



PRESS RELEASE

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Multi-Agency water safety appeal ahead of August Bank Holiday Weekend

Ahead of the August Bank Holiday weekend, the Irish Coast Guard, RNLI, Water Safety Ireland and Met Éireann are appealing for people to take care when they are on or near the water.

With many people continuing to enjoy the summer holidays or planning a break this weekend, the organisations are asking people to be particularly mindful to check weather forecasts and tide times before venturing out and if planning on entering the sea to know how to spot and safely handle a rip current. If planning other activities such as paddleboarding, the ask is to always go prepared so the water can be enjoyed safely.

Evelyn Cusack, Head of Forecasting in Met Éireann says: 'While there will be some warm sunny spells the weather will be mixed this weekend. For a detailed forecast for 10-days ahead for over 1,000 locations around Ireland including the beaches, lakes and mountains go to www.met.ie'.

If heading out on the water or visiting the coast:

- Always check the weather and tide times
- Carry a reliable means of raising the alarm such as a VHF radio or Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) and a mobile phone in a waterproof pouch as back up.
- Tell someone where you are going and what time you are due back
- If going afloat, wear a lifejacket or suitable Personal Flotation Device for your activity
- Never ever swim alone. Only swim in areas that are supervised by Lifeguards or in areas with which you are familiar.
- Should you get into difficulty or see someone else in trouble, dial 999 or 112 and ask for the Coast Guard

Kevin Rahill, RNLI Water Safety Lead said: 'This weekend will see spring tides so we would encourage anyone planning a walk or activity near the coast to check tide times before venturing out to avoid becoming cut off.'

'The RNLI is also urging everyone to remember to Float to Live if they do get into trouble in the water this weekend. To do this: lean back, using your arms and legs to stay afloat. Control your breathing, then call for help or swim to safety. In a coastal emergency, call 999 or 112 for the Coast Guard.'

Irish Coast Guard Operations Manager Micheál O'Toole said: 'We wish to thank the public for their cooperation and support and for the responsible approach displayed when participating in any water based or coastal activity. We would also advise people to avoid bringing inflatable toys to the beach, rivers or lake side as users can easily get swept away from the shore.'

Water Safety Ireland's Acting CEO, Roger Sweeney said: 'Swimmers should watch out for rip currents which are one of the most dangerous natural hazards at Irish beaches. The strong channel of water running from a beach back to sea can be difficult to spot so the best way to avoid them is to swim at lifeguarded beaches between the red and yellow flags. If caught in one, don't exhaust yourself trying to swim against it. Swim parallel to the beach until free of the narrow current and then head for shore'.

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