

Caroga Lake, New York
East Caroga Lake/West Caroga Lake
Emergency Assistance Plan

*READ THIS PLAN IN FULL BEFORE DIVING
Keep accessible during & after the dive*

The hamlet of Caroga Lake, and East Caroga Lake & West Caroga Lake, are located in the Town of Caroga in north/central Fulton County.

IN AN EMERGENCY, CALL 911

**IF ON A CELL PHONE, INSURE YOU ARE TALKING TO, OR ARE TRANSFERRED TO,
FULTON COUNTY, NEW YORK**

Fulton County provides 911 services through the Fulton County Sheriff's Office, which is responsible for dispatching all emergency services in Fulton County, with emergency response from the

- Fulton County Sheriff's Office,
- New York State Police, and the
- Caroga Lake Volunteer Fire Department.

Cell phone service in the Town of Caroga is spotty: If you are out of coverage area,

- if you are on a boat in the lake,
 - there are private homes along shore whose owners may be approached for use of their phone or to help in some other way;
 - staff at the New York State Campground, located on the north-east shore of East Caroga Lake, can offer assistance: the facility supervisor or assistant is on the premises at all times [fyi, campground phone: (518) 835-4241];
 - there are numerous business near the north shore of West Caroga Lake that may be approached (e.g., the U.S. Post Office, Grooms Store, Vrooman's Restaurant).
- if you are on shore,
 - there are homes and businesses along the roads throughout the hamlet;
 - at the marina, use the phone at the marina store [fyi, marina phone: (518) 835-6615].

→ **DAN: Divers Alert Network**

- **Call 911 first, then call the DAN emergency hotline: (919) 684-9111 (collect calls accepted)**
- Non-Emergency Medical Questions:
 - (800) 446-2671 or
 - (919) 684-2948Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (eastern time)

NOTE: Before calling for emergency services (i.e., a "911" call), make a determination that there is actually an emergency: a sprained ankle or capillary bleeding (even requiring stitches), either of which would require first aid, might also require an ambulance ride to the hospital, but probably would not require local emergency responders: **if in doubt, call 911.**

SUGGESTED SCRIPT

This should be sufficient to convey location and degree of emergency.

NOTE: if there is any doubt about which emergency response center you have reached (i.e., when calling on cell phone and you do not hear some clear identification of “Fulton County”), begin with

“Is this Fulton County, New York?”

Then, continue with script.

“**SCUBA diver emergency at...** “ < specific name of location: e.g., “Caroga Lake Marina” >

“**...on...**” < specific highway identification: e.g., “state route 10” > “**...in Caroga Lake**”

→ If a **non-DCI** injury emergency:

“**Diver has injured** < his / her > ...”

→ If **DCI** or if otherwise appropriate:

“**Diver** < is / is not > **breathing**”

↳ If not breathing, “**CPR** < is / is not > **being administered**”

“**Emergency oxygen** < is / is not > **being administered.**”

“**Diver was ...**” Select as appropriate:

- ❶ **out of water after dive** < when symptoms began / when stopped breathing >
OR
- ❷ **rescued in water, on surface,** < breathing / not breathing >
OR
- ❸ **rescued under water,** < breathing / not breathing >

→ Any other pertinent observations, such as

“**Diver appears to be suffering from decompression illness**”

OR

“**Diver appears to have suffered lung overexpansion injury**”

OR

“**Diver appears to have a severed artery**”

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Remain calm and provide any information that is requested

LOCAL HEALTHCARE RESOURCES

→ The nearest healthcare facility is

Nathan Littauer Primary Care Center
1840 State Highway 10
Caroga Lake, NY 12032
Phone: (518) 835-2341
Hours: Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

This facility is **2.2 miles north from the Caroga Lake Marina**, which is located on the stream connecting the two lakes on State Highway 10: From the marina, it is reached by

- ① travelling north on State Highway 10 to the Y-intersection with State Highway 29A,
- ② continuing on the west (left) leg of the wye to join State Highway 29A, and
- ③ continuing north on State Highway 10/29A.

→ The nearest hospital is

Nathan Littauer Hospital
99 East State Street
Gloversville, NY 12078
Phone (518) 725-8621
This is a full-time facility with an operating emergency room.

This facility is **10.9 miles south-east from the Caroga Lake Marina**: From the marina, it is reached by

- ① travelling north on State Highway 10 to the Y-intersection with State Highway 29A,
- ② continuing on the south-east (right) leg of the wye to State Highway 29A
- ③ continuing south on State Highway 29A towards Gloversville, and
- ④ follow the hospital signs (“H”) left onto State Street Extension, which becomes East State St.

To the east, East State Street intersects with State Highway 30A.

