



To ensure consistency, the following messages are meant to help provide standard responses to media interview questions that may be asked in certain situations:

General:

- We want to ensure everyone has fun and enjoys safe water activities this summer.
- With this year's high water levels in streams, rivers and lakes, the danger is elevated. Check conditions before going out on the water as they may be more treacherous than expected.
- Most drowning victims never expected to be in the water and think it will never happen to them.
- Think about the worst-case scenario and prepare for it by having rescue equipment available and knowing what to do in case of an emergency.
- Helpful rescue equipment could include a reaching assist, rope or even a styrofoam cooler.
- The biggest mistake many people make is to instinctively jump into the water when someone is in trouble near them. Rather than becoming another victim, think about the lower risks on the Lifesaving Society's rescue risk ladder --- Talk, Throw, Reach, Wade.
- Taking a course in water rescue at your local pool will help, but even basic knowledge in CPR or first aid could save a life.

Boating:

- It's always important, in fact mandatory, that certain safety equipment be on board a boat (reference WaterWise pamphlet)
- The most important piece of safety gear is a lifejacket or personal flotation device (PFD). It is mandatory to have one to properly fit each person on board.
- Many boating incidents occur due to capsizing or swamping, often in unexpected bad weather. Check the weather before launching and if it changes quickly, head for the nearest shore.
- If thrown into the water while boating, the standard rule is to stay with the boat. Only attempt swimming to shore if you're wearing a lifejacket, shore is close (within 100 meters) and there are no boats in the vicinity that could rescue you.
- Sudden immersion in cold water will create panic and a gasp reflex. Take a minute to calm yourself, control your breathing and assess your options.

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Swimming:

- We encourage people to swim with others and use the buddy system to look out for each other.
- Swimmers in distress rarely yell and splash around; they're too intent on getting their breath and keeping their head above water; they will likely be in a vertical position with their head back and may look like they're trying to climb a ladder.

Rafting/tubing:

- Know the water level, flow and condition before heading out. High water levels from run-off and recent rain can change the normal condition of a river or stream and may cause more hazardous debris to be in the water.

Backyard Pool:

- The safest backyard pools have fencing on all four sides with a self-closing, self-latching gate and nothing near the fence that would allow a child to climb over it.
- Safety alarms can also help alert adults when someone has entered the pool unexpectedly.
- The most important prevention is to ensure responsible and vigilant adult supervision.
- Do not rely on inflatable toys or water wings to replace constant supervision.

For more information, go to lifesaving.bc.ca or smartboater.ca or call the Lifesaving Society at 604-299-5450.

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