

Summer Safety

Swimming

Never Swim Alone – always use the buddy system

Never leave children unattended in or around swimming areas

- Swim in supervised areas only.
- Obey all rules and posted signs.
- Don't mix alcohol and swimming. Alcohol impairs your judgement, balance, and coordination, affects your swimming and diving skills, and reduces your body's ability to stay warm.
- Pay attention to local weather conditions and forecasts. Stop swimming at the first indication of bad weather.
- Watch out for the dangerous “too’s” – too tired, too cold, too far from safety, too much sun, too much strenuous activity.

Boating

When changing seats, stay low and near center line of a small boat.

Be ready for trouble when a powerboat passes you in a [narrow channel](#).

Be weather wise:

Sudden wind shifts, lightning flashes and choppy water all can mean a storm is brewing.

[Anchor from bow, not stern.](#)

Use anchor line length at least five times longer than water depth.

[Take a safe boating course.](#)

As an extra benefit, you may earn lower boat insurance costs.

Never Drink and Drive. **Effective May 27, 2004:** A person with a blood alcohol level (B.A.C.) of 0.08% or greater who operates a vessel/boat is considered to be driving under the influence. The penalties for operating a boat while drunk can be quite sever so think before you drink.

http://www.state.nj.us/mvc/cit_violations/d_vp_dui.html

Always wear a Coast Guard approved Personal Floatation device (PFD) that fits well; make sure it is the proper type and approved for your specific usage.

Beach Safety

- Protect your skin: Sunlight contains two kinds of UV rays -- UVA increases the risk of skin cancer, skin aging, and other skin diseases. UVB causes sunburn and can lead to skin cancer. Limit the amount of direct sunlight you receive between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. and wear a sunscreen with a sun protection factor containing a high rating such as 15.
- Drink plenty of water regularly and often even if you do not feel thirsty. Your body needs water to keep cool. Avoid drinks with alcohol or caffeine in them. They can make you feel good briefly but make the heat's effects on your body worse. This is especially true with beer, which dehydrates the body.
- Watch for signs of heat stroke: Heat stroke is life-threatening. The victim's temperature control system, which produces sweating to cool the body, stops working. The body temperature can rise so high that brain damage and death may result if the body is not cooled quickly. Signals include hot, red, and dry skin; changes in consciousness, rapid, weak pulse, and rapid, shallow breathing. Call 9-1-1. Move the person to a cooler place. Quickly cool the body by wrapping wet sheets around the body and fan it. If you have ice packs or cold packs, place them on each of the victim's wrists and ankles, in the armpits and on the neck to cool the large blood vessels. Watch for signals of breathing problems and make sure the airway is clear. Keep the person lying down.
- Wear eye protection: Sunglasses are like sunscreen for your eyes and protect against damage that can occur from UV rays. Be sure to wear sunglasses with labels that indicate that they absorb at least 90 percent of UV sunlight.
- Wear foot protection: Many times, people's feet can get burned from the sand or cut from glass in the sand.

Boating

- Alcohol and boating don't mix. Alcohol impairs your judgment, balance, and coordination -- over 50 percent of drownings result from boating incidents involving alcohol. For the same reasons it is dangerous to operate an automobile while under the influence of alcohol, people should not operate a boat while drinking alcohol.
- Look for the label: Use Coast Guard-approved life jackets for yourself and your passengers when boating and fishing.
- Develop a float plan. Anytime you go out in a boat, give a responsible person details about where you will be and how long you will be gone. This is important

because if the boat is delayed because of an emergency, becomes lost, or encounters other problems, you want help to be able to reach you.

- Find a boating course in your area (Red Cross, U.S. Power Squadron, the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, US Sailing, etc) -- these courses teach about navigation rules, emergency procedures and the effects of wind, water conditions, and weather.
- Watch the weather: Know local weather conditions and prepare for electrical storms. Watch local news programs. Stop boating as soon as you see or hear a storm.

Home Pools

- Never leave a child unobserved around water. Your eyes must be on the child at all times. Adult supervision is recommended.
- Install a phone by the pool or keep a cordless phone nearby so that you can call 9-1-1 in an emergency.
- Learn Red Cross CPR and insist that babysitters, grandparents, and others who care for your child know CPR.
- Post CPR instructions and 9-1-1 or your local emergency number in the pool area.
- Enclose the pool completely with a self-locking, self-closing fence with vertical bars. Openings in the fence should be no more than four inches wide. The house should not be included as a part of the barrier.
- Never leave furniture near the fence that would enable a child to climb over the fence.
- Always keep basic lifesaving equipment by the pool and know how to use it. Pole, rope, and personal flotation devices (PFDs) are recommended.
- Keep toys away from the pool when it is not in use. Toys can attract young children into the pool.
- Pool covers should always be completely removed prior to pool use.
- If a child is missing, check the pool first. Go to the edge of the pool and scan the entire pool, bottom, and surface, as well as the surrounding pool area

Keeping Children Safe In, On, and Around the Water

- Maintain constant supervision. Watch children around any water environment (pool, stream, lake, tub, toilet, bucket of water), no matter what skills your child has acquired and no matter how shallow the water.
- Don't rely on substitutes. The use of flotation devices and inflatable toys **cannot** replace parental supervision. Such devices could suddenly shift position, lose air, or slip out from underneath, leaving the child in a dangerous situation.

- Enroll children in a water safety course or [Learn-to-Swim classes](#). Your decision to provide your child with an early aquatic experience is a gift that will have infinite rewards. These courses encourage safe practices. You can also purchase a Water Safety Handbook at your [local Red Cross](#) chapter.
- Parents should take a CPR course. Knowing these skills can be important around the water and you will expand your capabilities in providing care for your child. You can contact your [local Red Cross](#) to enroll in a [CPR for Infants and Child course](#).