



TOPSIDE



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The NDP Newsletter for NOAA Diving Supervisors and Divers

May 2003

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TRAINING SCHEDULE

Training requests are being accepted for the **September 2003 Working Diver/Divemaster** courses. Please contact Laurie Barber if you would like to enroll in either of these September classes or have any questions about requirements for any class being offered.

A **Working Diver Refresher** course is also tentatively scheduled for late August. This course is designed to certify NOAA divers who's dive activity has lapsed a year or more, certify NOAA Scientific divers in the use of a dry suit, or is an option for the initial certification of Scientific divers. Please contact LCDR Mike Lemon, or Laurie Barber if you are interested in the Working Diver Refresher Course.

Dates for the **January 2004 Working Diver/Divemaster** courses have been set as listed below.

The following classes are scheduled for 2003:


Apr 29 - May 02	Diver Refresher	Seattle, WA
May 19 - Jun 06	Working Diver	Seattle, WA
Jun 02 - Jun 06	Divemaster	Seattle, WA
Aug TBA	Diver Refresher	Seattle, WA
Sep 15 - Oct 03	Working Diver	Seattle, WA
Sep 29 - Oct 03	Divemaster	Seattle, WA
Dec 1 - 12	EMT	Seattle, WA
Dec 15 - 20	Diver Medic	Seattle, WA

2004:


Jan 12 - 30	Working Diver	Key West, FL
Jan 26 - 30	Divemaster	Key West, FL



NDC STAFF ADDITION

As mentioned in last month's TOPSIDE, LCDR Mike Lemon has joined the NOAA Diving Center staff. He will be replacing LT Bill Cobb as Operations Manager at NDC in the near future. In this position, Mike's duties will include overseeing Scientific Diver certifications, diver physicals, the SEP assessment, TOPSIDE, and a variety of other tasks. LCDR Lemon will be the contact point for the above listed items as well as any items not listed that divers normally contacted LT Cobb about. LCDR Lemon can be reached at 206-526-6474, or Michael.Lemon@noaa.gov. 

DIVING SURVEY

One last reminder that all divers, dive supervisors, Program Managers, and on up the line are encouraged to complete and submit the **"NOAA Diving Program Needs Survey & Assessment."** The intent of this survey is to help NDP determine how best to serve NOAA programs now and in the future. NDC is asking your help in facilitating this survey process by completing the survey yourself, and by providing timely diving information to program supervisors and encouraging them to complete the survey. An electronic version of the survey can be found at the following website address: [http://www.ndc.noaa.gov/pdfs/dive survey.pdf](http://www.ndc.noaa.gov/pdfs/dive%20survey.pdf)located. Completed surveys can be faxed to NDC at 206-526-6506 or mailed to LCDR Mike Lemon at the NOAA Diving Center address. 

EXERCISE AND DIVING

Several questions regarding exercise and diving have been posed to NDC recently. Following is a reprint on exercise and diving recommendations from the September 2001 issue of TOPSIDE.

Captain Michael Vitch, Chairman, NOAA Diving Medical Review Board, provided the following recommendation and an excerpt from the Divers Alert Network (DAN) regarding exercise and diving:

NDMRB RECOMMENDATION:

Refrain from vigorous exercise four (4) hours pre-dive and twelve (12) hours post-dive.

Excerpt from DAN web site:

"Nitrogen absorption and elimination is largely a matter of temperature and circulation. Gas exchange works very well at constant temperature. **After diving when body tissues have been loaded with nitrogen, activities such as running, weight lifting, or a heavy workload can shake up the bottle of soda, so to speak.** So exercise after diving requires that you give tissue nitrogen levels time to drop, making bubble generation less likely in the tissues.

You should always start off a dive well rested with muscle that is cooled down and not calling for more oxygen and blood flow.

Exercise before diving may be your best bet. We all enter the water warm and take on nitrogen at a similar rate. Once in the water we begin to cool, vasoconstrict, and we take on less nitrogen. Which means after the dive, we are still cool and not off gassing as a mathematical model may predict. **This would appear to favor a diving after exercise procedure.**

Although there is no definitive answer, **a two-hour [four-hour for NOAA] wait might be considered a minimum waiting guideline for diving after exercise.**


A more conservative suggestion would be four hours to allow your body to cool down and rest before you add a nitrogen exposure.

Remember to rehydrate after exercise. Although dehydration doesn't cause decompression illness [but it can contribute to it!], increased fluid losses decrease your off gassing efficiency, so be sure to get plenty of water on dive and exercise days."



NOAA Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, Timothy Keeney (right) and Director, NOAA Diving Program, Dave Dinsmore

KEENEY VISIT

NOAA's Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, Timothy Keeney, along with Scott Smullen, Deputy Director, NOAA Public Affairs, were recently given a tour of the NOAA Diving Center by DNDP Dave Dinsmore. While touring the Center Mr. Keeney was presented with both a NOAA Working Diver ball cap and an honorary NOAA Working Diver certificate. 

NOAA DIVING REGS

After almost 4 years in the making, the NOAA Diving Regulations (NAO209-123) have been officially revised and approved for issuance. The effective date of the changes is May 2, 2003, and the issuance date is May 14, 2003. An electronic copy of the regulations was previously forwarded by e-mail to all divers. Hard copies to be distributed to each NOAA diver will be mailed to their respective UDS with this TOPSIDE. There is also a link to a downloadable pdf version on the dive program website (www.ndc.noaa.gov). The URL for the file is: <http://www.ndc.noaa.gov/pdfs/nao-209-123.pdf>. Special thanks to the past and present members of the NOAA Diving Safety Board, Jim Arnold (OFA), and Martin Freeman and Catherine Lewers (OGC) for their undying support in making this happen. This revision supersedes the 1991 version and is effective immediately. 