



PRESS RELEASE

6th June 2018

Ten die in our waters during 15 days of warm weather

Irish Water Safety is appealing to the public to take greater care when swimming and fishing in the current spell of warm weather as ten people have drowned accidentally in the last 15 days. 62% of all drownings occur at inland water sites. Water temperature is 18° Celsius and less in many inland sites and is 14° and less at sea. Cold water immersion is the greatest contributing factor to drowning on our island nation <http://www.iws.ie/emergency-situations/hypothermia-what-to-do.355.html>

1. Swim at Designated Bathing Areas where lifeguards are on duty during the Bathing season which runs from the 1st of June to the 15th September <http://www.iws.ie/bathing-areas-page.html>;
2. If there is no Designated Bathing Area near you then swim at known traditional bathing areas where there are ringbuoys erected that you can use if somebody gets in to difficulty
3. **Swim within your depth and stay within your depth**
4. Use local knowledge to determine local hazards and safest areas to swim
5. Always ensure that the ringbuoy is in its yellow box before entering the water
6. Make sure that the edges are shallow shelving so that you can safely and easily enter and exit the water
7. Don't swim in Quarries and ESB Reservoirs and tail races
8. Wear a wet suit if you are not used to the cold water
9. **Stay Away From The Edge** after you consume alcohol as 30% of all drowned victims have consumed alcohol.

The majority of drownings occur inland where river and lake beds can be difficult to see and therefore extremely difficult to determine if you are swimming within your depth. The onset of cramp, combined with the panicked realisation that you are out of your depth can have tragic consequences and be compounded further by the muscle cooling effect of longer periods in open water.

If you see someone in difficulty, these simple steps may save a life:

- A. **Shout** to the casualty and encourage them to shore. This may orientate them just enough.
- B. **Reach** out with a long object such a branch or a piece of clothing but do not enter the water yourself.
- C. **Throw** a ringbuoy or any floating object and call 112 for the coast guard.

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