

**Bruce A. Blakeman**  
*County Executive*



**Patrick J. Ryder**  
*Police Commissioner*

# Media Advisory

July 5, 2023  
14 - 2023

## Water Safety

With the summer season finally upon us, Nassau County Executive Bruce A. Blakeman and Police Commissioner Patrick J. Ryder would like to remind county residents that water safety is something that all parents should be aware of. Drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury related death among children ages 1 - 14. It can happen very quickly and in less than 1 inch (2.5 centimeters) of water, so filled bathtubs, swimming pools, wading pools, hot tubs, and even buckets of water and sinks can be dangerous.

### **To reduce your child's risk of drowning:**

#### Pool

- Never leave your children alone in or near the pool, even for a moment.
- Practice 'touch supervision' with children younger than 5 years. This means that the adult is within an arm's length of the child at all times.
- If you are planning a pool party, consider hiring a certified lifeguard to supervise those who will be in the pool.
- Put up a fence to separate your house from the pool. Most young children who drown in pools wander out of the house and fall into the pool. Install a fence at least 4 feet high around the pool. This fence will completely separate the pool from the house and play area of the yard. Use gates that self-close and self-latch, with latches higher than your children's reach.
- Alarm the doors so that you are alerted if a child attempts to leave the house to enter the yard. Also consider a pool alarm that alerts if someone enters the water.
- Keep rescue equipment (such as a shepherd's hook or life preserver) and a telephone by the pool.
- Do not use air-filled "swimming aids" as a substitute for approved life vests.
- Remove all toys from the pool after use so children aren't tempted to reach for them.
- After the children are done swimming, secure the pool so they can't get back into it.

- Place a safety cover on pool or hot tub when not in use & remove any ladders or steps used for access.
- A power safety cover that meets the standards of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) may add to the protection of your children but should not be used in place of the fence between your house and the pool. Even fencing around your pool and using a power safety cover will not prevent all drowning.

**Drain Entrapment** occurs when part of a child's body becomes attached to a drain because of the powerful suction of a pool or hot tub filtration system. The powerful suction can trap a child underwater or cause internal injuries. It can also occur when a child's hair, swimsuit or jewelry becomes entangled in the drain. In 2007, the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act made it illegal to manufacture, distribute or sell drain covers that do not adhere to the standards for anti-entrapment safety set by the Consumer Product and Safety Commission.

- Warn your children about the dangers of drain entrapment, and teach them never to play near a pool drain, with or without a cover.
- Pin up long hair when in the water and remove loose parts of swimsuits and loose jewelry that can get ensnared.
- Equip pools and hot tubs with an anti-entrapment drain cover and an approved safety vacuum release system and regularly check that drain covers are secure and have no cracks. Flat drain covers can be replaced with dome-shaped ones.
- Be aware of public wading pools with missing or broken drain covers. Small children have direct access to the bottom drain in wading pools and sitting on open drains can cause serious internal organ damage.

From Memorial Day through Labor Day 2022, on average, about 150 children under the age of 15 drowned in pools.

Drowning is the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death for children ages 1-4.

Remember, teaching your child how to swim **DOES NOT** mean your child is safe in water. Most young children who drown in swimming pools were last seen in the home, had only been missing from sight for a matter of minutes, and were in the care of one or both parents at the time. There is no substitute for active adult supervision to prevent drowning.

**PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE  
NASSAU COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT  
1490 Franklin Ave., Mineola, NY 11501  
516-573-7138**