

**Irish Water Safety Press Release  
June Bank Holiday**

**31<sup>st</sup> May 2016**

**11 drown monthly - 1,379 in ten years  
80% of drownings occur close to victim's home.  
Be bank holiday safe from drowning**

Irish Water Safety is appealing to the public not to swim for extended periods during the current warm spell as drownings can happen quickly and silently in waters that are still cold. Drowning risks increase during bank holiday weekends with alcohol present in one third of drowning victims. 62% of drownings occur inland with 80% of drownings occurring close to the victim's home.

Bank Holiday safety:

1. Supervise children at all times near water - 37 children aged 14 and under drowned in the ten years to 2014. In total, 1,379 drowned in the same decade.
2. Swim at lifeguarded waterways - listed at [www.iws.ie](http://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 waters are still cold and you risk hypothermia.
8. Train for your aquatic activity at [www.safetyzone.ie](http://www.safetyzone.ie)
9. Wear a Lifejacket when on the water and make sure that it has a correctly fitting crotch strap.
10. Learn swimming and lifesaving. Irish Water Safety has swimming and lifesaving classes for children and adults.
11. Watch for changing weather. Be prepared to get out of the water and take cover if the skies look threatening.
12. Alcohol impairs judgment, balance and coordination - all essential for swimming and boating and avoiding hazards in the water.
13. In Marine Emergencies, call 112 and ask for the coastguard.

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