

CREATING A WATER SAFETY PLAN FOR THE U.S. IS A BIG TASK. WE ARE READY FOR THE CHALLENGE.

It's 2022! The debut year for the first U.S. National Water Safety Action Plan!

We are excited to release the Plan, but we know that water safety doesn't wait for unveiling, acknowledgment, or action. Thousands of people across the United States work every day preventing drowning by raising awareness; teaching water safety, swimming, and CPR; guarding beaches and pools; performing rescues; and treating drowning victims.

In this newsletter, we'd like to acknowledge the work which has been occurring in the field over the years, often with little acknowledgement or recognition. We've put together a brief history of water safety in the U.S. Please let us know what we've missed, or where the internet misled us. After all, those who do not study history are doomed to repeat it - let's make sure our surfboards are all pointed in the same direction!

- **1700's** - dories were launched from shore by lifesavers to save shipwrecked people in distress. Eventually organized as the United States Lifesaving Service
- **1800's** - swimming became a popular form of recreation, and the need for rescues grew. The U.S. Lifesaving Service eventually became part of the U.S. Coast Guard
- **1891** - Dr. Friedrich Maass performed the first documented instance of chest compression.
- **1908** - First lifeguard training, at Redondo Beach, California
- **1912** - YMCA developed a National Lifesaving Service
- **1914** - Commodore Wilbert E. Longfellow established the American Red Cross Lifesaving
- **1940's** - Female lifeguards step up as young men go to war - and (thankfully) never step back from the profession of lifeguarding
- **1950's** - Modern CPR techniques were first introduced
- **1956** - First international lifesaving competition. California sent a contingent as Surf Life Saving Association of America, which became National Surf Life Saving Association in 1965
- **1997** - First World Medical & Rescue Conference held in San Diego, USA. A second conference was held in Portugal in 2007.
- **2011** - First World Conference on Drowning Prevention held in Da Nang, Vietnam. Conferences now occur every 2 years. WCDP 2023 will be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka <https://www.ilsf.org/drowning-prevention/conference/>
- **2012** - UNICEF releases the first major report on drowning. <https://www.unicefusa.org/press/releases/unicef-report-drowning-causes-one-four-child-deaths-parts-asia/8128>
- **2014** - World Health Organization releases the first global report on drowning. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/global-report-on-drowning-preventing-a-leading-killer>
- **2014** - Water Safety USA is formed - a consortium of national governmental and non-governmental organizations with a strong record in providing drowning prevention and water safety programs.
- **2017** - World Health Organization releases Preventing Drowning: An Implementation Guide. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/preventing-drowning-an-implementation-guide> Recommends that countries create national plans.
- **2019** - Work on the first U.S. National Water Safety Action Plan begins.



And today, every year, across the world, organizations promote and celebrate International **Water Safety Day on May 15**. We've come a very long way, from an unrecognized global epidemic to an organized national and global movement to end drowning.

A rising tide lifts all boats. It is an honor and a privilege to work with all of you to reduce drownings while increasing then public's enjoyment of our amazing open water and pools.

Congratulations and thank you for the amazing work that YOU have done to save lives!

Tell us how you are celebrating International Water Safety Day - tag us!

- Share this newsletter by clicking here for the link.
- We're on Instagram now at @usnwsap, on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/USWaterSafetyPlan> and Twitter at @USWaterSafetyP1 - give us a shout out and share what you are doing to increase water safety in your community!