



## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Water Safety Appeal from Coast Guard, RNLI & Water Safety Ireland for bank holiday weekend**

**The Coast Guard, RNLI and Water Safety Ireland have issued a joint water safety appeal as people are expected to enjoy the water this bank holiday weekend. Even in good weather, water temperatures remain cold and the organisations have advised that those taking part in any water-based activity should make sure they have the proper equipment and know how to do it safely.**

The Coast Guard, RNLI and Water Safety Ireland advise to always carry a means of calling for help and to keep it within reach at all times. When kayaking or paddle-boarding close to shore, conditions can turn quickly and wearing a buoyancy aid or lifejacket can make the critical difference. If you unexpectedly find yourself in the water and wearing a lifejacket, you have given yourself vital time to be brought to safety.

While the good weather is set to continue, always check the forecast, tide times and sea conditions before setting off. Get regular updates if planning to be out for any length of time. And be prepared to change your plans or cancel the trip if the forecast is unfavourable.

For those swimming, remember to acclimatise slowly, wear a bright swimming cap and consider a tow float to increase visibility. Never swim alone and always ensure that your activity is being monitored by a colleague. Swim in areas that are lifeguarded or are known locally to be safe.

Irish Coast Guard Operations manager Micheál O'Toole said; "We appeal to everybody to plan for and attend to their personal safety. We again are warning on the dangers of using inflatable toys such as LiLo's on or near the water, be it seaside, lake or river. Please do not bring such items with you. We again express our thanks to all members of the emergency services who will be on duty over the weekend, in particular volunteer members of Coast Guard, RNLI, Community Inshore rescue boats and mountain rescue teams. Have a safe and enjoyable weekend."

RNLI Water Safety Lead Linda-Gene Byrne said: 'The fine weather and brighter evenings will encourage more people onto the water and it's great to see people out and about and enjoying it. If you fall in unexpectedly, remember to 'Float to Live' – lie on your back and spread your arms and legs, gently moving them to keep afloat. Keep floating until you feel your breath coming back before calling for help or swimming ashore if nearby. Taking a few minutes to check you have taken all the necessary equipment and advice for your activity and knowing what to do in an emergency will give peace of mind and help prevent accidents.'

Water Safety Ireland's Deputy CEO Roger Sweeney said: "This weekend, please remember that although air temperatures have risen, our waterways are still too cold for extended swims. A full moon on Saturday will make the coastline more precarious and rip currents will be stronger. Swim within your depth at the lifeguarded waterways listed at [www.watersafety.ie/lifeguards/](http://www.watersafety.ie/lifeguards/). A full moon also creates lower low tides that will expose even greater areas of the coastline which often tempts walkers

to explore sandbanks. Be aware of being trapped by incoming tides, carry a fully charged mobile phone, and please provide constant uninterrupted adult supervision for any children in your care.”

The Coast Guard, RNLI and Water Safety Ireland also wish to express their condolences to the families and friends of the two young men who lost their lives in jet ski accidents on Carlingford Lough and on Lough Derg.

If you see somebody in trouble on the water or along the coast, or you think that they are in trouble, dial 112 or use marine VHF radio Channel 16 and ask for the Coast Guard.

**Ends**

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