

Bank Holiday Alert

Three factors that increase your drowning risk: Cold water, wind chill, rip currents

Water Safety Ireland is warning that the risk of drownings is higher over the coming bank holiday due to cooler waters, wind chill and particularly high tides due to a new moon.

Stranding will also be a risk for many walkers as lower tides will expose even greater areas of the coastline.

Although we have had no accidental drownings during any bank holiday weekend this year, water-related tragedies can happen in seconds and with an average total of 124 drownings every year, Water Safety Ireland is drawing your attention to the dangers that will put people's lives at risk.

The new moon will cause strong rip currents that can quickly take a person away from shore. Survival time in such scenarios is greatly reduced due to the cooler water temperatures and wind chill factor.

Those going afloat should always wear a lifejacket and carry a portable Marine VHF and/or a personal locator beacon.

- Shore walkers should stay away from edge; beach walkers risk being stranded by incoming tides and should always carry a mobile phone.
- Wear a Lifejacket when on or near water and ensure that it has a correctly fitting crotch strap.
- Anglers should be extremely vigilant to new moon tides when fishing from the shoreline of Atlantic swells.
- Surfers, divers, kayakers and sailors should wear suitably warm and waterproof clothing.
- Ensure that you are fully trained and competent for your aquatic activity.
- Alcohol should be avoided before or during any aquatic activity.
- In emergency situations, call 112 and ask for the Coast Guard.

Water Safety Ireland has swimming, lifesaving, water survival and rescue classes nationwide. For further information click on www.watersafety.ie.

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