottom ripple pattern. These signs will orient you while diving and returning to shore. Keep track of depth and time.

If you are separated from your buddy, surface and remain surfaced until reunited. It is highly unlikely that you will meet underwater.

Ascend from depth no faster than 60 feet per minute, using watch and depth gauge. A dynamic pressure change is encountered while ascending, and your body must have time to adapt. Breathe normally while ascending -- do not hold your breath.

Don't drain your tank of air, even at shallow depths. Quit when pressure reaches 200 psi. Air is cheap.

If diving in an area where not trained take a diver with you who knows the area and learn about the local hazards.

Unless properly equipped and trained do not enter a cave.

Buddy system

When diving, ALWAYS use the buddy system:

Avoid being the odd number buddy -- dive only in pairs.

If your buddy tends to be a loner, convince him of the importance of teamwork or find a new buddy.

Emergencies

Panic is your worst enemy so do what needs to be done logically, deliberately and correctly!

Call help if possible, but don't desert your buddy. In any case of unconsciousness while or immediately after diving, the diver should be immediately taken to the nearest recompression facility.

Did you review your first aid book recently? Do you have the local emergency telephones available? Where is the nearest recompression facility?

Conclusion

This information may be old hat to some, forgotten by many, or never learned by a few unfortunate divers. If after reading this material you have any questions, seek professional guidance. Accidents and emergencies do happen, but don't be the cause of the problem.

Diving equipment

Use quality equipment and avoid poorly maintained second-hand gear.

Maintain your equipment—check it before every dive.

Basic gear should include the following:

Mask—Check strap for rot	Diver's knife—should be sharp and accessible
Snorkle	Fins—should be snug-fitting
Wet suit	Diving watch
Inflatable diving vest—check CO ₂ bottle	Depth gauge
Tank—should receive annual internal inspection and 5-year hydro test	Diver's flag
Regulator	Decompression tables
Air gauge from tank	Telephone numbers for emergency aid (U.S. Coast Guard and nearest recompression chamber)
Weight belt—should be properly weighted	

This public document is promulgated at a cost of \$333.50 or 3.3 cents per copy to provide safety reminders for recreational scuba divers.

This information was prepared by Lt. Allan D. Kissman, NOAA, with assistance from regional diving safety specialists, and is reproduced from a pamphlet published by the Washington Sea Grant Program.

The State University System of Florida Sea Grant Program is supported by award of the Office of Sea Grant, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, contract number 04-5-158-44, under provisions of the National Sea Grant College and Programs Act of 1966. This information is published in cooperation with the Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Joe N. Busby, Dean, in conducting Cooperative Extension work in Agriculture, Home Economics, and Marine Sciences, State of Florida, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Commerce, and Boards of County Commissioners, cooperating. Printed and distributed in furtherance of the Acts of May 8 and June 14, 1914.

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