



## Open Water Safety Plan

### **Application Instructions**

- Before applying for a USMS open water sanction, event hosts must review their event information and safety plans with their LMSC Sanctioning Officer. Upon approval from the LMSC Sanctioning Officer, the event host is then ready to apply for sanction.
- When applying for a USMS open water sanction, event hosts are required to submit their safety plan for review and approval by the Open Water Compliance Coordinator (OWCC) ON THIS APPLICATION through the online sanction process. We welcome additional supporting information—after all, many event hosts have developed extensive safety plans over years of hosting events—but everyone must submit this completed application to ensure that all pertinent points are covered in safety planning.
- Using a Google Earth map or equivalent, event hosts are also required to upload a map of the venue and course with the safety plan application. Maps must include locations of start & finish, guide & turn buoys, feeding stations, safety craft, lifeguards/first responders, on-site medical care, and evacuation points.
- In the best scenario, the Safety Director should assist the event host in the developing the event safety plan. If the Safety Director did not take part in developing of the safety plan (usually in the case of appointment after the sanction request or in the case of a substantially unchanged safety plan developed over years of experience), the event host must give the Safety Director a copy of the approved safety plan.
- Upon request, USMS OWCC David Miner will send you a copy of the approved safety plan. Contact David at [openwateradvisor@usmastersswimming.org](mailto:openwateradvisor@usmastersswimming.org) or 941-545-9709.

# Open Water Safety Plan Application

## Event Information

### General Information

**Name of Host:** Central Illinois Masters Swim Team, Inc.  
**Name of Event:** 2026 Central Illinois Open Water Swim  
**Event Location:** Evergreen Lake in Comlara Park  
**City:** Hudson **State:** IL **LMSC:** Illinois  
**Event Dates:** 6/28/2026 through 6/28/2026  
**Length of Swim(s):** 1.2 miles & 2.4 miles  
**Dual Sanctioned with USA-Swimming:** No

### Key Event Personnel

**Event Director:** Miranda Jackson **Phone:** 309-826-9841 **E-mail:** miranda@cimst.org  
**Referee:** Scott Penland **Phone:** **E-mail:** scottpenland5077@comcast.net  
**Certified Safety Director:** John Pratt **Phone:** 309-530-8593 **E-mail:** jpratt@meyercafel.com

### Pre-Race Safety Meeting (required): all officials & safety personnel must attend

**Tentative date:** 5/31/2026 **Time:** 4:30 p.m.

#### Tentative agenda:

1. Introductions
2. Safety Plan
3. Normal Fire Department & EMS Responsibilities
4. McLean County Park – lake closing during events and other responsibilities
5. Lifeguards – #, communication, locations, equipment
6. Other monitors – kayakers
7. Watercraft issues - # of rowboats and location and other boats
8. Communications – cell phone numbers & walkie talkies
9. Severe weather monitoring and evacuation plans
10. Cold/warm water plans
11. Other issues

### Pre-Race Swimmer Meeting (required): all officials & swimmers must attend to participate in race

**Tentative date:** 6/28/2026 **Time:** 8:35 a.m.

#### Tentative agenda:

1. Course design and location of turn buoys and guide buoys
2. Lifeguard locations
3. Signals for evacuation
4. Swimmer in distress signals

5. Kayaker locations
6. Positive check-in and check-out of water
7. Rules for turning, aggressive swimmers, other
8. If needed, cold/warm water plans
9. Q & A

## Course & Event Conditions

### The Course

**Body of water:** Lake      **Water type:** Freshwater      **Water depth:** from 15 feet to 50 feet

**Course:** Closed - only event watercraft allowed

**If open course, indicate the agency used to control the traffic while swimmers are on the course.** N/A

b [Click here to enter agency.](#) **How to contact during event:** [Phone # or radio channel](#)

Expected water conditions for the swimmers: (marine life, tides, currents, underwater hazards): Evergreen Lake was built in 1970 to serve as a secondary water source for the City of Bloomington, IL. The lake is owned by the City of Bloomington, IL, and is managed by the McLean County, IL, Department of Parks and Recreation. Water life is typical for fresh water lakes: bass, crappie, and similar fish. There are no tides and only a small current created by an overflow dam, which is more than a mile from the CIOWS course. Underwater hazards occasionally are caused from fallen trees, but will be clearly marked with yellow buoys when the course is set up.

