

# THE RESCUER



April - June 2000

Number 29

## Educating the Public by William Shields, SRT1

Every year flooding effects countless locations around the world and unfortunately, in almost all of these events both life and property are lost. Over the past few years the public safety industry has made minimizing these losses one of its top priorities, and because of this has met with amazing results. Currently most flood awareness and prevention programs focus on rescuer training and preplanning. While this has helped tremendously, it is still necessary to implement other means in order to try to further reduce the number of lives lost every year. One way to do this is to learn from the past successes of other industries. For example, the fire service over the past few years has managed to dramatically reduce the loss of life with a few simple and innovative programs. The use of public awareness campaigns, community oriented safety training, and public service literature availability have all been instrumental in reducing fire disasters. By implementing some of these programs into current flood preparation guidelines, similar results could occur nationwide.

I'm sure we all would agree that the best way to deal with an emergency is to keep it from happening in the

first place. The key is that in order for the general public to survive a flood they must first be able to save themselves, and to do this they need to be well

***“Now the general who wins a battle makes many calculations in his temple ere the battle is fought. The general who loses a battle makes but few calculations beforehand. Thus do many calculations lead to victory, and few calculations to defeat: how much more no calculation at all! It is by attention to this point that I can foresee who is likely to win or lose.”***  
Chinese military philosopher Sun Tzu

informed as to what actions to take or not take. As we in the public safety domain know, water conditions associated with flooding can be very dangerous and unpredictable. As waters rise, conditions change quickly, and what was there five minutes ago could be all the way across town in just a few moments. This has been especially evident these last few years in the southwest and southern California where shallow water has claimed lives and property very, very rapidly due to changing geographical and topographical problems. The public often will take unnecessary risks, such as crossing flooded roads that appear shallow enough to cross, and we all know what the outcome is most likely going to produce: job security. The main problem is that the public simply does not know what they are up against. I can't even begin to count how many times I've heard a victim state that "the water didn't look

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that deep!” Hopefully by arming the public with a basic understanding of how dangerous flood water can be they will be able to make more informed decisions, and thus make our jobs a whole lot easier.

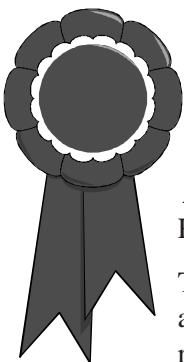
As agencies across the nation have become more aware of the need for an informed public, many new and innovative programs have been started. One method in service in many areas is public service commercials. This method not only reaches a wide range of people, but it can also drive home the severity of a flood with the use of frightening visual images. It can also be used in conjunction with making literature available to the public, school safety programs, and community disaster awareness training. Another proven method in reducing loss of life during flooding is an emergency alert system. While classically television and radio have been the primary sources of these alerts, a new system, called reverse 911 is becoming popular with many agencies. This system allows a pretaped message to be sent to over 200 homes per minute over the telephone, thus reducing the number of non-emergency inquiries received by 911 dispatchers. Unfortunately, in order to put this program into play there must be some sort of warning as to what areas will be affected. To solve this, specific flood prone areas can be equipped with river and stream monitoring devices that constantly

monitor rising water, allowing residents of effected areas to make preparations to evacuate if the need arises.

Over the next few years the need for public awareness will be even greater. Not only will there be more people living in flood prone areas, but experts also predict that over the next decade the number of floods will increase dramatically. This is already evident by the fact that the worst flooding of the 20<sup>th</sup> century occurred during the late 1990’s. By having resources available before and during a disaster the public will be better able to help themselves should the need arise. While many outcomes can be predicted during a flood, there is no real way of predicting a 100% sure answer for a problem. Some things are for certain though: levees break, structures fail, and Mother Nature lets us all know how small we really are in her world. Protecting the public from death is the main goal of all public safety. In order to survive a flood the general public must be kept aware of the changing conditions and know what actions to take in the event that an evacuation is called for. As rescuers we train as to what to do as well as making a pre-flooding plan, but this by itself is not enough. In order to do our job fully everyone must be taught what to do in an emergency. The public has been taught how to save themselves in case of a fire. Don’t they deserve the same chance for survival in a flood?



