

Tidal Water Safety

Tidal waters can pose increased hazards because of the movement and undertow of the water. There are a few additional precautions to be considered:

- * Avoid swift moving water and beware of an undertow.
- * If you find yourself caught in a current, stay calm. Do not fight the current, swim gradually out of the current by swimming across it.
- * Even experienced swimmers can get into trouble if they overestimate the distance they can swim. When swimming long distances, stay parallel to the shore or be accompanied by two people in a boat to assure safety.



COUNTY OF BERGEN



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Enjoy the Summer Safely



Be a Good Swimmer

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Surrounded by water on three sides and dotted with lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams, New Jersey abounds with water recreation facilities. In addition to these natural water resources, many Bergen County residents have access to a swimming pool. The combination of people and water can be hazardous if proper safety precautions are not followed at all times.



Water Safety Guidelines

- * Play it safe. Swim only in areas protected by a lifeguard.
- * Never swim alone. Use the “Buddy System.”
- * Know the depth of the water, and whether there are hidden rocks, strong current, etc., before wading, swimming or diving in an unfamiliar place.
- * Never dive in shallow water.
- * Never mix alcohol with aquatic activities.
- * Know how to swim, tread water, and float before venturing into deep water.

- * Avoid going into the water when exhausted, overheated or chilled.
- * Never leave children unsupervised around water, especially if no lifeguard is present, even if they have had swimming lessons. Flotation devices are no substitute for supervision.
- * Learn CPR (cardio pulmonary resuscitation).
- * Don't swim in the dark, except in an emergency.
- * If you feel uncomfortable or lazy after eating, avoid swimming. Eating lightly before swimming will not cause cramps.
- * Water so cold as to numb the body should be avoided. Cold water exhausts the swimmer more quickly than warm water.
- * Improvised flotation devices such as a styrofoam cooler, beach ball, oars, branches or wooden chairs can help keep a distressed swimmer above water until help arrives. Attempt a swimming rescue only if you know how.

Swimming Pool Precautions

Pools range from small plastic wading pools to elaborate in-ground pools built for diving. It makes no difference which one you own; they all have one common hazard — even shallow water can cause a drowning. Make sure that your pool is safe and that you set up and enforce safe practices that will prevent drownings.

- * Fences or walls (minimum 4 feet) can help keep small children out of a pool area when unsupervised. The construction code requires fencing or enclosures around all pool installations.
- * Gates and doors should have self-locking mechanisms placed out of reach of children.
- * Floatlines can serve as lifelines and help keep weak swimmers in the shallow end. They also warn of a change in pitch of the pool bottom.
- * Recessed steps or ladders should be located at ends of the pool for ease of entry and exit.
- * Depth markings on pool decks show safe jumping and diving areas.
- * Rescue equipment can help prevent many accidents from becoming tragedies.
- * Emergency instructions and safety rules should be posted for all pool users.