### How is the course marked?

- **Turn buoy(s):**      **Height(s)** 8 feet      **Color(s)** Orange      **Shape(s)** Tetrahedron
- **Guide buoy(s):**      **Height(s)** 2 feet      **Color(s)** Red      **Shape(s)** Round
- **Approximate Distance between Guide buoys:** 150 yards

**Number of Feeding Stations:** 0

**Type of structure(s) used as feeding station(s):** N/A

**Number of people the structure(s) can safely hold:** N/A

### Water & Air Temperatures

**Expected air temp range:** 78-82      **Expected water temp range:** 76-82      **Wetsuits:** Optional based on race day conditions

#### **USMS Water Temperature Index for sanctioned open water events:**

- Below 57°F (Very Cold) – heat retaining swimwear and a Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims is **REQUIRED**
- 57°F-60°F (Cold) - heat-retaining swimwear is required or a Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims is **REQUIRED**
- 60°F-66°F (Quite cool) - Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims is **RECOMMENDED**
- 66°F-72°F (Fairly cool) - Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims is **ENCOURAGED**
- 72°F-78°F (Cool) - No Thermal Plan required
- 78°F-82°F (Optimal) - Heat-retaining swimwear & neoprene caps are not permitted above 78°F.
- 82°F-85°F (Warm) - Thermal Plan for Warm Water Swims is **RECOMMENDED**
- 85°F-87.8°F (Very warm) - Thermal Plan for Warm Water Swims is **REQUIRED**
- 87.8°F-95°F (Hot) - Sanctioned open water swims cannot be held

**- Over 95°F (Extremely hot) - Any swimming is ill-advised**

**USMS Water Temperature Measurement Procedure:** Using an accurate thermometer, the event host should take three to five measurements at various places on the course—12 to 18 inches below the water surface and no closer to the shore than 25 meters (if possible)—within one hour before the start of an open water swim. The host should average these measurements, post and/or announce the resulting average temperature at least 30 minutes before the start of the swim, and announce it during the pre-race staff safety and swimmers' meetings.

### **Water Quality**

It is recommended that one week before the event, check water quality. If results returned are inconsistent with the local governing body's standards, notify swimmers who participated in the event of any known exposures post-race. If an exceptional event such as heavy rain or flooding affects the water quality, the Event Director, Referee, or Safety Director shall have the authority to postpone or cancel the race. It is recommended to take and retain water samples on race day and retain for reference.

Two water samples will be taken from various locations on the course within one week of the event. These will be delivered within 4 hours of sampling to the Bloomington Water Treatment Plant for analysis of fecal coliforms and E. coli bacteria. Results will be provided to the CIOWS Director. Additional samples may be collected if warranted by results of prior tests. Acceptable samples must be obtained within 48 hours of the event or cancellation may occur.

## **Event Safety**

### **Medical Personnel**

**Lead medical personnel (emergency trained) on site:** Normal Fire Dept

**Experience in sporting events (Marathon, Triathlon, Open water swim, etc.):** Yes

**Will medical personnel be located on the course?** Yes

The number of medical personnel will be dependent on the course layout, number of swimmers in the water, expected conditions, etc.

**How many medical personnel do you plan to have on site?** 3

### **First Responders/Lifeguards & Monitors**

**Indicate the qualifications of the first responders:** ARC Lifeguards

**Number on course:** 15                      **Number on land:** 1

**Indicate their location on the Race Plan Map.**

### **Onsite Medical Care & Facilities**

**Describe onsite set up for medical care, such as medical treatment tent, heating/cooling tent or facility. etc., and indicate locations on the Race Plan Map.** The Normal Fire Department sets up a location on shore with an ambulance and 3 EMTs. It is located to the east of the registration tent and is visible from the course.

### **Ambulance/Emergency Transportation & Nearby Medical Facilities**

**Ambulance(s) onsite:** 1                      **On Call:**

**Have you spoken with local emergency response agency regarding potential emergencies?** Yes

**Closest medical facility:** Carle BroMenn Medical Center                      **Phone:** 309-454-1400

**Type of medical facility (urgent care, hospital, etc.):** Carle BroMenn Medical Center has served and cared for the people of Central Illinois for nearly 125 years. It is a medical center with over 220 beds and a complete Emergency Department. It is the healthcare leader in McLean County and provides world-class care in neurology, cardiology, orthopedics, obstetrics, behavioral health services and more. It is also a teaching facility and offers residency programs in neurosurgery, neurology, and family medicine.

