

CHAPTER 1 – PREPARATION FOR EMERGENCY

Time: One hour

GOAL: Students will recognize the need and strategies for emergency preparedness. This section sets the groundwork for the entire course by establishing the role of drills and instruction in saving lives and the priorities to be used in any life threatening situation.

NEED STATEMENT:

1. You NEVER know how your day will end.
2. Proper preparation gives you the self-confidence, positive attitude, and equipment needed to survive.
3. Research shows that training and practice (drills) can increase survival rates by reducing panic in emergency situations.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Distinguish between the two types of emergencies.
2. Recite the Seven Steps to Survival from memory.
3. Identify the four general components for a personal and abandon ship survival kit.

SKILLS CHECKLIST:

1. State the Seven Steps to Survival in priority order.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

Examples of emergency instructions and station bills

Abandon ship kit

Examples of personal survival and commercial survival kits (optional)

TEACHING TIPS: The following activities may help you bring this outline to life:

- *Short (less than five minute) eye-catching videos are excellent attention grabbers for what most students anticipate as a dry, boring subject. Reinforce that idea “you never know how your day might end” and how quickly emergencies can happen.
- *Ask students for examples of immediate and delayed onset emergencies. This will generate discussion of local examples; discuss how preparation was a factor. Be sensitive to people in your class who may have been involved or lost friends/relatives in such incidents.
- *Ask students to empty their pockets, do an inventory and discuss how these items and their clothing can be used in a survival situation. Note which of the four components of a personal survival kit the item fits into. Discuss the limitations of what they have.
- *Display both commercial survival kits and abandon ship bags.
- *Display your own personal survival kit.
- *Ask students to generate the uses of a plastic garbage bag.
- *Provide examples of emergency instructions and station bills when discussing them. Many people are familiar with the concepts, but not the terms.
- *Start a newspaper clip notebook of accidents in your area. This reinforces “it can happen here” and will undoubtedly include the incidents your students will be asking about.

INSTRUCTIONAL OUTLINE:

I. EMERGENCIES

A. Types

1. Immediate onset
 - a. Happens suddenly with little or no warning.
 - b. Ex.: collision, capsizing, person overboard, explosion.
2. Delayed onset
 - a. Begin slowly and develop into life threatening situations.
 - b. Examples: mechanical failure, overloading or leaking vessel.
 - c. Ego and perceptual defense “this can’t be happening to me” emotional response can be a factor in delay.

B. Emotional factors in emergencies

1. Fear
 - a. A normal reaction in emergencies.
 - b. Can be useful in keeping us alert and aware.
2. Panic
 - a. Prevents clear thinking.
 - b. Wastes energy.
 - c. Is an obstacle to setting priorities.
3. Depression
 - a. Recognize it as a problem.
 - b. Destroys the will to survive.
4. Ways to reduce or eliminate panic, fear, and depression
 - a. Accept the fact it can happen to you; make contingency plans, file float plans, check weather, run drills.
 - b. Obtain training. It gives you procedures to follow which

increases confidence and reduces panic.

- c. Recognize your ability to be creative, innovative and resourceful in a survival situation.
- d. Develop a positive attitude. Think like a survivor, not a victim. Do something to improve your situation.

II. **SEVEN STEPS TO SURVIVAL** (were developed by Coast Guard SAR aircrews working out of Kodiak, AK)

A. Principles

- 1. Review the Seven Steps To Survival every time your situation changes (on the boat, in the life raft, on the beach).
- 2. They are organized in general priority order.
- 3. Be flexible in applying them.

B. Steps

- 1. Recognition
 - a. Recognize you're in trouble.
 - b. If you don't take some action, you may die.
- 2. Inventory – take into account the things that work for you and things that work against you.
 - a. Injuries
 - b. Equipment
 - c. Environment (weather, currents, etc.)
 - d. Skills
 - e. Location
 - f. Ability to communicate with rescuers

3. Shelter

- a. Anything that insulates and protects you from the environment.

The boat is your best shelter.

- b. Clothing is your primary shelter.

Dress for outside, not inside environment.

- c. Onshore survival

- 1. A fire is better at calming the nerves than warming the body in most cases.

Build your shelter first!

