Great Lakes Water Safety Project  
IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI  
Great Lakes Sea Grant Network  
Supported by the NOAA Coastal Storms Program

Water Safety and Rescue Equipment:

- **Youth (Loaner) Life Jacket** - Type II Near-shore Vest (USCG-approved)  
  - (50-90 lbs)
- **Adult (Rescue) Life Vest** - Type I, Offshore, 22 lbs buoyancy, face-up design (USCG-approved)
- **Rescue Throw Ring Buoy**, 24 in., orange, 35 lb. buoyancy, grab rope handles (USCG approved), and 75 ft. poly rope
- **Rescue Tube**, 54 in. length, red (USLA-approved), commonly used by life guards or other first responders
- **Rescue Throw Bags**, 75 ft. rope, (unknown approval rating), commonly used by first responders
- **Rescue Board** with grab handles (4 ft. length, durable ethafoam). These are being used in select locations and primarily by first responders. Initial feedback from 2014 pilot project is that some park managers felt that this was an item that could be easily stolen at highly populated beaches. In areas of the UP, they have been used successfully.

Grant funds for this project do NOT cover the cost of installation, including posts or other structures. Most parks have their own system for signs and safety equipment (e.g., single posts, kiosks, huts, contained kit boxes) and preferred to handle this, consistent with existing park structures.

If the equipment is damaged, lost or stolen, it is the responsibility of the community or park manager to replace equipment. Note: The project team has specified some additional equipment to allow for replacements, as grant funding allows.

Timeline for ordering and distribution of equipment:
- Equipment needs from each state should be finalized by January 23, 2015.
- Equipment will be ordered on or before February 2, 2015
- Equipment should be distributed, if possible, before May 31, 2015 (or shortly thereafter)
- Michigan Sea Grant will distribute a news release announcing the locations for new equipment in MI. OH, IL, IN, WI and MN project
partners will do the same. We anticipate local media will be interested in seeing equipment and talking with local sheriffs/first responders and/or community leaders.

**Best Practices for Equipment Maintenance and Reducing Theft:**

- All equipment should be tagged with "Property of" messages using a permanent marker or paint.
- An emergency procedures sheet will be included with the equipment to assist with first responder and other training/education efforts focusing on the proper use of equipment. Best Practice: Conduct regular water safety training sessions and include opportunities for staff to practice using equipment.
- During the swimming season, equipment should be monitored 1-2 times per day. A monitoring checklist will be provided to assist with this effort.
- Some park managers are removing all safety and rescue equipment at time of park closure and deploying it again before park opening in the morning.
- Many first responders are using rescue throw bags, which can be more effective than ring buoys, if used correctly, in high wind conditions.