



Water Safety

Toolbox Talks are intended to facilitate health and safety discussions. Find more Toolbox Talks on the [Occupational Safety web page](#).

General Information

Summer in Iowa means more time outside, and the need to be safe near rivers, lakes, and beaches. Excluding boating incidents, 10 people die every day from drowning in the United States. Follow the precautions below when near a body of water. (<https://www.nsc.org/>).



Water Safety Tips

- Do not go into or onto the water unless you know how to swim or are wearing a life jacket.
- Never swim alone.
- Avoid swimming or boating while impaired.
- Learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and rescue techniques.
- Keep a first aid kit and emergency contacts available.
- Avoid deep and/or swift water when you choose to cross a stream.
- Do not jump off waterfalls or dive into water. Submerged rocks, trees or other hazards may be under the water's surface.
- Make sure the body of water matches your skill level; swimming in a pool is very different to swimming in a lake or river.
- If you get caught in a current, do not try to fight it. Stay calm and float with it or swim parallel to the shore until you can swim free.
- If you fall into fast-moving water, do not try to stand up. The force of the water could push you over and hold you under.
 - Most drownings result from getting a leg or ankle caught in an underwater obstacle. Lay on your back with your feet pointing downstream and be prepared to fend off rocks with your feet. (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/>)
- State law in Iowa requires life jackets on all watercrafts, this includes motorized boats, jet skis, kayaks, canoes, or paddleboards.
- Ensure everyone onboard is wearing a life jacket when operating a boat.
- Check local weather conditions and forecast before swimming or boating.

Discussion Date:

Supervisor:

Participants:

Source: US Forest Service and National Safety Council