



TOPSIDE



Sept 2006

The NDP Newsletter for NOAA Diving Supervisors and Divers

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TRAINING SCHEDULE

All individuals applying for any dive classes offered by the NDC must submit the following items; NOAA Diving Training Request and Authorization form, completed NOAA diving physical, swim test, dive resume, Standardized Equipment Measurement form, and current First-aid/CPR certificates. All forms are available online at: www.ndc.noaa.gov/forms.html. Completed forms can be mailed or faxed to the Diving Center.

Due to current budget issues the Winter training classes may be cancelled. A decision will be made in October.

Events scheduled through March 2007:

Sept.25 - 29	Divemaster	Seattle
Nov. 27 - Dec. 2	DMT	Seattle
Jan. 8 - 19	MPIC	Seattle
Jan. 8 - 26	Working Diver	Key West
Jan. 22 - 26	Divemaster	Key West
Mar. '07	TBD Tentative WD Refresher	Sea.

Please contact Laurie Barber at 206-526-6695 or via e-mail laurie.barber@noaa.gov.



DATABASE UPDATES

The NOAA Dive Center has been working on various changes to the diver database. Some of the new items are as follows:

- Reminder emails will be sent to individuals one month prior to the expiration of their dive physical. (running soon)
- Expiration dates have been added to diver profiles for all appropriate training certifications (CPR, First Aid, DMT, etc...)
- Specific titles have been added for the various individuals we have diving for the NDP, e.g. WM - Wage Mariner, WG - Wage Grade, NCO - NOAA Corps Officer, GC - Government Contractor, etc...
- Comment field has been maxed at 255 characters on the logs

Some things to come in the future:

- Photos of each diver on the profile page
- A Diver BBS (online forums)
- The ability for our divers to log multiple dives in the field and submit them via an upload when they return to the office, therefore ensuring capture of all dives performed.



A WORD ABOUT DIVING RECIPROACITY

Each year, the NOAA Diving Program (NDP) establishes diving reciprocity with a number of institutions, organizations and agencies. The purpose for establishing reciprocity is to minimize the red-tape required to dive with each other.

Here are some Frequently Asked Questions about diving reciprocity.

Q: I've been asked to participate on a diving project with another agency for which NOAA has established diving reciprocity. What do I need to do?

A: You need to contact Laurie Barber at NDC (Laurie.Barber@noaa.gov) to request a "Letter of Reciprocity (LOR)," be sent to the Diving Safety Officer (DSO) of the receiving unit. Please allow a minimum of 5 working days to process these requests.

Q: What qualifications are required to qualify for diving with a reciprocity organization?

A: You must be in an "Authorized to Dive" status (conducted a dive within the last 6-weeks and a current dive physical) as indicated on each diver's profile page of the NOAA diver database. You must also be current in CPR, First Aid, and Oxygen Administration as indicated on the same profile page. If you are delinquent on any of these requirements, a LOR will not be sent until the requirements are met and documentation received by the NDC. The CPR, First Aid, and Oxygen Administration must be current for the duration of the reciprocity project.

Q: I am a NOAA certified diver that happens to be a contract employee. Can I dive with a reciprocity organization as a NOAA diver?

A: Yes, but in addition to the requirement listed above, you will also have to complete the "Verification of Coverage" form (available at: http://www.ndc.noaa.gov/pdfs/verification_of_coverage.pdf) which must be signed by an official with whom you are employed (contracting agency) and send the form to Ms. Barber at NDC. The form will be attached to the LOR and sent to the appropriate DSO. Please note that if the receiving organization is not satisfied with the insurance coverage, as indicated on the verification of coverage form, they may not allow you to dive with them. Workers compensation and health coverage are typically required.

Q: I am a NOAA certified diver, but not employed (e.g., volunteer) by NOAA. Can I dive with a reciprocity organization as a NOAA diver?

A: No. You must be employed by NOAA as a federal employee or a contract employee.

Q: When diving with a reciprocity organization, whose diving standards and policies do I follow?

A: You must follow NOAA diving standards and policies as outlined in NAO 209-123.

Q: How long is the LOR good for?

A: Since NOAA divers are required to dive every 6-weeks, the LOR is good for the same period from the date of issuance but is extended for another six weeks for any dives conducted during the project, up to a total of 12-weeks.

Reciprocity diving is a privilege granted to NOAA divers by the multiple agencies with whom the NDP has reciprocity. When working with a reciprocity agency remember that you are representing the whole of the NOAA dive program and are still bound by the regulations that NOAA divers are to operate under.

Please forward any questions to LT Eric Johnson at (206-526-6460) or eric.t.johnson@noaa.gov. 