**Distance to closest medical facility:** 10-20 miles    **Approximate transport time:** 25 minutes

## Watercraft

### Motorized Watercraft:

- **Owned/operated by government agencies (Coast Guard, police, fire & rescue, etc.):** 3-5
- **Owned/operated by volunteers or hired individuals:** 0

**Will all motorized watercraft with a propeller owned/operated by volunteers or hired individuals be equipped either with a propeller guard or a swimmer monitor?**

### Other motorized watercraft:

- **With propellers fore of the rudder:** 0
- **With impeller motor (jet ski, jet boat):** 0
- **Anchored from start to finish:** 0

### Allocation of Watercraft:

- **Safety Watercraft:**
  - **1st Responders: Motorized:** 0 **Non-motorized:** 15
  - **2nd Responders: Motorized:** 3-5 **Non-motorized:** 10-12
- **Watercraft for race officials: Motorized:** 0    **Non-motorized:** 3
- **Watercraft for race supervision: Motorized:** 0    **Non-motorized:** 0
- **Watercraft for feeding stations: Motorized:** 0                      **Non-motorized:** 0
- **Watercraft for escorted events: Motorized:** 0 **Non-motorized:** 0
- **Other event watercraft:** Kayakers are on the course to assist and direct swimmers. Lifeguards are on rescue boards.

**Emergency Signal Flag Color for all watercraft:** Red

## Communications

**Primary method between event officials:** Radio **Secondary method:** Cell Phone

**Primary method between medical personnel, first responders & safety craft:** Radio (separate channel from Meet Officials) **Secondary method:** Cell Phone

## Swimmer Counting & Accountability

**Describe method of swimmer body numbering:** Permanent black ink clearly marked on two areas of the body per USMS Open Water Guidelines.

**Describe method of electronic identification of swimmer (Recommended):** Timing chip with matching ID number around ankle.

**Describe different bright cap colors for various divisions (Recommended):** 1.2 miles swimmers will wear a yellow cap marked in permanent black ink with matching ID number and 2.4 miles swimmers will wear a green cap marked in permanent black ink with matching ID number.

**Describe method of accounting for all swimmers before, during and after swim(s):** Each swimmer is required to undergo a positive check-in at the CIOWS registration table upon arrival at the event tent area. Each swimmer is only allowed to enter and exit the lake via a one-way entry and exit point for both warm up and competition. Monitors will be stationed at the entry/exit point to be sure each swimmer is wearing the assigned swim cap with ID number, body marked ID number, and timing chip. Each swimmer entering or exiting the water is accounted for automatically with the electronic chip, manually using an accounting of swimmers on an identification checklist showing the assigned ID number, and during the race by observation from lifeguards, kayakers, and other on the water observers and safety personnel.

**Describe method of accounting for swimmers who do not finish:** If a swimmer cannot complete the race, he or she will be escorted from the water by a lifeguard, in a rescue boat or by other safety personnel and will then be accounted for by the same methods as above.

### Warm-up/Warm-down Safety Plan

**Describe safety plan for warm-up/warm-down, include number and location of lifeguards and designated watercraft.** Warm ups through the designated entry/exit point are open from 8:00 – 8:30 a.m. At least 3 lifeguards will be in the water on rescue boards and at least 1 lifeguard will be monitoring the entry/exit point. Warm up is only allowed from the entry/exit along a straight line towards the middle of the course. The warm up area is approximately 25 x 25 yds. The warm up area is marked by the lifeguards and other on the water personnel. There is no warm down area in the lake.

### Swimmer Management

**Maximum number of swimmers on course at a time:** 250

**If more swimmers show up on the day of the swim(s), how will you adjust the safety plan to accommodate the increased number of entries?** Entries are closed at noon on the day before the event. Entries will be closed earlier if the maximum number is reached.

