



Beach Safety



www.ocfa.org

Swim Near A Lifeguard

The United States Lifesaving Association statistics, over a ten-year period, show that the chance of drowning at a beach without lifeguard protection is almost five times as great as drowning at a beach with lifeguards. They have also calculated the chance that a person will drown while attending a beach protected by USLA affiliated lifeguards at 1 in 18 million.

Use Caution Near Beach Fire Pits

After a barbecue at the beach, picnickers often cover the hot coals with sand believing that this will extinguish the briquettes. Instead, the sand acts as an insulator making the coals even hotter. The result: children walking over the covered fire pit several hours later can severely burn their feet. Every year, youngsters incur very deep burns on their hands and feet, which require skin grafts and months of recuperation.

Avoid Rip Currents

A rip current is a strong, narrow, surface current of water flowing perpendicular to the beach, out into the ocean. These currents can pull the strongest swimmer into deeper water. You can generally recognize a rip current in the surf zone by a discoloration of the water that extends in a band offshore, or foam or seaweed moving steadily seaward from the breakers. Often a rip current can be identified by a mushroom-shaped plume of dirty water extending from near-shore outward to beyond the waves. Other indicators are choppy waters in an area of relatively calm waves or an offshore plume of turbid water past the breakers. Beach patrol personnel, who can easily see these characteristics from their elevated towers, typically post warnings on guarded beaches when they are observed. If you are being dragged from the shore by a rip current, remain calm! Let the current carry you. Fighting against it will only tire you, and most rip currents weaken a short distance from the sandbar that creates them. Signal to someone on the beach that you need assistance. *Source: www.masgc.org.*



IF CAUGHT IN A RIP CURRENT

- ◆ Don't fight the current
- ◆ Swim out of the current, then to shore
- ◆ If you can't escape, float or tread water
- ◆ If you need help, call or wave for assistance

SAFETY

- ◆ Know how to swim
- ◆ Never swim alone
- ◆ If in doubt, don't go out

More information about rip currents can be found at the following web sites:
www.ripcurrents.noaa.gov
www.usla.org



Pool Safety



Children drown without a sound, learning the ABC's of pool safety could help prevent this senseless tragedy. Drowning is the nation's number one killer of children under the age of 5 and it's the second leading cause of death from unintentional injuries for ages 1 to 14. The majority of these accidents occur in residential swimming pools and spas. The OCFA along with the other fire agencies support the ABC's of pool safety. They include:

"A"- Adult Supervision: It is important that the "water watcher" must be somebody who is capable of swimming. Also, have more than one water watcher who can swim if possible and make sure that there is a phone nearby to call 9-1-1 in an emergency.

"B"- Barriers: In addition to barriers/layers, you should have multiple layers of protection such as safety covers, door alarms, gate alarms, and motion detectors to warn you of possible problems. On toilets you can purchase a toilet latch so that children cannot lift the cover.

"C"- Classes: Learning CPR is very, very important. What is also important is learn to swim classes for children. Lastly, stay calm when calling 911 and make sure to clearly and calmly state the information and listen for instructions as those vital seconds could save your child's life. Inform your children of the dangers and of water safety rules.

One last thought, drownings happen not only in pools and oceans, but also in areas such as bathtubs, mop buckets, toilets, and even in standing water as shallow as 2 feet. They also happen year round! Please be diligent not to have unattended children around the water. Looking away for just a few seconds could be worth a lifetime of regret.



For More Information

www.ocfa.org
www.abcpoolsafety.org
www.usla.org
www.swimforlife.com
www.choc.org