## Nominations for Higgins-Langley Award Needed



The Swiftwater Rescue Committee of the National Association for Search and Rescue is seeking nominations for the 2000 Higgins and Langley Memorial Awards for Outstanding Achievement in the Field of Swiftwater Rescue.

The awards recognize outstanding achievement in the field of swiftwater rescue. In addition to individual incidents and acts of heroism, swiftwater rescue team efforts, those who have dedicated years of service to developing and implementing swiftwater rescue training programs,

and public safety-media-education efforts, will be considered for nomination.

**The deadline for submission is July 15, 2000.** For more information and copies of the nomination forms, please send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

Mr. Paul McMinn  
NASAR-Swiftwater Rescue Committee  
c/o South Bend Recreation Dept.  
727 Eddy St.  
South Bend, IN 46615  
Telephone (219) 235-9328 Fax (219) 235-5566

Or visit CFS Press web site at <http://www.cfspress.com/> and click on the “Higgins and Langley Memorial Awards” link.

## Man Rescued From Portable Toilet



(Associated Press-Thursday , June 15, 2000) HUNTINGDON VALLEY, Pa. Losing your keys into the depths of a portable toilet is bad enough. But one man who recently

found himself in that situation only made things worse for himself.

Authorities said the man had to be rescued after he got into the portable toilet to look for his keys and got stuck. Some kids playing at a nearby recreational field heard the man’s cries for help Wednesday afternoon and told their mother.

The woman then called police, who arrived at Elkins Field in Lower Merion Township and found the man stuck in the toilet’s lower chamber up to his hips. The man, who was not identified, had taken off his shoes and pants for the unpleasant task.

He told police he had been in the predicament for at least 45 minutes. He was freed about 45 minutes later, after emergency response workers destroyed a significant part of the portable toilet to get him out.

The man was treated for cuts and bruises. Doctors also had to remove the toilet seat, which had become wedged around his torso.

Lower Merion Township is about a mile outside Philadelphia. 🗹



## Why Consider Sterling Rope?

With quality rope manufacturers like New England, Wellington, and PMI, why would you consider using Sterling Rope, a relatively new entry into the rope market? To come up with an answer we turned to TECHNICAL RESCUE (UK) publication and their technical gear review for an answer.

US manufacturer Sterling Rope Company Inc of Scarborough, Maine began life in 1992 producing climbing and utility ropes. Since then it has joined the elite ranks of rescue rope manufacturers and has arguably one of the toughest ropes on the market with the HTP (High Tenacity Polyester) static.

The rope will retain strength when wet, won’t become twice as heavy during a rain storm and will be more resistant to abrasion and shock impact damage. Sterling refers to this treatment as DryCore. As the name implies it is only the core that is treated but since this represents about 70% of the rope’s strength this will make a significant difference when wet, both to saturated weight and strength. The polyester rope is also more resistant to acid, UV and damage from certain chemicals and this all adds up a huge benefit in certain types of industry or terrain.

The best use of the HTP is in lowering and hauling systems, and high lines or tyroleans where its strength, resilience and lack of stretch would be a real bonus.

### Positives:

- Excellent strength relative to similar brands especially in the HTP.
- Nylon versions are some of the best handling ropes we’ve tried (inc. good knotability).
- HTP is particularly suited to hauling and abusive caving.

### Negatives

- Slicker finish can make control difficult when the rope is new.
- Harder to get a prusik to set because of slick finish.



For technical questions please contact Sterling at 800-788-ROPE, email: [info@sterlingrope.com](mailto:info@sterlingrope.com) or [www.sterlingrope.com](http://www.sterlingrope.com). 🗹

## Amazing Save!

by Keith Stringfellow

The City of Wenatchee, Washington, located in Chelan County, hosts the *Ridge to River Race* in April of each year. The event consists of a skiing leg from Mission Ridge, a bicycling leg to the Wenatchee River and a canoeing or kayaking leg to the finish line on the Columbia River. Competitors may enter as individuals or teams for the race. There is also an Ironman/Ironwoman category.

On Saturday April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2000, many of the competitors were on the Wenatchee River, practicing for the race the following day. The river was high and running fast. Spring runoff from the Cascade Mountains was well under way.