**How will you deploy the safety staff and crafts distributed to supervise this event to ensure swift recognition, rescue, and treatment of any swimmer?** Lifeguards on the water are on safety boards and are wearing red lifeguard swim suits and carrying a Red Cross rescue tube. They carry whistles and walkie talkies. Kayakers are easily visible and carry personal floatation devices. All are spread evenly throughout the course. Hudson Fire Department and McLean County Parks boats and dive team are on the exterior of the course.

**How will you deploy the safety staff to maximize rapid response to a troubled swimmer?** Lifeguards on the water are on safety boards and are wearing red lifeguard swimsuits and carrying a Red Cross rescue tube. They carry whistles and walkie talkies. Kayakers are easily visible and carry personal floatation devices. All are spread evenly throughout the course. Hudson Fire Department and McLean County Parks boats and dive team are on the exterior of the course.

**How will you alter the event if insufficient safety personnel/craft are available on the day of the swim(s)?** Event will be canceled if insufficient safety personnel/craft are not available on the day of the swim.

**Describe your missing swimmer plan:** The Fire Chief, Medical Officer, Referee, Lifeguard Supervisor, Host Venue Director, and Event Director have independent authority to delay, evacuate, or cancel if it is determined that a swimmer is missing or there is inadequate accounting of all swimmers. This would trigger an evacuation as described below and a search for the missing swimmer.

### Severe Weather Plan

**Is a lightning detector or weather radio available on site?** Yes

**Describe your plan for severe weather or natural disaster:** The Fire Chief, Medical Officer, Referee, Lifeguard Supervisor, Event Director, and Host Venue Director have independent authority to delay, evacuate, or cancel if it is determined that unsafe conditions exist or are imminent. This includes severe weather conditions. Weather is under constant monitoring by the Fire Chief.

**Describe your course and site evacuation plan, including accounting for all swimmers and other participants:** If it becomes necessary to evacuate the water, an air horn will sound with three long blasts to alert swimmers and event personnel that the swim has been immediately stopped. Evacuation will be along the shortest safe exit route and will be directed by lifeguards, kayakers, and emergency powerboats. Whistles, bull horns, and physical contact may be necessary to alert swimmers that an evacuation has been ordered. No swimmer will be allowed to reenter the lake until the reason for the evacuation has been resolved and sufficient time has elapsed for safe continuation of the event.

## **Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims**

### **General Information**

Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims: USMS Rules for Open Water Swims state:

302.2.2A (1) A swim shall not begin if the water temperature is less than 60° F. (15.6° C.), unless heat-retaining swimwear is required of all swimmers or a USMS-approved thermal plan is in place.

302.2.2A (2) A swim in which heat retaining swimwear is required of all swimmers shall not begin if the water temperature is less than 57° F. (13.9° C.), unless a USMS-approved thermal plan is in place.

Remember that the average masters swimmer does little or no acclimatization to cold water, so even a small drop in water temperature—especially in the colder ranges—dramatically increases the odds of thermal issues: Cold Shock Response, Cold Incapacitation, Hypothermia, and Circum-rescue Collapse). Be Prepared!

- If your swim course has a remote chance of water temperature less than 60° F., you are **REQUIRED** to complete the thermal plan below, showing your specific commitment to increased swimmer preparation before the event, reduced swimmer exposure during the event, and maximize mitigation & treatment of thermal issues during & after the event.

- If your swim course has a chance of water temperature between 60° F & 66° F., a thermal plan is **RECOMMENDED**.

- If your swim course has a chance of water temperature between 66° F & 72° F., a thermal plan is **ENCOURAGED**.

### **How will you assist swimmer preparation before the event:**

**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Emphasize & stress on entry information of possible cold water swim conditions.
2. Require prior cold water swim experience.
3. Require swimmer cold water preparation plan.
4. Refuse entry if swimmer is not acclimated to cold water swimming.

**What method(s) of swimmer preparation will you take:** It is very likely that the water temperature will be between 76 and 80 degrees F, as in past CIOWS events. But if the temperature is between 66 and 72 degrees F, swimmers will be notified by e-mail the day before the event and when they check-in to be prepared for cold water conditions. We will follow items above including entry refusal if a swimmer is not acclimated to cold water swimming.

### **What action will you take to reduce swimmer exposure to thermal issues:**

**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Cancel the swim(s).
2. Shorten swim(s) or institute/shorten time limits.
3. Encourage wetsuits for all swimmers.
4. Require wetsuits for all swimmers.

