



Weekly Safety Meeting

National Water Safety Month

May serves as National Water Safety Month — a reminder that water safety is everyone’s responsibility. As warmer weather approaches and summer vacations begin, and more people head outdoors to enjoy pools, lakes, rivers, and boating activities, understanding water safety is essential for everyone. Whatever the body of water, taking proper precautions can help prevent injuries and save lives. Even experienced swimmers can encounter emergencies and water-related accidents. So, be vigilant and smart around water. Learning CPR and First Aid is added plus so you are well-prepared for summer water activities.

Pool Safety

Swimming pools are a popular way to cool off, but they require constant supervision and attention, especially of young children and non-swimmers. A drowning can happen very quickly and silently, so make sure to keep watch around the pool and provide children with the support they need in the water. Follow the posted rules and be vigilant of your children in and around the pool area. If you have a pool at home, make sure there is a fence with a gate that stays secured and is not easily opened. Always wear sandals around the pool and in public showers; this helps prevent foot fungus and “pool toe” as well as severe burns from the hot concrete.

Pool Safety Reminders:

- Never leave children unattended near water;
- Designate a “Water Watcher” during gatherings;
- Walk — never run — around pool decks;
- Keep pool gates closed and locked;
- Learn CPR and basic first aid; and
- Keep rescue equipment and phones nearby.

Lake Safety

Lakes and rivers can contain hidden dangers such as sudden drop-offs, currents, rocks, and cold-water temperatures. Lakes also may have bridges with underpasses or low-hanging areas supported by piers (bridge supports). Proceed with caution when approaching these for head and boat clearance distances and be especially cautious and go slowly when going under a bridge in low visibility conditions or at night. Natural water conditions can change quickly, making awareness and preparation essential.

Lake Safety Tips:

- Avoid swimming alone;
- Wear a properly fitted life jacket;
- Swim in designated swimming areas only;
- Never dive into unknown water – always know the depth before diving;
- Never dive headfirst into less than 9 feet of water; and
- Watch for changing weather conditions and get out if there's a storm.

Ocean Safety

The ocean presents unique hazards including waves, tides going out/in, rip currents, undertow, coral reefs, razor-sharp oyster beds, spiky sea urchins, stinging jellyfish and other marine life. On the beach wind and sun present dangers as well. High winds can pick up sand and beach umbrellas, and too much sun can cause sunburn, heat exhaustion or worse.

Ocean Safety Guidelines:

- Swim at beaches with lifeguards whenever possible;
 - Learn how to recognize and escape rip currents;
- Swim parallel to shore until free from the current;
- Obey warning flags and posted signs;
- Wear water shoes when walking on rocks;
- Keep a close watch on children near shorelines;
- Don't let children dig very large holes that might cause a cave-in injury or fatality;
- Stay hydrated and use sunscreen to prevent heat-related illness; and
- Never underestimate ocean conditions, even on calm-looking days.

Boating Safety

Boating accidents often occur due to speeding, inattention, alcohol use, or failure to wear life jackets. Safe boating starts with preparation and responsible operation. First, check the weather forecast before departing, and make sure every passenger wears a properly sized life jacket. If the vessel takes on water, crashes and capsizes, it is too late to put on the lifejackets. Most boating fatalities involve people who were not wearing life jackets.

Lastly, file a "float plan" with someone on shore. A float plan is a detailed document outlining your boating itinerary, vessel description, and passenger list. It acts as a critical safety tool, providing search and rescue teams with exact coordinates to locate you if you fail to return at the scheduled time.

Boating Safety Reminders:

- Wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket;
- Never operate a boat under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- Wear boat shoes to protect your feet from fishing hooks;
- Carry emergency supplies and communication devices; and
- Avoid overloading the boat.

Make Water Safety a Priority

Drowning is fast and often silent, but many incidents are preventable through education, supervision, and safe behaviors. Take time this month to review water safety precautions with your family and coworkers before heading outdoors this summer.

STAY ALERT, PREPARED, AND SAFE AROUND WATER!!

