SWIM AREA SAFETY

Millions Enjoy the Water, so What's the Risk?

- 4,000 fatal drownings per year
- 45% of those while swimming in natural waters ; 20% in pools
- Over 20% of population can't swim

Water Depth

Depths of chin height or more pose significant risk to nonswimmers.

Underwater Hazards

Drop-offs, rocks, trash, debris, weeds, and muddy bottoms threaten safety & enjoyment.

Water Quality

Pollution and contamination pose health risks. Obey signs. Avoid foam, scum, or algae.

Water Clarity

Visibility varies in natural waters. Murky water hides hazards and hinders rescue.

Water Temperature

Check water temperature before entering. Limit time in water that feels cold.

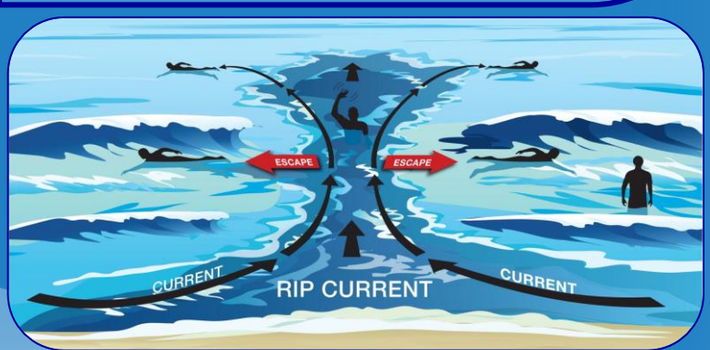
Moving Water

Currents & waves in rivers, oceans & lakes pose risks for all swimmers. Currents may be hard to see & very difficult to swim against. If necessary, swim across the current. Rip currents account for 80 % of ocean rescues.

Nonswimmers entering deep water will likely begin to drown immediately, are unable to move to safety or call for help, and submerge in only 20 to 60 seconds.

Safety Tips

- Review area safety, based on group abilities, prior to entering the water.
- If unable to judge area safety, choose designated swim areas at campgrounds, state parks, and federal recreational areas.
- Keep nonswimmers away from deep water until they learn how to swim.
- All ability groups should consider wearing life jackets as an extra layer of protection, particularly in deep, murky, or moving water.
- Learn how to prevent, recognize, and respond to drowning incidents.
- If your group lacks those skills, swim where professionally trained lifeguards are on duty.



Learn rip current safety. Relax and swim swim out of the current, or float or thread water.

Remember: Water safety begins with you! Visit watersafetyusa.org for more information.

WATER SAFETY USA