



## **TOOLBOX TALK: National Weather Safety Month**

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In recognition of the popularity of swimming and other water related activities in the United States, and the resulting need for ongoing public education on safer water practices, the month of May 2016 is National Water Safety Month! National Water Safety Month will be celebrated through educational programs, public service announcements, government proclamations, dealer and business promotions and the distribution of water safety themed materials, aimed primarily at the public.

As the weather warms up, pools are preparing to open and crowds are gearing up to head to the beach. Swimming is the most popular summer activity. Please see list of water safety tips.

- Learn to swim course for children as well as adults
- Swim in designated areas supervised by lifeguards
- Always swim with a buddy
- Never leave a young child unattended near water
- Have young children or inexperienced swimmers wear U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets
- Establish water safety rules for your family and enforce them without fail
- If you go boating, wear a life jacket! Most boating fatalities occur from drowning
- Avoid alcohol use
- Always obey pool rules
- Walk slowly in the pool area, don't run
- Swim at a depth that is safe for you
- Don't push or jump on others
- Don't chew gum or eat while you swim, you could choke
- Only jump off of diving boards
- Depth markers on the side of the pool tell you how deep the water is at that point
- Always look before you jump into a pool or body of water
- Put on plenty of sunscreen, wear sunglasses and a hat to protect your skin from harmful rays
- Drink plenty of water and fluids when your outside swimming to prevent dehydration
- Stop swimming or boating as soon as you see a storm, lightening is dangerous
- Don't swim in the dark
- Make sure not to swallow the water. Germs lurk in the water that can make a person sick

- Know your limits, if you start feeling tired, or get a cramp, get out of the water and rest a while
- Never pretend to be drowning
- Store drinks in plastic containers, broken glass and bare feet don't mix

#### Lakes, Ponds, Streams and Beaches

- You can't always see the bottom, so you don't know the depth or hidden hazards such as jagged rocks, broken bottles, trash or weeds/ grass which can trap, wear something to protect your feet
- Waves and currents can push pull or knock you down. Don't swim out too far or too close to piers
- Strong undertows or riptides can carry swimmers away from shore. If you are caught in a current, swim parallel to shore until the water stops pulling you, then swim diagonally to shore