Also, within 25 miles, in Amsterdam, N.Y. is

St. Mary’s Hospital
427 Guy Park Avenue
Amsterdam, N.Y. 12010-1060
(518) 842-1900
This is a full-time facility with an operating emergency room.

This facility is located off State Highway 5 in lower Amsterdam, along the Mohawk River; Amsterdam is exit 27 on the New York Thruway: follow State Highway 30 north; follow the signs for State Highway 5 west and then follow the signs for the hospital (“H”).

Ambulance Transport

For non-emergency but still urgent ambulance transport, you might directly contact Ambulance Service of Fulton County at (518) 725-3667. **(But in an emergency, call 911)**

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED IF AT THE DIVE SITE

- 1) Begin Primary & Secondary response immediately.
- 2) Contact 911 and DAN as rapidly as possible using the resources listed above:
 - a. know in advance if you are in cell-phone coverage and have a contact-plan in place (e.g., “beach at the campground and ask a camper to run to the office to call 911”).
 - b. If all else fails, there is usually coverage near the south-east leg of the 10/29A wye, outside of vehicles near the Caroga Lake Emporium.
- 3) Get the victim as close as possible to State Highway 10 or State Highway 29A.
- 4) With respect to the above, get the victim to a recognizable landmark, such as the marina or the campground.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED WHEN NOT AT THE DIVE SITE

Delayed onset of DCI symptoms, especially of DCS, or discovery of an injury, is always possible. If having departed the dive site, proceed with the following:

- 1) Begin Primary & Secondary response immediately.
- 2) Contact 911 and DAN as rapidly as possible using the resources listed above:
 - a. cell-phone coverage on State Highways 10, 10A, 29, and 29A is essentially non-existent until in the Johnstown or Gloversville areas to the south-east;
 - b. bang on doors to get to a land-line, but don't waste too much time running from house to house.
- 3) If departing the area on 29A or still in the Johnstown/Gloversville area (State Highway 30A corridor), proceed directly to Nathan Littauer in Gloversville.
- 4) If on the Thruway eastbound, exit at exit 27 in Amsterdam and proceed to St. Mary's hospital; further east, Ellis Hospital is in Schenectady (exits 26 and 25) and Albany Medical Center, St. Peter's Hospital, and Albany Memorial Hospital are in Albany (exits 24 and 23).
- 5) If continuing south on 10 toward Canajoharie, the nearest facilities are in Little Falls to the west, Cooperstown to the south-west, and Cobleskill to the south; Nathan Littauer in Gloversville or St. Mary's in Amsterdam may still be the closest options.

HYPERBARIC FACILITY

Never attempt recompression by returning the diver to the water.

Emergency response would not involve any type of recompression or direct transport to a hyperbaric facility; nevertheless, it can be useful to know of these facilities. While there are now hyperbaric facilities at many hospitals dedicated to wound treatment and other conditions that benefit from oxygen therapy, including at Albany Medical Center, most, like Albany Med., state that their chamber “*provides outpatient oxygen therapy*,” so this would not be considered a dive treatment facility (many of these chambers are one-person tubes), although they might be used as an intermediate point; anticipate the patient's ultimate transfer to the main hyperbaric facility for this region:

Westchester Medical Center
Valhalla Campus
Valhalla, N.Y. 10595
(914) 493-7000 (general number)
(914) 493-1500 (hyperbaric chamber)

GENERAL DIVE SITE INFORMATION AND CAUTIONS

The lakes are at an approximate altitude of 1585 feet. The East Lake covers a surface area of 198 acres with a mean depth of 13 feet; the long axis of the lake (between the campground and the marina) is roughly 5000 feet south-east/north-west. The West Lake covers a surface area of 275 acres with a mean depth of 34 feet; the long axis of the lake is roughly 5500 feet east/west.

Although both of the boat launches are in the East Lake (the marina and the State campground), both lakes are heavily utilized during the summer months by a wide range of water craft, including personal water craft, pontoon boats, speed boats (with and without persons in tow), and sail boats.

The lakes are a principal drainage for the surrounding area, the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains, and are heavily silted.

- 1) This is an altitude dive: use appropriate procedures.
- 2) These can be busy lakes:
 - a. dive while displaying appropriate signaling devices (dive flags, floats, etc.)
 - b. dive on non-holiday weekdays
 - c. dive in weather not conducive to recreational boating (overcast skies, drizzle, etc.)
- 3) These are very silty lakes (typical of the Adirondacks):
 - a. visibility is usually only five to ten feet even on the best of days
 - b. silt can reduce visibility to zero in a matter of seconds
 - c. while the bottom is fairly clean, free from excessive debris, as in any heavily-utilized recreation area there may be broken glass, jagged tops of cans, fish hooks, and other detritus in the silt:
 - i. avoid contact with the bottom if at all possible;
 - ii. use extreme caution in reaching into the silt.

