



Charlie Crist  
Governor

Ana M. Viamonte Ros, M.D., M.P.H.  
State Surgeon General

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 11, 2010

**Contact:** Noreen Nickola-Williams  
(904) 825-5055 x 1123

**NEWS RELEASE**

**MAY 2010 IS NATIONAL WATER SAFETY MONTH**

**ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FL** - St. Johns County Health Department reminds its community and visitors that May is recognized as National Water Safety Month. With summer in full gear and more people heading to the water to stay cool, it's important that everyone work together to stay safe.

Swimming is an activity engaged in by people of all ages. It offers many health and fitness benefits, cools you off in the summer, and provides an opportunity to socialize with family and friends. As with any form of exercise, it is important that safety rules be followed to ensure that water activities of any kind are always a fun experience.

Whether you are planning to head to a pool, beach, or water park, you can help avoid unintentional injury and sickness by following these simple safety tips:

- Supervise children at all times! Kids can drown in seconds and in silence. If you have a pool at home, consider installing a pool isolation fence, with self-closing and self-latching gates. These can help keep children away from the area when a parent can not supervise them.
- Swim only in designated areas supervised by a responsible adult or by lifeguards.
- Avoid the use of air-filled swimming aids (such as "water wings") with children. It is best to use life jackets or life preservers.
- Protect against sunburn by using a sunscreen with at least SPF 15 and both UVA and UVB protection, and be sure to re-apply it after swimming.
- Avoid swallowing the water as it may cause illness, if contaminated.
- Even if you do not plan on swimming, be cautious around natural water bodies (ocean shoreline, rivers and lakes). Cold temperatures, currents and underwater hazards can make a fall into these bodies of water dangerous.
- Avoid consuming alcohol before and during water activities. Alcohol impairs judgment, balance and coordination; affects swimming and diving skills; and reduces the body's ability to stay warm.
- Know what to do in an emergency! If a child is missing, check the water first. Every second counts in preventing death or disability. Know how and when to call 9-1-1. Get trained in CPR.

For more information on swimming safety, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/general\\_pub.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/general_pub.htm).

###

***Our Mission:** Promote, protect and improve the health of all people in Florida.*

***Our Vision:** A healthier future for the people of Florida.*

***Our Values:** - Integrity; Commitment to Service; Respect; Excellence; Accountability; Teamwork; Empowerment –*



St. Johns County Health Department  
1955 US 1 South, Suite 100, St. Augustine, FL 32086  
Phone: (904) 825-5055  
[www.StJohnsCHD.org](http://www.StJohnsCHD.org)



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.