

Rescue in a French public pool with the help of the Poseidon System, a computer-aided drowning detection system.

Carquefou, 16 April 2008 – The accident happened Wednesday, April 16th at 4:18 pm when a young adult suddenly suffered a blackout at the municipal pool D. Gilard, at Carquefou, west of France. The victim stayed motionless under the surface of the water at 6 meters from the edge, in the shallow part of a 25x12m competition pool with depth ranging from 1 to 2.50 meters.

Within 10 seconds, the Poseidon computer-aided drowning detection system from MG International sounded an alarm at 4:18:41. 7 seconds later, a bather swimming above the victim reached her and started to pull her up. At the same time, 4 seconds later at 4:18:52, the lifeguard on duty who was standing about 20 meters away from there immediately rescued the victim and pulled her out of the water.

According to ongoing procedure, swimmers were asked to get out of the water by the surveillance personnel and the pool closed immediately afterwards.

First aid arrived on the spot at 4 :41 :32 and resuscitated the victim.

The Poseidon System is in service at the D Gilard pool since July 30th 2001. A dedicated software analyzes in real time images captured by 4 underwater and 6 overhead cameras. The Poseidon System has been developed as a supplementary tool for lifeguards. It alerts surveillance personnel in real time and gives exact coordinates and location of a victim in a pool.

The key in this type of accident is to minimize the immersion time, intervene rapidly in order to avoid brain damages or fatal consequences.

The Carquefou rescue is a remarkable example of the worldwide safety standard in terms of drowning prevention that sets the following rule : 10 seconds to spot a swimmer in trouble and 20 additional seconds to initiate aid.

Computer-aided technology is a determining factor in improving safety in public pools as it is commonly used in other professional fields such as air transportation,

Since the first installations in 2000, Poseidon has helped to detect 12 drownings in France, Germany, United-Kingdom and in the Netherlands.

The accident in Carquefou is the 4th accident detected by the Poseidon System in less than 6 months in a French public pool.

The following pictures, recorded by the Poseidon System in real time and shown below, reveal the details of the dramatic incident as it unfolded.

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Image 1 : 16 :18 :41 the Poseidon System triggers an alarm



Image 2 : 16 :18 :48 Swimmer reaches the victim

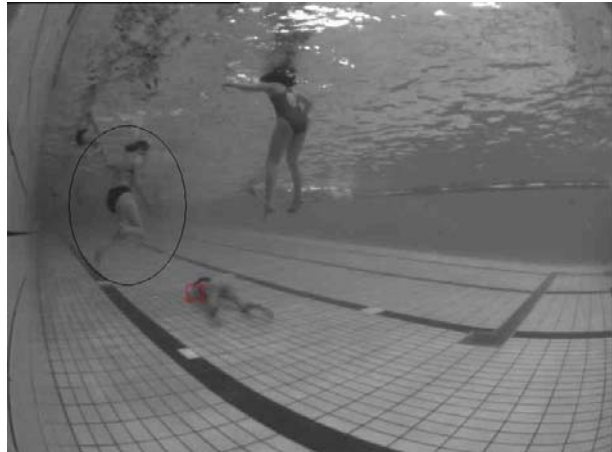


Image 3 : 16 :18 :52 Rescuer arriving.



Image 4 : 16 :19 :02 Rescuer pulls victim out of the water



Image 5 : 16 :19 :22 Pool evacuation



Image 6 : 16 :41 :32 First aid is given



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About drowning in French public pools

50% of the children going into their first year of secondary school don't know how to swim. 45 drownings - 5 among them died – have been recorded over the 4 months summer period in French public pools in 2006 according to the French Health Department specialized in domestic hazards (Institut National de Veille Sanitaire /INVS).

Drowning is a real public safety issue. In January 2006, a law has been voted to reinforce safety in private pools making compulsory the use of certified security devices.

Nothing similar has been done yet to deal with drowning in public pools which is a major issue as well despite the professionalism of lifeguards.

Since last summer, many Members of Parliament have alerted the government on the fact that the situation was becoming more and more critical.

Sports Secretary of State, Bernard Laporte, has just launched a special scheme aiming at offering swimming lessons for children 7-12 years old. 100 000 children are expected to benefit from the plan by the end of 2012. The final objective is that all kids know how to swim when leaving secondary school. This is the first action resulting from debates initiated by the Ministry of Health and Youth & Sports on the aquatic branch reform and the regulation on drowning prevention.

Computer-aided systems that helped to save more than 10 lives these last few years proved their efficiency and should be integrated into public drowning prevention policy.

A few bills have been brought in regarding public pools safety with the aim of “fitting all aquatic facilities with a standardized security device to prevent drownings”.

A new European norm on safety requirements for new build projects and operating pools (CEN/TC 136/WG8) should be released by the end of 2008.

About MG International

Based in La Ciotat (South of France), MG International is specialized in the design of alarms for private pools since 2002. Its experience and know-how strengthened by the acquisition of Poseidon in 2006 allow the company to be the world leader in private and public pool safety.

With Poseidon, the unique and most advanced computer vision technology for public pool safety, MG International benefits from a proven technology and operates worldwide. Thanks to a global offer, MG International has become the key contact for private pool major players (manufacturers and distributors) and public pools operators.

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About Poseidon

The Poseidon System is the benchmark for computer-aided drowning detection systems for public pools.

Composed of a network of underwater or overhead cameras connected to a computer, Poseidon analyses in real time the trajectories of swimmers and sets off an alarm during the crucial first seconds of a possible drowning. Poseidon is the “Lifeguard’s third eye” and allows to save precious seconds.

With more 150 sites installed or being installed in Europe (France, United-Kingdom, Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg, Scandinavia, Germany), in the US, Japan and Australia, the Poseidon System has progressively become a world safety standard.

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