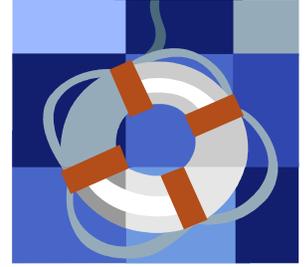


Summer Water Safety



Summer is when people want to beat the heat and look for ways to cool off, and this means more people are heading to their favorite body of water to enjoy swimming, boating and other water recreation activities.

However, it is the time of year when most accidental drowning occurs. With this in mind, children should learn to become proficient swimmers by taking lessons. Knowing how to swim could save lives should they unexpectedly end up in the water.

Here are some tips to stay safe around water and boating:

Parents should be extra vigilant with small children around water.

Children and non-swimmers should always wear lifejackets.

Never dive into a lake or river unless you are sure of the condition of the bottom.

Don't over estimate your swimming ability.

Don't mix alcohol with swimming, diving and boating.

Alcohol affects judgment, balance and coordination.

Always wear lifejackets when operating personal watercrafts.

Children on boats should always wear a lifejacket.

- ◆ According to the Center for Prevention and Control (CDC), from 2005-2014, an average of 3,536 fatal unintentional drownings (non-boating related) annually in the United States — about ten deaths per day. An additional 332 people died each year from drowning in boating-related incidents.
- ◆ About one in five people who die from drowning are children 14 and younger. For every child who dies from drowning, another five receive emergency department care for nonfatal submersion injuries.
- ◆ More than 50% of drowning victims treated in emergency departments require hospitalization or transfer for further care. These nonfatal drowning injuries can cause severe brain damage that may result in long-term disabilities such as memory problems, learning disabilities, and permanent loss of basic functioning (e.g., permanent vegetative state).

HOME DROWNING

Bathtubs are the second leading location, after pools, where young children drown. Buckets, other containers, and even landscaping features, also can present a danger. The danger for drowning for young children is real all year long not just in the summer. Drowning is the leading cause of unintentional death among children ages 1 to 4 according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). A child can drown in just a few inches of water.

Many of the reported incidents involved a lapse in supervision, such as a parent or caregiver leaving the bathroom while the child was in the bathtub to answer a phone or the door, or to retrieve a towel. In other incidents, an older sibling was left to watch the younger sibling.

- ◆ Never leave young children alone near any water, tub or basin with fluid.
- ◆ Don't leave a baby or young child in a bathtub under the care of a young child.
- ◆ Never leave a bucket containing a small amount of liquid unattended. Toddlers are top heavy and they can fall headfirst into the buckets and drown. After using a bucket, empty and store it where young children can't reach it. Don't leave buckets outside where they can collect rainwater.
- ◆ **Learn CPR. It can be a lifesaver when seconds count.**

Pool Safety

Pool and spa submersions and drowning happen quickly, especially when they involve children. A child can drown in the time it takes to answer a telephone. Be alert to the hazards of drowning, non-fatal submersion injuries and drain entrapments—and how to prevent them. For millions of Americans, swimming pools and spas are great places for families to spend time together having fun. Yet it's important to ensure everyone stays safe in and around pools and spas.

By practicing the following water safety steps, you can help prevent drowning in residential pools and spas:

- Always watch your child when they are in or near a pool or spa.
- Teach children basic water safety tips.
- Keep children away from pool drains, pipes and other openings to avoid entrapments.
- Have a portable telephone close by at all times when you or your family are using a pool or spa.
- If a child is missing, look for him or her in the pool or spa first.
- Share safety instructions with family, friends and neighbors.
- Learn how to swim and teach your child how to swim.
- Learn to perform CPR on children and adults, and update those skills regularly.
- Understand the basics of life-saving so that you can assist in a pool emergency.
- Install a four-foot or taller fence around the perimeter of the pool and spa and use self-closing and self-latching gates; ask your neighbors and community groups to do the same at all residential and public pools.
- If your house serves as a fourth side of a fence around a pool, install door and window alarms and always use them.
- Install pool and gate alarms to alert you when children go near the water.
- Ensure any pool and spa you use has compliant drain covers, and ask if you do not know.
- Maintain pool and spa covers in good working order.
- Consider using a surface wave or under-water alarm.
- Have life-saving equipment such as life rings and reaching poles available for use.

