



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Water Safety Saves Lives

Drowning usually occurs quickly and silently. Childhood drowning and near-drowning occurrences happen in seconds, often because a child is left unattended or there is a brief lapse in supervision.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about ten people die every day from unintentional drowning in the United States. Of these, two are children 14 and younger. For every child who dies from drowning, another five receive emergency department care for nonfatal submersion injuries.

The majority of drowning and near-drowning occur in residential swimming pools and in open water sites. However, children can drown in as little as one inch of water and are therefore at risk of drowning in wading pools, bathtubs, buckets, toilets, spas and hot tubs. Devices (such as bathtub seats or water wings) cannot be relied upon to keep them afloat and alive.

Pools filled with water are a potential death trap for a young child. San Bernardino County Fire suggests these simple water safety tips to keep your children safe:

- ✓ Install four-sided isolation fencing equipped with self-closing and self-latching gates around pools.
- ✓ Pool alarms and pool covers can offer an extra layer of protection. These should be used with fencing.
- ✓ If your child does not know how to swim enroll them in swimming lessons taught by qualified instructors. Do not consider young children to be drown-proof because they have had swimming lessons.
- ✓ Children must be watched closely while swimming.
- ✓ Know which of your child's friends and neighbors have pools and make sure they are supervised.
- ✓ Keep rescue equipment, a telephone and emergency numbers by the pool.
- ✓ Instruct babysitters about potential pool hazards to young children.
- ✓ Maintain constant supervision. Actively supervise kids whenever around the water.
- ✓ If a child is missing, **check the pool first**. Seconds count in preventing death or disability.
- ✓ Do not allow a young child in the pool without an adult.
- ✓ Learn CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). Other caretakers, such as grandparents and older siblings, should also know CPR.
- ✓ Remove toys from in and around the pool when it is not in use.
- ✓ Empty all buckets, containers and wading pools immediately after use and store them upside-down.

The difference a second makes is the difference between life and death. San Bernardino County Fire encourages parents to take necessary precautions before it's too late. For more safety tips, visit our website at www.sbcfire.org. The Safe Kids Worldwide website (www.safekids.org) offers numerous facts and safety tips.

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