Carol, a 16-year-old high school girl, from Tenino, Washington was canoeing with her two friends, Mary, 16, and Rick, 19. They had borrowed the canoe from Tenino High School. The weather was partly cloudy and cool. Air temperature was 52



degrees, and the Wenatchee River water temperature was in the low 40's. Carol and her two friends had overturned their canoe once, they were wet and cold, and were paddling for shore when the current took control of their canoe.

The river pulled their canoe sideways against a cement support column for the Sleepy Hollow Bridge. The force of the water crushed the fiberglass canoe against the column, ejecting Mary and Rick from the craft and pinning Carol by the legs, in the sinking canoe. The river's hydraulics then sank the canoe, pulling Carol under

water, still pinned in the canoe.


Chelan County Sheriffs Marine Patrol boats were also on the river, evaluating the water hazards and preparing for the next day's big race. At approximately 2:29 p.m. the call came in that a canoe had sunk and the boaters needed help at the Sleepy Hollow Bridge. Carol had been under water at least 10 minutes when

*Continued on page 5*

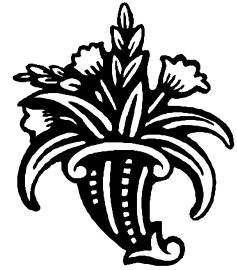
### ISO Announces Property Losses for 1999

In 1999, U.S. property and casualty insurers paid \$8.2 billion to homeowners and business for losses for 27 catastrophic events. The 10 states that suffered the highest insurance losses were:

Oklahoma	\$1.1 billion	May tornadoes	Ohio	\$375 million	Severe weather
N.Carolina	\$928 million	Hurricanes Dennis and Floyd	Arkansas	\$325 million	Severe weather
Texas	\$515 million	Severe weather	Pennsy.	\$255 million	Hurricane Floyd
Virginia	\$485 million	Hurricanes Dennis and Floyd	New York	\$230 million	Severe weather
Michigan	\$375 million	Severe weather	Florida	\$222 million	Hurricanes Dennis and Floyd

According the Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO) these losses are the fifth highest for catastrophe losses since 1949, when ISO's recordkeeping began. 

## Heaven-Bound Instructors And Friends



It is with a heavy heart that we report the untimely passing of three of our valued friends.

Mike Cate passed away on April 15, 2000, in Briton, NH. He had been an SRT1 instructor since 1996. He suffered a cardiac arrest and died while in the hospital. Mike was 35 years old. He leaves a wife, Nancy and 2 children, Peter (15) and Samantha (13).

Darrell Sherrett passed away on May 22, 2000, in Kalama, Wa. He had been diagnosed with cancer in February of this year. Darrell had been an active SRT1 instructor since June of 1997. Darrell was 41 years old. He owned and operated Northwest River Runners. He was a volunteer for Cowlitz County Fire Department, District 5, a leader of the Cowlitz Volunteer Dive Team and an EMT. He leaves a wife, Kim and 2 children, Sadre (16) and Streeter (14).

David Vanni passed away on June 14, 2000, in Lafayette, Ca. He collapsed while jogging at the Lafayette Reservoir. The cause of death has not yet been determined. He had taken an SRT1 course in 1998. David was also a former Higgins & Langley Award Recipient. He was a 24-year veteran of the Contra Costa Fire Department. A trust fund has been established for his two young daughters:

Dave Vanni Trust Fund

C/O Contra Costa County Federal Credit Union  
1111 Pine Street  
Martinez, Ca. 94553

All their friends and associates will feel the loss of these three fine men. But as long as we remember the good times, the things that made them special to each of us, their memory will live on. 🖼️

*"Amazing" continued from page 4*

the two rescue boats arrived.

First attempts to pull the canoe off the column were unsuccessful. The force of the water was just too much so a fire department rescue truck with a winch was requested. Upon arrival, the winch cable was lowered from the bridge. Inspector Mike Harum positioned the jet boat against the downstream side of the column while Keith Stringfellow and Larry Land cut a hole in the canoe with an ax and attached the winch cable to the canoe. The eight-thousand pound winch was stalled by the enormous force of the water against the canoe. Inspector Harum rammed the end of the canoe with the jet boat, to help break it free. Finally the canoe came free of the pillar and Carol popped free, floating down river. The second rescue boat, piloted by Everett Gahringer, dragged

Carol from the water at 3:32 p.m. and raced her to shore.

