



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Renewed Water Safety Appeals Ahead of Bank Holiday Weekend Rip Currents, Cooler Water Temperatures and Stranding Increases Drowning Risks**

**Water Safety Ireland is warning that the risk of drownings is higher over the coming bank holiday due to cooler waters, rip currents 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.**

On average, 110 people drown every year and Water Safety Ireland is drawing 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.

With many families planning activities around the mid-term break, Water Safety Ireland is 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 or kayaking, always go prepared and ask for local advice so the water can be enjoyed safely.

- Thirty children died from drowning in ten years. Children are naturally curious about water and constant supervision is the safest way to avoid tragedy. Drownings can occur within the home environments to which we are restricted, where familiarity can breed complacency, making danger more difficult to spot. Streams, drains, ponds, water tanks, septic tanks, slurry pits and waterside fencing should all be properly secured.
- The risks are even greater at inland waterways. Although 40,000 people live less than 100 metres from the coast and some 2 million people live within 5km of the coast (40% of the population), the majority of drownings, some 62%, actually occur inland at our rivers and lakes. Stay Away From Edges of all inland waterways.
- Be aware of the changeable weather at this time of year. Reduced temperatures increase the risk of cold shock and hypothermia which makes swimming to safety difficult or impossible.
- Do not attempt to rescue pets from the water.
- Always wear a Lifejacket when on or near water and ensure that it has a correctly fitted crotch strap. Surfers, kite boarders, divers, kayakers and sailors should wear suitably warm and waterproof clothing.
- Shore walkers should stay away from the edge and remain vigilant to the dangers of being stranded and to being carried away by dangerous swells.
- In emergency situations, call 999 or 112 early and ask for the Coast Guard. More advice at [www.watersafety.ie](http://www.watersafety.ie)

**Ends**

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