- 2. Building a fire can be time and energy consuming.

4. Signals

- a. Need to attract attention and give a message.

- 1. Think: BIGGER, brighter, DiFFERenT.

- 2. Give a message of distress.

- b. Need signals that are worked by you (active) and without you (passive).

- c. General principles

- 1. Three of anything (e.g., 3 fires).

- 2. Hard angles (not found in nature).

- 3. Three times as high as wide.

- 4. Contrast with background.

- 5. A moving signal is more eye catching.

- d. Onshore survival, fires can be used for signals and obtaining a safe water source.

5. Water

- a. Average person can live only 3-4 days without water; need to acquire clean, plentiful water source.
- b. Water needs increase with physical activity.
- c. Only safe sources in a survival situation:
 - 1. Boiling (as soon as boiling starts it's OK)
 - 2. Prepackaged
 - 3. Rainwater
 - 4. Water from distiller/purifier in raft
- d. 2-4 quarts per person per day is recommended
- e. Drinking salt water, urine, or contaminated water will only worsen your condition.

6. Food

- a. Important to meet energy needs and keep up spirits
- b. Generally, don't eat unless you have water.
 - 1. Especially true of life raft rations.
 - 2. High water content foods like berries may be an exception.
- c. Onshore survival: need to know beforehand which plants and animals are edible.
 - 1. Intertidal zone is greatest source of food.
 - 2. Avoid bivalves due to PSP.

7. Play

- a. Reinforces a positive attitude which strengthens the will to survive.
- b. Improves your physical and/or mental situation.

III. SURVIVAL KITS – It's not one unless it's with you.

A. Considerations

1. Most persons find themselves in survival situations with:
 - a. Only the clothing they are wearing.
 - b. What's in their pockets.

B. Abandon Ship Kit

1. May not “make it out” with you in an emergency but if time allows, can make survival easier.
2. Store near exit.
3. Should be watertight and float and have handle.
4. Contains extra flares, water, EPIRB or PLB, VHF radio, log book, etc.

C. Personal Survival Kit

1. Must be small enough so it is always with you.
2. Contents depend upon the individual, environment and activity.
3. Consider putting a kit in immersion suit.
4. Consider items with multiple uses.
5. Meets four general requirements
 - a. Shelter (building aides such as dental floss).
 - b. Signals (mirror, space blanket).
 - c. Personal health considerations (medication).
 - d. Fire starter (steel wool, fire sticks, waterproof matches).

IV. SUMMARY:

A. Types of Emergencies

1. Immediate onset
 2. Delayed onset
- B. Seven Steps to Survival
1. Recognition
 2. Inventory
 3. Shelter
 4. Signals
 5. Water
 6. Food
 7. Play
- C. Survival Kits
1. Abandon ship kit can make survival easier – customize.
 2. Store near exit.
 3. Personal survival kits should be with you at all times, and meet your personal needs as well as shelter, signals & fire starter.
- D. THINK LIKE A SURVIVOR, NOT A VICTIM!
- Take action to improve your situation.
- E. USCG Regulations
1. The development and use of crew orientation, emergency instructions, and station bills help you think through and plan for emergencies.
 2. Practice, through drills, will help you to act positively in an emergency situation.
 3. ACT – don't just REACT.

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. List two types of emergencies.
ANS: Immediate onset and delayed onset
2. List the Seven Steps to Survival.
ANS: Recognition, inventory, shelter, signals, water, food, play
3. Name the four general requirements for a personal survival kit.
ANS: Shelter, signals, personal health and fire starter
4. Abandon ship bags should be stored near an exit in a watertight bag.
True or False?
ANS: True
5. Practice reduces the effects of panic. True or false?
ANS: True
6. Briefly define 1) emergency instructions, 2) station bill, and 3) emergency drill.

ANS: 1) procedures for handling emergency, 2) emergency plan, who, what, where, and how, 3) hands-on practice that follows emergency procedures and plans.

SKILLS CHECK:

1. State the Seven Steps in priority order. This should be requested of students throughout the course, e.g., during in-water practical, liferaft section, during drills, etc.
2. (optional) Build a personal survival or abandon ship kit including elements from all four categories.