



JUDGES' COMMENTS

"Impressive adaptation to the changes from the new facilities."

BEST OVERALL COMMUNITY COMMITMENT TO AQUATICS Class 5
(50,000 and under population)

Derby Recreation Commission, Derby, Kan.

Everyone is a lifeguard to some degree at the Derby Recreation Commission's Aquatic Department in Derby, Kan. Each employee, from the person behind the cash register to the maintenance crew, is required to renew their CPR/ AED and First Aid certificates annually — just in case.

It's these types of precautionary steps that give DRC an extra boost in safety and regard for its patrons at its waterpark and indoor pool. The facilities serve numerous populations, including the Boys & Girls Club, Girl/Boy Scout Day Camps, YMCA Summer Youth programs, the local high school, special needs groups and other after-school programs.

When the new Rock River Rapids waterpark opened in 2004, DRC was up against a huge challenge: Hire three times the number of aquatics staff as needed in the past. At least 112 more employees were required to guard, instruct, maintain and manage the waterpark as well as the renovated Derby Recreation Center, compared with the 35 staff members in 2000. DRC aggressively went to work, maintaining contact with summer staff, advertising two job fairs around college schedules, increasing the number of lifeguard classes and volunteering as lifeguard instructors at local facilities.

To retain the high number of staffers, DRC heavily recruits young volunteers through its youth programming. It relies on these volunteers to become future lifeguards, managers and instructors, saying it would be more difficult to train those unfamiliar with the system and the facility. ■



FACILITY HIGHLIGHTS Formed a tight partnership to draw the support of the school district, city council and citizen groups such as the Supporters of the Aquatic Center to build Rock River Rapids Family Aquatic Park. • Guards receive about 45 hours of additional training before their first day of work. • After the new pool was built, the old outdoor pool was turned into a skate park.

STATS One traditional indoor pool • Family waterpark

AMENITIES Lazy river • Water slides • Diving well • Diving boards • Open water • Water playground equipment • Water toys

PROGRAMS Learn-to-swim • Diving • Lifesaving • Water aerobics • Competitive swimming • Scuba • Adaptive aquatics