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Established in 1945, DuPage County Health Department promotes physical and emotional health; prevents illness injury and disability; protects health from environmental risk factors, and strives to assure the provision of accessible, quality service.

May 26, 2022  
**For Immediate Release**

## Health Department Reminds Residents to Protect Swimmers this Summer

DUPAGE COUNTY— Memorial Day weekend is filled spending time with loved ones barbequing and swimming. As the weekend approaches and the summer swimming season begins, DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) reminds all individuals to stay alert and practice simple water safety steps to keep children safer near water.

Drowning continues to be a leading cause of unintentional death for children ages 1-14. Children under the age of five are more likely to drown in backyard pools, while children over the age of six are more likely to drown in open water. Last year in Illinois, fatal drownings involving children occurred in backyard pools, retention ponds, rivers, small lakes, and Lake Michigan. Drowning can happen anytime, including when children are not expected to be near water, such as when they gain unsupervised access to pools.

While children are at highest risk, anyone can drown. According to media reports, in the past year, four adult caregivers from Illinois fatally drowned while rescuing children who had entered deep water or currents.

Swimming pools are a great way to spend time together for family fun. To keep everyone safe in and around the water, parents and caregivers can follow Pool Safely's simple steps:

- Never leave a child unattended in or near water. Designate a focused adult Water Watcher to supervise children who are swimming.
- Teach children how to swim. Infant, child, adult, group, and adapted swim lessons are offered at pools throughout our region.
- Ensure that any pool or spa/hot tub that you use has drain covers that meet federal safety standards. If you're not sure, ask the swimming pool owner or facility manager.
- Avoid entrapment by teaching children to stay away from pool drains and pipes. Keep long hair, bathing suit straps, and drawstrings away from drains.
- Install proper barriers, covers and alarms on and around your pool area.
- Learn how to perform CPR on children and adults.

Before the long weekend, make a water safety plan and take the Pool Safely Pledge to protect children in your family and your community. Together, we can prevent child drownings all year long. For more information, visit <https://www.dupagehealth.org/231/Pool-Safely>.

