

**Safety Tip of the Month – October 2005**  
**VSI Safety Committee**

**“Ten Essential Elements when Serving as a Marshal”**

1. **Arrive to the pool on time.** That means getting to general warm-ups at least 20 minutes before they start. Warm-ups CANNOT start without the presence of two Marshals on deck. There could be significant liability to the host club if an athlete sustains an injury and there was not adequate Marshal coverage at the time.
2. **Position yourself appropriately.** During warm-ups, at least one Marshal should be at the start end of the pool. Be prepared to intervene if an athlete dives into the pool during general warm-ups, jumps in from the side of the pool, or purposefully jumps into the pool very close to another swimmer.
3. **Look for potential deck hazards.** This includes glass bottles, electric appliances plugged in near the water, lane lines with exposed metal, and exit lights that are not working.
4. **Be on the lookout for adults who act inappropriately.** Take any athlete's complaint about an adult spectator very seriously - report to the Police, if necessary.
5. **Know your exit route(s) in case of evacuation.** Know the number for police, fire, and rescue squad. Know where your lifeguards will be stationed during the meet.
6. Intervene immediately with any swimmer who **attempts to swim UNDER a bulkhead** in the pool. This behavior carries a high risk of unobserved drowning.
7. **Help maintain a relatively open area behind the blocks.** Only the athletes, timers, and S/T Judges should be in the start end of the pool.
8. **Patrol areas adjacent to the pool,** such as the locker rooms, adjoining open buildings that are used for spectators, and the facility lobby. Report any aberrant or unusual behavior to the facility personnel.
9. **Communicate frequently and thoroughly** with the Meet Director, the Meet Referee, your other Marshal(s), and the Lifeguards.
10. **Take care of yourself.** Take a short break every 2 hours, and be sure to drink plenty of fluid and partake of the good Hospitality Room food. Wear your Marshal Badge/Vest/Shirt proudly!