

YOUR FIRST 10 MINUTES AT THE BEACH



Calling for Help

Make a plan for how you will respond in an emergency.

- Do you have cell reception?
- If cell reception is poor, know where to go to call in case of emergency.
- Is the waterfront easy to access and close to emergency services?
- Assess all potential risks and hazards (obstacles, water depth, water movement).
- Always enter the water feet first.



Get Trained

The Lifesaving Society's programs teach lifesaving skills to rescue others. Most drowning victims were less than 15 metres from a point of safety. Many were closer at only 2-3 metres. Simply using reaching and throwing assists can make all the difference in these circumstances.

To Learn More About Waterfront Safety

Please visit www.Lifesaving.org.

The Lifesaving Society

The Lifesaving Society – Canada's lifeguarding experts works to prevent drowning and water-related injury through its training programs, Water Smart® public education, aquatic safety management, drowning research and lifesaving sport. Annually over 1,200,000 Canadians participate in the Society's swimming, lifesaving, lifeguard and leadership training programs. The Society sets the standard for aquatic safety in Canada and certifies Canada's National Lifeguards.

Lifesaving Society Alberta and Northwest Territories
Canada's Drowning Prevention Charity
Charitable Reg. No. 11912 9021 RR000113123

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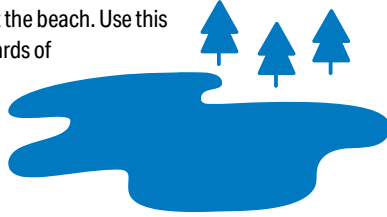


Scan the QR code and complete the survey for a chance to win a free lifejacket!
The Lifesaving Society Alberta and Northwest Territories Branch gratefully acknowledges funding support from the Government of Alberta.

Your First 10 Minutes

Safety is very important during your first ten minutes at the beach. Use this time to familiarize yourself with the conditions and hazards of the waterfront in order to keep yourself and others safe.

- Natural bodies of water in Canada are often cold. Be aware of the risks of cold water (i.e. hypothermia).
- Walk the shoreline and wade the perimeter of the proposed swimming area prior to swimming. Know the shoreline as it can change.
- Look for color changes in the water as these may indicate changes in depth and presence of submerged items.
- Be aware of currents, varying depths, and sudden drop-offs.
- Observe and obey all signage or warnings.
- Locate the washrooms and other area facilities.
- Check the weather and avoid storm conditions. Weather can change quickly – be prepared.
- Seasonality is important. Spring can bring elevated levels of water and flooding, while fall can bring lower levels of water, exposing new potential risks.



Know your Limits

- Non-swimmers and weak swimmers should wear a lifejacket at all times.
- Limit non-swimmers to shallow water. Shallow water is defined relative to each individual and is considered to be less than chest deep. Water that is shallow for you may be deep for others.
- Anyone who wants to go in deep water should be able to achieve the Canadian Swim to Survive Standard (roll into deep water, tread water for 1 minute, and swim 50 metres in sequence).
- If you have a serious medical condition, see your doctor before going in the water. Don't exceed your level of physical fitness.

Bring Safety Equipment

Lifejackets



Emergency phone



Sunscreen and hat



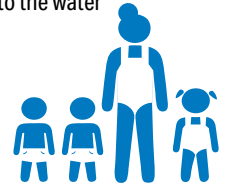
First aid kit



Supervise Children

Children are naturally curious about water and will be excited to get into the water right away. Most Canadian waterfronts have no lifeguard on duty.

- Ensure you are actively supervising children any time they are in, on and around the water.
- Wearing a lifejacket helps keep children at the surface. Lifejackets are not a replacement for active supervision.



Swim Safe

- Swim in marked or designated areas. Boat launches and boating areas should be separated from swimming areas. Avoid swimming in moving water (i.e. rapids and near waterfalls).
- Always swim with a buddy – adults too!
- Avoid using floating toys. Offshore breezes can blow them further away from shore.
- Check for hazards every time you go. Hazards may be submerged underneath the water and can get moved around by currents, ice and storms.
- Only swim in daylight.
- Stay away from the water if you have consumed alcohol and/or drugs. The effects of alcohol/drugs are heightened by sun exposure and heat, making you more likely to get into trouble.
- Lifejackets Save Lives. Wear one!
- Learn to swim. The Lifesaving Society Swim to Survive program teaches the necessary skills to survive an unexpected fall into deep water. The Lifesaving Society Swim for Life program teaches further critical self-rescue and swimming skills.



Don't Dive in Shallow Water

- Always enter the water feet first. No Diving. Diving into shallow water (less than 2.5 metres) is a particularly high risk activity that often results in severe head or spinal cord injury.
- Injuries can also occur as a result of horseplay around the waterfront – throwing or pushing a person into the water, diving off shoulders, or being 'boosted' into the air by another swimmer.