Paramedic Shawn Ballard started CPR and treatment and raced her to Wenatchee Valley Hospital. It is estimated that Carol was underwater for at least 45 minutes. Her body temperature had dropped to 77 degrees in the chilly water.

Dr. David Daniel was in charge of Carol's care, at Wenatchee Valley Hospital. She was maintained on kidney dialysis and on a respirator for three weeks. On Friday May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2000 Carol was transported to Children's Orthopedic Hospital in Seattle for physical and emotional therapy. She is fully alert and remembers everything except plunging into the water and being overcome by the water. Carol is currently under doctor's care and expected to make a full recovery.

*Ed. Note: The victim's names have been altered to protect their privacy. 🖼️*

## What is the NFPA 1006 Standard for Rescue Technician Professional Qualifications?



The NFPA 1006 Standard for Rescue Technician Professional Qualifications was written and adopted by the NFPA to establish the minimum job performance requirements (JPR) for fire service and other emergency

response personnel who perform technical rescue operations. Currently it is for those rescuers who wish to perform at the technician level only. It is not the intent of this standard to restrict any jurisdiction from exceeding these minimum requirements.

Rescue 3 International's *Swiftwater and Flood Rescue Program* was developed to help the area having jurisdiction (AHJ) establish instructional priorities to meet NFPA 1670. Now with NFPA 1006 for Professional Qualification, the use of Rescue 3's training program can help to prepare individuals to meet the JPRs of this standard. In the Swiftwater Rescue Technician Unit 1 (SRT1) and Swiftwater Rescue Technician Advanced (SRTA) courses, the student is taught these JPR's as well as other rescue techniques. With training, practice, and experience the student will be able to show proficiency under the requirements of 1006. It is our intent to have available by August of 2000, a task book to aid the student with documentation of skills to qualify under this standard.

The following matrix shows the steps for a student using Rescue 3's *Swiftwater and Flood Rescue Program* to become qualified at the technician level under NFPA 1006.

It should be noted that an AHJ may choose to train their personnel to Awareness, Operations, SRT1 and/or SRTA levels and not to the technician level under 1006. To ensure that the student and AHJ are aware of and work to meet the requirements and objectives of NFPA 1670 and 1006, Rescue 3 International has listed the skills at the beginning of

each section of our manuals and referenced the portion of the standard that applies.

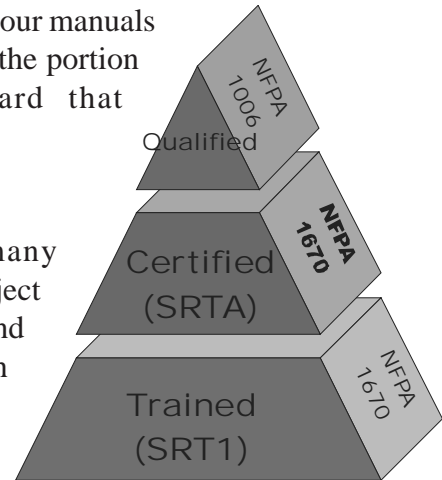
### Conclusion

There are many facets to the subject area of water and rope rescue such as training standards, operational

policies, safety guidelines, rescue techniques, professional rescue qualifications and more. To various degrees, the AHJ's address most or all of these issues. Rescue 3 is proud to play a role in assisting agencies in meeting the AHJ training needs, as they prepare to meet the challenges to this vital community service. Yet it must be understood that no single resource of training or information can provide a given agency with a complete program, because each community, organization and geographic location is unique. Development of a complete water rescue program involves:

- The development of a plan that sets goals for operational capabilities (scope of practice),
- Training,
- Preplanning,
- Setting response & operational protocols,
- Equipment acquisition,
- And continuing education/training.

