

**Last year, ten people drowned every month*
1,329 in ten years
Be alert as drownings happen quickly and silently.**

In launching Irish Water Safety’s Annual Report 2015, the Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government, Simon Coveney TD appealed for greater care in, on and near water so that drownings are prevented.

Speaking at the launch on Fountainstown beach in Cork on Monday 22nd August 2016, Minister Coveney expressed regret at the tragic loss of life suffered by so many families last year.

“122 people drowned in Ireland last year, equating to ten deaths every month. While it is particularly poignant that 33 of those drownings were suicides, every single drowning is an avoidable tragedy and I appeal to all to take great care when visiting our waterways nationwide.”

“Ireland has some of the most wonderful waterways in the world yet drownings can happen quickly, silently and in shallow water which is perhaps most tragically reflected in the fact that thirty children aged fourteen and under drowned in the last ten years,” continued Mr Coveney, “instilling a healthy respect for our aquatic environments at a young age and giving children the skills they need to stay safe in water is key to preventing drownings in the long term.”

In launching its report, Minister Coveney pointed to some of the advice issued by Irish Water Safety:

1. Supervise children at all times near water - 30 children aged 14 and under drowned in the last ten years.
2. Swim at lifeguarded waterways - listed at www.iws.ie
3. Swim with others, never alone, in recognised, traditionally safe bathing areas.
4. Swim within your depth, parallel and close to shore.
5. Never use inflatable toys in open water or swim out after anything drifting.
6. Never swim in the dark or late at night.
7. Avoid staying in the water for extended periods as you risk hypothermia.
8. Train for your aquatic activity at www.safetyzone.ie
9. Wear a lifejacket when on the water and make sure that it has a correctly fitting crotch strap.
10. Watch for changing weather. Be prepared to get out of the water and take cover if the skies look threatening.
11. Learn swimming and lifesaving skills, available nationwide for all ages through IWS.
12. Alcohol impairs judgment, balance and coordination, all of which are essential for swimming and boating.
13. In Marine Emergencies, call 112 and ask for the coastguard.

External Cause	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014 ¹	2015 ¹	TOTAL
Accidental	60	59	64	51	49	59	76	55	55	66	594
Self/harm Suicide	59	76	53	60	50	44	51	35	33	33	494
Assault	1			1				1	1		4
Undetermined Intent	22	32	20	33	26	19	17	19	25	23	236
Other Causes		1									1
Total	142	168	137	145	125	122	144	110	114	122	1329

¹ Provisional

* 122 people drowned in 2015 which equates to an average of ten every month. Ireland averages 133 drownings every year based on the last ten years.

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