



Chapter 12 Swiftwater Rescue

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12.1 Level I General Requirements. Level I water rescue skills are applicable only to survival swimming skills and Level II support of swiftwater rescue. The job performance requirements defined in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, Section 11.1, and 12.1.1 through 12.1.4 shall be met prior to Level I qualification in swiftwater rescue.

12.1.1 Construct rope systems particular to the swiftwater rescue needs of the AHJ, given rescue personnel, rope equipment, a load to be moved, and personal protective equipment, so that the movement is controlled, the load is held in place when needed, and operating methods do not stress the system.

(A) Requisite Knowledge. Rope systems specific to the swiftwater environment, capabilities and limitations of various rope systems, incident site evaluation as related to interference concerns and obstacle negotiation, system safety check protocol, procedures to evaluate system components for compromised integrity, common personnel assignments and duties, common and critical operational commands, and methods to increase the efficiency of load movement.

(B) Requisite Skills. The ability to determine incident needs, complete a system safety check, evaluate system components for compromised integrity, select personnel, communicate with personnel, manage movement of the load, and evaluate for potential problems.

12.1.2 Support Level II operations, given a designated mission, safety equipment, props, and water body, so that skills are demonstrated in a controlled environment, performance parameters are achieved, hazards are continually assessed, and emergency procedures are demonstrated.

(A) Requisite Knowledge. Support procedures, including search patterns, equipment setup, operation support equipment, and communications issues.

(B) Requisite Skills. Basic support skills, including the ability to serve as an upstream or downstream safety or spotter, and tend a "go" rescuer.

12.1.3 Assess moving water conditions, characteristics, and features in terms of hazards to the rescuer and victims, given an incident scenario and swiftwater tool kit, so that flow and conditions are estimated accurately, mechanisms of entrapment are considered, hazards are assessed, depth and surrounding terrain are evaluated, and findings are documented.

(A) Requisite Knowledge. Flow calculation methods, map or chart reading, local water hazards and conditions, entrapment mechanisms, and human physiology and survival factors.

(B) Requisite Skills. Determination of flow and environmental factors, the effect on victims and rescuers, and interpretation of maps or charts.

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12.1.4 Perform a nonentry rescue in the swiftwater/flooding environment, given an incident scenario, personal protective equipment, and swiftwater rescue tool kit, so that rescue is accomplished, and adopted policies and safety procedures are followed.

(A) Requisite Knowledge. Types and capabilities of personal protective equipment, effects of hydrodynamic forces on rescuers and victims, hydrology and characteristics of water, behaviors of waterbound victims, water rescue rope-handling techniques, incident-specific hazard identification, criteria for selecting victim retrieval locations based on water environment and conditions, hazards and limitations of shore-based rescue, local policies/procedures for rescue team activation, and information on local water environments.

(B) Requisite Skills. Select personal protective equipment specific to the water environment, don personal protective equipment, identify water hazards (i.e., upstream or downstream, current or tides), identify hazards directly related to the specific rescue, and demonstrate appropriate shore-based victim removal techniques.

12.2 Level II General Requirements. The job performance requirements defined in Sections 11.2 and 12.1 and 12.2.1 and 12.2.2 shall be met prior to Level II qualification in swiftwater rescue.

12.2.1 Perform an entry rescue in the swiftwater/flooding environment, given an incident scenario, personal protective equipment, and swiftwater rescue tool kit, so that rescue is accomplished, and adopted policies and safety procedures are followed.

(A) Requisite Knowledge. Types and capabilities of personal protective equipment, effects of hydrodynamic forces on rescuers and victims, hydrology and characteristics of water, behaviors of waterbound victims, water rescue rope-handling techniques, incident-specific hazard identification, criteria for selecting victim retrieval locations based on water environment and conditions, hazards and limitations of shore-based rescue, local policies/procedures for rescue team activation, and information on local water environments.

(B) Requisite Skills. Select personal protective equipment specific to the water environment, don personal protective equipment, identify water hazards (i.e., upstream or downstream, current or tides), identify hazards directly related to the specific rescue, and demonstrate appropriate victim removal techniques.

12.2.2 Negotiate a designated swiftwater course, given a course that is representative of the bodies of swiftwater existing or anticipated within the geographic confines of the AHJ, water rescue personal protective equipment, and swim aids as required, so that the specified objective is reached, all performance parameters are achieved, movement is controlled, hazards are continually assessed, distress signals are communicated, and rapid intervention for the rescuer has been staged for deployment.

(A) Requisite Knowledge. Hydrology and specific hazards anticipated for representative water rescue environments (shoreline, in-water, and climatic), selection criteria for water rescue personal protective equipment and swim aids for anticipated water conditions and hazards, and swimming techniques for representative body of water.

(B) Requisite Skills. The ability to swim and float in different water conditions with and without flotation aids or swim aids as required, apply water survival skills, don and doff personal protective equipment, select and use swim

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aids, utilize communications systems, and evaluate water conditions to identify entry points and hazards.