

## **ELEVEN DROWN IN IRELAND EVERY MONTH**

### **Stay Away From Edge this May Bank Holiday**

There are 135 drownings in Ireland every year – that's more than eleven per month. The risk of drowning increases during bank holiday weekends as many people take to seasonal water based activities for the first time. Cold weather and the associated wind chill will increase the risk of hypothermia. Stranding, falling in and entanglement are just some of the scenarios that lead to drownings but can be prevented with some bank holiday safety advice:

- Always wear a Lifejacket when on water and ensure that it has a correctly fitted crotch strap.
- Walkers and anglers should stay away from edges and avoid walking where you risk being stranded by incoming tides or risk being caught unawares by Atlantic swells.
- Ensure that you are fully trained and competent for your aquatic activity. If not, seek training through [www.safetyzone.ie](http://www.safetyzone.ie)
- Children are curious about water and constant supervision is the safest way to avoid tragedy. Parents of primary school children should check if their local school has yet introduced Irish Water Safety's PAWS programme – Primary Aquatics Water Safety, which teaches children all about staying safe around water and is a component part of the physical education strand of the primary school curriculum. Now is the time to instill good habits in time for the summer months ahead.
- Swimmers should swim parallel and close to the shore and be aware that water is still too cold for extended swims.
- Ensure that the condition of your boat is fit for purpose and well maintained throughout the season.
- Alcohol should be avoided before or during any aquatic activity. On average, a third of drowning victims had consumed alcohol.
- In emergency situations, never hesitate to call 112 and ask for the CoastGuard.

Irish Water Safety encourages everyone to take swimming, lifesaving, survival and rescue classes - for further information click on [www.iws.ie](http://www.iws.ie). Report missing or located ringbuoys, essential for public rescues, at [www.ringbuoys.ie](http://www.ringbuoys.ie).

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