



## PUBLIC SWIMMING POOL SAFETY

### Q. Who drowns at public swimming pools?

A. In the past decade, 80 people drowned in public swimming pools, a quarter of these were children under five years of age. While young children are the main victims, non swimmers who fall in or swimmers caught out of their depth are also at risk.

### Q. Why do drowning deaths occur at public swimming pools?

A. Many people mistakenly believe that once they enter a swimming pool, the responsibility for their child's safety is transferred to the lifeguards. This is not the case. Lifeguards are not babysitters. Some parents also believe that other parents will keep an eye on their child. Every parent/guardian is responsible for the safety of their child.

### Q. What is the role of a pool lifeguard?

A. The role of the lifeguard in a public pool facility is to oversee the safe running of the facility and ensure all patrons can safely enjoy their time. Some of a lifeguard's responsibilities are posting warning signs, establishing and enforcing safety rules, cleaning and clearing pool decks, and basic first aid. Often lifeguards perform these responsibilities for hundreds of patrons at a time, so it is important to always supervise your child. Lifeguards are not babysitters.

### Q. What is supervision?

A. Supervision means being within arms reach of your child. It is not keeping an eye on your child while you go to the coffee shop, visit the kiosk, chat or read a book – supervision is being physically within arms reach of your child.

### Q. What can I do to make my trip to the public pool safer?

A. Always obey any instructions the lifeguards give you, and follow the advice on signs around the pool. When you visit the pool you can expect to safely enjoy your time. If people are being disruptive, using foul language or unruly behaviour, tell a lifeguard who can put a stop to this behaviour.

**Public swimming pools can be a great place for fun and enjoyment, with a variety of different facilities, lessons and classes available for patrons. However, as with any aquatic location, public pools can become dangerous places if appropriate safety rules are not followed.**

### Public Pool Safety CHECKLIST:

- Obey the instructions given to you by the lifeguard
- No unsafe or dangerous behaviour
- No pushing or throwing persons into the pool
- No bombing or excessive splashing
- No abusive, disruptive or offensive behaviour or language
- No spitting
- Do not sit on or touch lane markers
- Always check water depth before entering the pool
- Swim in the appropriate lane/area

Royal Life Saving has developed a number of fact sheets on water safety issues in Australia. Contact Royal Life Saving on:

**1300 RESQ ME**  
(1300 7377 63)

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