

Manitoba's PFD Loaner Program:

November 2008

Review 2006 - 2008

Prepared for:
Manitoba Health and Health Living
Manitoba Coalition for Safer Waters

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PFD Loaner Program Review: 2006 – 2008

Purpose of Review

The purpose of this review was

- a) To find out if the communities who received PFDs under the PFD Loaner Program are currently running their PFD Loaner Program (If not, why?)
- b) The type of activities the PFDs are being used
- c) If the amount and sizes being provided are appropriate
- d) To maintain a relationship with the participating communities

Background

Based on priorities identified in the Manitoba Water Safety and Drowning Prevention Strategy the Manitoba Coalition for Safer Waters requested funding to stimulate programming in northern and remote communities. In 2006 Manitoba Health and Healthy Living provided \$50,000 to the Coalition to implement a PFD Loaner Program targeting northern and remote communities. In addition to this funding the Manitoba Government purchased air-time from local radio outlets using existing water safety public services announcements.

Manitoba Health and Healthy Living provided the same funding and media buy for 2007 and 2008. Due to an oversight the media buy was not undertaken in 2008.

What is a PFD Loaner Program?

A PFD Loaner Program is a community-led project which loans personal floatation devices (sometimes called PFDs or lifejackets) to individuals, families and community organizations at no cost. In order for the communities to receive their compliment of PFDs they submit an application to the Coalition. IMPACT in turn follows up with the community and ensures that they receive their PFDs and supporting educational material.

IMPACT's Role

As the Secretariat for the Manitoba Coalition for Safer Waters, IMPACT has provided administrative support for the program. As well IMPACT has acted as the liaison between the Coalition and Manitoba Health and Healthy Living.

Survey Method

During the summer and early fall of 2008, telephone interviews were conducted with community contacts. A maximum of three attempts were made to reach the community contacts.

The Results

Is the PFD Loaner program still operational in your community?

Year	Yes	No	Unable to Contact	Number of PFDs Provided
2006	16	2	2	546
2007	16	3	1	524
2008	12	4	3	779
Total	44	9	6	1,849

1. If no, reasons that program was not operational (what happened to the PFD's):

Of the 9 communities that do not currently have a PFD Loaner program 8 intend to either start one next season or re-start one. One community gave the PFDs away because they did not know why they had received them. This was due to staff changes and no information left behind for the new staff.

In the summer of 2008 four communities did not have PFD loan programs set up as they did not understand why they had received the PFDs. It was determined for all four communities that a community member did not fill out the application for the PFDs but rather a visiting swim instructor had ordered them. Once the interviewer explained the intent of the PFD Loaner Program all four communities intend to start one next season.

The other four communities do not have programs running as there had been staff changes and no one currently had the PFD Loan Program under their job responsibilities. All four communities said that they would look at ways to offer it again as they believed it would be good for their communities. These

communities still have their allotment of PFDs.

2. How were the PFD Program promoted?

The most common way to promote the program was by using locally made posters placed at local stores, health centres and gatherings such as powwows, celebrations and sports days. The reliance on word of mouth was also very common as was the use of community newsletters. Ten communities used local radio stations to advertise the program.

Some communities only used the PFDs for school / youth programming so the PFDs were only made available to those groups not the entire community.

3. For which activities are the PFDs being used?

The PFDs were used for a wide verity of activities the most common were for use during swimming lessons, followed closely for canoeing (trips and recreation), boating (recreational), boating (transportation). Eight communities indicated that the PFDs were used during community culture and youth canoe trips. Two communities used the PFDs during search and rescue operations.

4. How many PFDs have been loaned out in total?

Communities have not been keeping track of how many PFDs are loaned out but there was a common theme that they are being loaned out to groups of people (camps, youth programs, families) rather than to individuals.

5. Did the sizes of PFDs meet your needs?

For the most part the range of sizes did meet the needs of the community (child to adult XXL). In the first year of the program the adult large was the biggest sized PFDs supplied. In a review of that year, communities reported that they needed larger sizes to adequately provide for their residents. The program was modified in the next year to include a supply of XXL PFDs. Some communities identified that they would like to have more XXL sizes. One community inquired about the availability of infant sized PFDs.

6. Did number of PFDs meet your needs?

Only 3 communities indicated that they could use more PFDs.

7. Were any PFDs not returned?

Five communities indicated that some of the PFDs were not returned however they knew who had them and plan to contact them soon.

One community loaned their PFDs to another community to be used in a search and rescue operation and the PFDs had not been returned at the time of the interview. It was stated that they would follow up with that community.

8. In your opinion, how valuable is the PFD loan program to your community?

The majority of communities that have a PFD program rated the program as being very valuable with 3 saying that it was valuable.

9. What other water safety programs / initiatives are being run in your community?

Of the 44 communities that still have PFD program in the community only five communities do not have any other water safety programs being offered. Please see question four for a listing of activities.

Participating Communities

	2008	2007	2006
1.	Berens River Community Council	Grand Rapids First Nation	Thicket Portage
2.	Sagkeeng First Nation	Churchill	Cormorant Lake School
3.	Garden Hill First Nation	Mallard	Norway House Cree Nation
4.	Easterville	Brochet	Ilford
5.	Fox Lake Cree Nation	Berens River, school	York Landing
6.	Panuingassi	Seymourville	Berens River
7.	Poplar River	Wabowden	Garden Hill
8.	Little Grand Rapids	Granville Lake	South Indian Lake
9.	Sayisi Dene First Nation	Leaf Rapids	Sherridon
10.	Skownan First Nation	Wanipigow	Camperville
11.	Snow Lake	Lynne Lake	Pukatawagan
12.	Northlands First Nations	Pinaymootang First Nation	Oxford House
13.	God's Lake Narrows First Nation	Gillam	Wasagamach
14.	Bloodvein	Norway House	Lynn Lake
15.	Wasagamack	Matheson Island	Waterhen
16.	Town of Grand Rapids	Nelson House (Nisichawayasihk First Nation	Churchill Joint Group Committee
17.	Leaf Rapids	Moose Lake (Mosakahiken)	Meadow Portage Council Office
18.	Moose Lake	Cross Lake (Cross Lake First Nation)	Crane River
19.	York Landing	Wasagamack (Waasagamach First Nations)	Spence Lake
20.	Sapotaweyak Cree Nation	Little Black River First Nation	Camp Wannakumbac
21.	Mallard		
22.	Lake Manitoba First Nations		
23.	Town of Lynne Lake		
24.	Pinaymootang		
25.	O-pipon-na-piwin Cree Nation		
26.	Fisher River Cree Nation		
27.	Cormorant		

* Some communities are listed as receiving PFDs in more than one year. This is because some organizations within those communities such as schools or culture camps requested PFDs for their specific use. As well, some communities requested extra PFDs due to community demand and population.

Recommendations

Next Step

1. The Manitoba Coalition for Safer Waters reviews this report and makes recommendations to Manitoba Health and Healthy Living on the program continuation.

Product

2. Provide as an option more XXL PFDs
3. Explore the possibilities of providing / recommending an appropriate infant PFD

Administration

4. Update the application form
5. Develop sample PFD sign out sheet and sample poster that could be used in communities.
6. Only members of the community complete the application form and obtain the required community authorization signatures.
7. Ensure that there is a system to collect feedback from participating community on a yearly basis and then share that feedback to the Coalition