**Explain your plan of action:** If the water temperature is below 66 degrees F, the event will be canceled.

**What extra medical care will you provide to mitigate & treat symptoms of thermal issues:**

**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Bring in more emergency trained medical personnel and/or ambulances.
2. Bring in more volunteers to assist medical personnel.
3. Bring in more emergency craft and first responders on the course.
4. Increase warm beverages before the swim and at feeding stations.
5. Have special procedures (different than normal) for removing swimmers from the water & venue.
6. Increase warm beverages after the swim.
7. Increase thermal treatment gear (blankets, hot water bottles, etc.)
8. Make warm showers available on-site.
9. Make warming facilities (buildings, tents, vehicles, etc.) available on-site.

**Specify what extra listed items you will provide:** We do not anticipate thermal issues, but will follow all the above if they exist.

**Comment on how you will be prepared to care for multiple medical issues:** Increase medical personnel onsite.

**If the water temperature is below 72° F, will you be prepared to deal with cold water medical issues:** We do not anticipate a temperature below 72 degrees F, but if it is below 72, we will follow all the above recommendations.

## Thermal Plan for Warm Water Swims

### General Information

Thermal Plan for Warm Water Swims: USMS Rule 302.2.2A(3) for Open Water Swims states:

“A swim of 5K or greater shall not begin if the water temperature exceeds 29.45° C. (85°F). A swim of less than 5K shall not begin if the water temperature exceeds 31° C. (87.8°F).”

Remember that the average masters swimmer does little or no acclimatization to warm water, so even a small increase in water temperature—especially in the warmer ranges—dramatically increases the odds of thermal issues: Dehydration, Heat Stroke, and Hyperthermia. Be Prepared!

- If your swim course has a chance of water temperature from 85° F to 87.8° F, you are **REQUIRED** to complete the thermal plan below, showing your specific commitment to increased swimmer preparation before the event, reduced swimmer exposure during the event, and maximize mitigation & treatment of thermal issues during & after the event.

- If your swim course has a chance of water temperature between 82° F & 85° F., a thermal plan is **RECOMMENDED**.

### How will you assist swimmer preparation before the event:

**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Emphasize & stress on entry information of possible warm water swim conditions.
2. Require prior warm water swim experience.
3. Require swimmer warm water preparation plan.

**What method(s) of swimmer preparation will you take:** It is very likely that the water temperature will be between 76 and 80 degrees F, as in past CIOWS events. But if the temperature is between 82 and 85 degrees F, swimmers will be notified by e-mail the day before the event and when they check-in to be prepared for warm water conditions. We will follow items above including entry refusal if a swimmer is not acclimated to warm water swimming.

### What action will you take to reduce swimmer, official, and staff exposure to heat-related issues:

**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Cancel the swim(s).
2. Shorten swim(s) or institute/shorten time limits.
3. Remind all participants to stay well hydrated.
4. Remind swimmers to select appropriate pace.
5. Make swim caps optional or use Lycra swim caps.

**Explain your plan of action:** It is very likely that the water temperature will be between 76 and 80 degrees F, as in all past CIOWS events. But if the temperature is between 82 and 85 degrees F, swimmers will be notified by e-mail the day before the event and when they check-in to be prepared for warm water conditions. We will follow items above including entry refusal if a swimmer is not acclimated to warm water swimming.

**What extra medical care will you provide to mitigate & treat symptoms of heat-related issues:**

**The following methods are among the ways you can do this:**

1. Bring in more emergency trained medical personnel and/or ambulances.
2. Bring in more volunteers to assist medical personnel.
3. Bring in more emergency craft and first responders on the course.
4. Increase cool beverages before, during and after the swim (for swimmers and staff, including extra cool beverages on watercraft and feeding stations)
5. Increase heat exhaustion and heat stroke treatment gear (iced water, ice chips, cold water bottles, misting tents/fans, etc.)
6. Make cool showers available on-site.
7. Make shade and cooling facilities (buildings, tents, etc.) available on-site.

**Specify what extra listed items you will need to provide:** We will provide all of the above.

**Comment on how you will be prepared to care for multiple medical issues:** We will increase the number of medical personnel onsite.

**If the water temperature is above 82° F, will you be prepared to deal with heat-related medical issues:** We will follow all the guidelines listed in this section.