



Water Safety

When the weather turns warm, everyone wants to be in or around the water. Hanging out at the pool, beach or water hole on a hot day is a great way to beat the heat.

When having fun most people don't think much about water safety — but they should. For people between the ages of 5 and 24, drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death.

It doesn't have to be that way, though. Most water-related accidents can be avoided by knowing how to stay safe and following a few simple guidelines.

Swim in patrolled areas only. It's safest to swim only in places that are patrolled by a lifeguard. No one can anticipate changing currents, or other hidden dangers. In the event that something does go wrong, lifeguards are trained in rescue techniques.

Provide Supervision. When taking clients out for water recreation of any type, supervision must be provided at all times. Supervision should be one on one (one staff member per client). Even if a client chooses not to participate and enter the water on arrival, supervision is still required.

Be CPR and first aid trained. Any staff that provides support must be CPR trained. This is a mandatory requirement.

Check water depth. Shallow water does not mean the risk of drowning has been eliminated as drowning can occur in almost any depth of water. When deciding on where to swim, choose swimming areas that do not exceed knee to hip level.

Use buoyancy devices. When undertaking water activities, use devices such as swim vests and pool noodles. This is especially important for anyone who has limited swimming ability.

Swimming pool safety standards. Swimming pool requirements vary for each state (e.g. fencing of water pools) ensure all pools meet the required safety standards.

Wading pools at houses. If using a wading pool, ensure it is emptied at the end of each use.

Stingers and other water wildlife. In warmer beach water at most times of the year there is a risk of stingers and other wildlife that can cause harm. Being stung by stingers such as Irukandji is very painful, can make a person very sick and requires urgent medical treatment. Visit beaches where stinger nets that protect from Irukandji are in use.

Never swim in water where the wildlife can cause harm to people.

Follow signs and directions. Signs are often used to alert to members of the public of wildlife that may be present in the water, as well as water conditions. Always follow the safety directions provided.

Do a risk assessment. To ensure you have considered the risks to staff and clients, always do a risk assessment to identify hazards and risks and what controls need to be put in place for safety. Ensure the safety controls are implemented to ensure everyone goes home safe and healthy every day.

