

## Washington State Drowning Prevention Network Encourages Extra Attention to Water Safety Amidst a Lifeguard Shortage

SEATTLE - June 22, 2022 - Washington State pools and beaches are facing a [lifeguard shortage](#). This will lead to reduced operating hours and some closures of beaches and pools throughout summer.

Swimming in areas with lifeguards is one important way to prevent drowning. Contact your local Parks and Recreation Department to find out which areas will be guarded this summer. Most drownings in Washington State happen in open water settings, i.e., lakes, rivers, oceans during the summer months.

Drowning happens quickly and silently, but *drowning is preventable*. Now is an important opportunity to share information on ways people can recreate safer in and around water as warmer days approach. Consider these layers of water safety.

- **Swim in designated swim areas with lifeguards when possible.** [Designated swim areas](#) are designed for swimming - some have lifeguards who are expert swimmers trained to rescue people who get into difficulty in a pool or at the beach.
- **Select a Water Watcher and never swim alone.** A Water Watcher is a responsible adult who agrees to actively watch children and teens in the water without distractions. Consider using a supervision tool, like the [Water Watcher badge or app](#). Water Watchers should be used even when lifeguards are present.
- **Wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket that fits.** Life jacket loaner stations are available [across the state](#). You can buy a life jacket for you and your family using this [Big 5 life jacket coupon](#). Coast Guard approval labels are located inside of life jackets.
- **Learn to swim and know your limits.** Swimming is a lifelong skill. Check about lessons at your local pool or lifeguard beach or find [swim classes](#) in your area. Swimmers tend to tire faster and get into trouble quickly in open water.
- **Check weather and water conditions.** Weather and water conditions can change quickly. Check with your local parks department or see Washington State Department of Health's [beach advisories](#) before you go. Cold water can kill, even on hot summer days.
- **Stay sober.** Practice [safe behaviors](#) like staying sober. Alcohol and drugs can affect judgment, swimming ability, and physical reaction.
- **Know what to do in an emergency.** Learn first aid and CPR. Bring a cell phone and be ready to dial 911 in an emergency.

The [Washington State Drowning Prevention Network](#) (DPN) encourages all to learn about the layers of water safety and to share information and resources like the ones here. The Washington State Drowning Prevention Network was developed in 1994 to provide a forum for organizations to work together to prevent drowning. Its key messages are: Know the water. Know your limits. Wear a life jacket.

## Events

Members of the public are invited to participate in the following water safety events throughout the region, hosted by various partner agencies of the Washington State Drowning Prevention Network:

Title of event	Date and time	Location	Event description and information
Water Safety Event at Meydenbauer Bay Beach Park	June 25, 2022, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.	Meydenbauer Bay Beach Park	This local event is to promote open water safety as our summer season begins in the PNW. We will educate on lifejackets, cold water, swimming in lakes and rivers and more.
Snohomish Regional Fire & Rescue (SRFR) Water Safety Day Camps	July 11 <sup>th</sup> & July 19 <sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.	Lake Tye Park, Monroe, WA & Lundeen Park, Lake Stevens, WA	SRFR's annual Kids Water Safety Day Camps teach kids awareness and safety skills while they are on the water.

Drowning prevention is a year-round effort. Find ways to promote water safety and awareness in your community throughout the year.

- [Washington State Department of Health](#) - Learn about water safety for lakes, rivers, beaches, pool safety, and more.
- [Washington State Parks Boating](#) - Spread awareness about cold water safety and ways to protect yourself and others year-round.
- [Seattle Children's Hospital](#) - Learn about and share water safety tips for children and families, including the importance of life jackets.
- [Recreate Responsibly Toolkit](#) - Share social media posts to amplify water safety guidelines. Available in English and Spanish.

### News media contact(s):

Isabell Sakamoto, Suicide and Injury Prevention Program Manager

206-987-6197

[DrowningPrevention@seattlechildrens.org](mailto:DrowningPrevention@seattlechildrens.org)

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### About the Washington State Drowning Prevention Network:

The Washington State Drowning Prevention Network is co-led by: Washington State Department of Health, Safe Kids Washington, Public Health Seattle and King County, Washington State Parks Boating Program, Washington Recreation and Park Association, Seattle Parks and Recreation, and Seattle Children's. Learn more: [www.seattlechildrens.org/dp-educators](http://www.seattlechildrens.org/dp-educators)