The NFPA with the 1670 and 1006 standards is the only recognized national standard for water rescue. It is therefore the recommendation of Rescue 3 International that all professional organizations reference these standards as a benchmark for their water and rope rescue program. 🏠



## CPR Givers May Breathe Easier

A recent article in the Washington Post suggests that when it comes to CPR, giving adults in cardiac arrest chest compressions alone will just as likely save their lives as giving full CPR.

The results of this recent study, performed over nine years in Seattle, raise the question whether more people might be saved if the CPR guidelines were simplified to eliminate the mouth-to-mouth part of resuscitation breathing.

The study went on to say about 225,000 people die of out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest each year. Without CPR and electric shocking (known as defibrillation) within 12 minutes of collapse, a person's chance of survival is less than 2 percent. But with CPR by bystanders and defibrillation within four minutes up, to 40 percent of people survive.

They did admit that the results of this study would have no immediate effect on CPR protocols, which are developed by the American Heart Association.

"It's tough for us to take results of this and make a general statement that CPR without (mouth-to-mouth) ventilation is just as good as with it, because in many cases that's not going to be true", said Jerry Potts, director of emergency care programs for the


AHA. "We continue to encourage people who have been instructed in CPR to use the ventilation techniques they have been taught."

In calculating the statistics that showed a slight advantage for people getting chest compression alone, the researchers excluded victims who initially suffered from "respiratory arrest." That is a cessation of breathing that eventually leads to the heart stopping as well. Drug overdoses, drowning, severe asthma attacks and objects stuck in the windpipe can cause respiratory arrests. In them, rescue breathing is essential and often lifesaving. In the Seattle study, victims with those problems were more likely to survive if they got CPR that included mouth-to-mouth.



In most cases of sudden cardiac arrest, the electrical activity driving the heart muscle to pump becomes chaotic and the heart stops contracting. Blood then stops circulating, although much of it is still loaded with oxygen. Until that oxygen is used up, rescue breathing won't add any more to it, but immediate chest compressions will distribute it to vital organs.

"I think this should encourage people to rethink exactly how CPR is taught," said Alfred Hallstrom, a biostatistician at the University of Washington, who headed the study, published in the New England Journal of Medicine.

In addition, several studies have shown that people doing CPR don't do the chest compressions as fast or as hard as they should. Stopping chest compressions to do rescue breathing probably just worsens this situation. 

THE RESCUER is published quarterly by  
Rescue 3 International, Inc.  
9075 Elk Grove Blvd. #200 • Elk Grove, CA 95624  
1-800-457-3728 • Fax (916) 685-6969 • Editor: Judy Turnbull  
Annual Subscription rate is \$7.50 in U.S.  
\$17.50 outside of U.S.

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### Surfin' the Web



- <http://www.egroups.com/group/swifh2o-news> -- This is a newsgroup hosted by Nancy Rigg and has swiftwater/flood rescue information, networking, referral, public safety education, and news coverage. Well worth a look!
- <http://www.firehouse.com> -- This is the website for Firehouse Magazine (A Cygnus publication). It has everything the magazine has plus search engines. A very useful place to visit.

## Calendar

- June 20-25, 2000. *InterSchutz* in Augsburg, Germany. International Exhibition for Fire and Catastrophe Prevention and Rescue Services. E-mail [interschutz@hfusa.com](mailto:interschutz@hfusa.com)
- June 25-28, 2000. *10th World Conference of Disaster Management*, Hamilton ON, Canada. Phone: 800-965-1608.
- July 20-22, 2000. *Firehouse Expo 2000* in Baltimore, MD. Phone: 877-791-2478.\*
- August 26-29, 2000. *Fire Rescue International*, Dallas, TX E-mail [iafchq@iafc.org](mailto:iafchq@iafc.org) or phone 703-273-0911.\*
- September 28-October 1, 2000. *NASAR Annual Conference RESPONSE 2000*, Colorado Springs, CO. E-mail [sar2000@nasar.org](mailto:sar2000@nasar.org) or phone 703-273-0911.
- October 16-19, 2000. *First Due-Fire and Rescue Conference and Exposition*, Las Vegas, NV. Phone (800) 266-5367 or visit the web site at <http://www.jems.com/confrenz/confhm.html>

\**Rescue 3 and The Rescue Source will be exhibiting at these shows. Please come visit with us!*