

WARM WEATHER MOOD INCREASES DROWNING RISK
Swim at Lifeguarded waterways this weekend

Irish Water Safety has issued this advice to minimize the risk of drowning as warm weather forecast for the weekend will tempt many people to swim in open waters for the first time this year.

1. Swim at lifeguarded waterways listed at <http://www.iws.ie/bathing-areas/map.372.html>;
2. If not lifeguarded, then swim with others, never alone, at recognised, traditionally safe bathing areas;
3. Swim within your depth, parallel and close to shore;
4. Supervise children at all times as drownings can happen quickly and silently; 30 children drowned in ten years;
5. Never use inflatable toys in open water or swim out after anything drifting.
6. Never swim in the dark or late at night or jump into water from heights.
7. Rivers can be dangerous due to currents, hidden hazards and colder water under the surface that can result in hypothermia. 62% of drownings occur inland with 80% of drownings occurring close to the victim's home.
8. Train for your aquatic activity at www.safetyzone.ie
9. Alcohol impairs judgment, balance and coordination - all essential for swimming and boating and avoiding hazards in the water. Almost 30% of drowned victims had consumed alcohol.
10. Wear a Lifejacket when on the water and make sure that it has a correctly fitting crotch strap.
11. In Marine Emergencies, call 112 and ask for the coastguard.

As we approach National Water Safety Awareness Week commencing on Monday, we appeal to the public to inform themselves of the dangers and so reduce the chance of drowning tragedies that average five per fortnight – get more advice at www.iws.ie

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