



Scuba Emporium

16336 S 104th Avenue Orland Park, IL 60467
(708) 226-1614

Why I Did Public Safety Diver

You may wonder why a PADI Platinum Course director with years of experience in pleasure diving would ever want to be involved in Public Safety Diving, where there is very little fun and pleasure. We'll let me take you down that path. In order to do this one we have to go back to 1975.

I was already a store owner and on my way to live the fun life as a SCUBA Educator and Dive Center operator. We had a few fire departments that would come in for air fills and even to borrow equipment. During a recovery in one of the Forest preserve lakes I received a call for help and more bottles. So I hurried over raced to the site and started to help. At this time things seemed odd to me. Everyone was moving fast and scrambled all over. Divers were walking in and out and a boat was doing s patterns. I began asking questions and realized we all needed to be on the same page. We found the boy at dusk, his parents were at the lake and I cannot forget the looks on their face when we pulled him out of the water with a hook thru him. You see back then dragging the bottom was an accepted way unless you were related. These people could not understand why we did that and why must that be the last way they see their child.

I went off sad and started to write an outline. Not to be morbid by now I had done CPR on dead people who stayed dead and had been on some body recoveries where the victim stayed dead. But I had already done a few rescues where the people are alive today due to a fast response. So I knew it would be important to separate the rescue for recovery and the speed we need to respond during each. I also knew we had to get rid of that gaffe. No more would I be involved with dragging for a body. I also understand that this is an important program, people need closer and that body helps everyone have some peace.

So we started meeting and practicing with different dive teams. It gave me a great opportunity to dive most of the lakes and pounds on the South side. So I started with search and recovery and night diver certs. As time moved on and we expanded into other areas I needed to add full face mask diver to this and then we needed training in underwater communication. We came up with log books for each practice session as well as logs for every mission. We would dive once a month minimum and in the winter we were in the pool practicing and doing training under the ice. It was a great time in my life. I no longer did the search dives I was now doing the training for the divers and I would go out on some of the recovery's to see how things went.

I had a lot going for me with these programs and all the departments were supporting me by purchasing their equipment from me. Today I still sell too many of those same departments and still take care of them and their equipment that was why I came up with the free loaner program. I knew they could not be without equipment so I would work on their equipment and lend them mine and today we still offer this program.



www.scubaemporium.com

Scuba Emporium

16336 S 104th Avenue Orland Park, IL 60467
(708) 226-1614

Why I Did Public Safety Diver

By 1980 or there about I saw the important of keeping the training equal for all teams however I also was seeing some difference in the areas we were diving. We did a dive in a river with a current and I saw three shades of black it just kept getting darker. So I knew these divers needed extra training. So I wrote a specialty called Public Safety Diver. This allowed me to focus on the needed skills each team needed yet keeping the training consistent. Today the PADI Public Safety Diver Program is well accepted all over the world and recognized by most as one of the finest programs out there.

My most memorable years were in the 80's working for the City Of Chicago, I worked close with the Air Sea Rescue team. I was training from trucks, boats and even a helicopter wow I was having fun and teaching PSD. When Doug retired the program fell apart, I am not sure what they do now.

You need to be a special person to do these dives and bring back that body, and my hat is off to all the divers on all the dive teams that help bring closer to the unfortunate families.