



LIFEGUARD COMPETITION

As the dog days of summer wind down, you can be sure the lifeguards of Fairfax County are still hard at work, watching over the thousands of water goers using Park Authority facilities trying to beat the heat. What you don't see are the hours of training these young professionals have put into their craft. "Each new summer lifeguard we hire puts in about 30 hours of training

before they ever step into the lifeguard stand." Says Water Mine Park Manager Tammy Yelmgren. With nine indoor and outdoor pools, a spray ground, and of course the Water Mine, the Park Authority needs over 500 lifeguards in the summer to remain operational. With all that training and so many staff, the annual Park Authority Lifeguard Competition is the perfect way to recognize these exceptional guards with some friendly competition.

The Fairfax County Park Authority's Lifeguard Competition is an annual event held at the end of July that let guards from each Rec Center and the Water Mine compete in a variety of events to test their physical abilities and rescue skills. "Our competition is designed to mimic real life scenarios that include swimming, paddling, treading water and communication which are the essential skills needed to keep our swimmers safe," said Lifeguard Competition chair Sarah Barrack. But is there anything fun? "We also have some events that require the guards to use what they have learned but in a new manner, from searching for something in muddy water to building a raft and swimming it across the pool, and my personal favorite the lifeguard manakin relay." This consists of the entire team swimming a leg of a relay with the lifeguard manakin serving as the baton. "I love it because we get a great crowd of non-competing lifeguards at the pool to support their site, and it involves every member of the team." Sara added.

For more information on becoming an FCPA Lifeguard visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/reccenter/aquatic-certification.



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The Fall issue of Parktakes will be available in mid-July. Registration will begin on August 1.

Park Authority Board meetings are open to the public.

For more information about dates and times, visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/board.

About Parktakes

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