

Signs of Drowning

Drowning victims do not usually scream or wave their arms. Signs of drowning include:

- Head low in the water, mouth at water level;
- Head tilted back with mouth open;
- Eyes closed or glassy and empty, unable to focus;
- Hair over forehead or eyes;
- Not using legs, vertical position;
- Hyperventilating or gasping;
- Trying to swim but not making headway;
- Trying to roll over to their backs;
- Appearing to be climbing on an invisible ladder.

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Prevent Drowning



"Be Pool Smart" Poster Contest Winner 2024
Fatimah Chaudhary, Grade 5; Teacher: Mr. Burghardt
Longwood Middle School, Middle Island, NY



Suffolk County

Edward P. Romaine
County Executive

Suffolk County Legislature

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Commissioner of Health Services





Pool Safety Laws

New York State law requires that residential swimming pools be equipped with an approved pool alarm, unless the pool is equipped with an automatic power safety cover. The pool must be enclosed within a fence or other barrier that is at least four feet high and can be entered only through self-closing and self-latching doors or gates. Suction outlets must be protected against user entrapment.

Current codes can be found on the NYS Department of State website. Contact your local municipality for additional code and zoning requirements.

Did you know?

- Ten people die from drowning each day in the United States.
- About one in five people who die from drowning are children ages 14 and under.
- Among children ages one to four, most drown in home swimming pools.
- Three out of ten deaths in children aged one to four are caused by drowning.
- Most young children who drown have been out of a caretaker's sight for less than five minutes.
- For every child under 15 years old who dies from drowning in a pool, another 10 are rushed to the emergency room for near drowning.
- When victims nearly drown, their brains are deprived of oxygen, which can cause damage and affect a person's ability to function.
- The good news is that drowning can be prevented.

Tips to Prevent Drowning

- Young children can drown in a few inches of water. A child younger than five years of age should always be within arm's reach when near water.
- Because drowning occurs quickly and quietly, adults should not be involved in any other distracting activity (such as reading or talking on the phone) while supervising children.
- If you leave the pool area, even for a minute, take your children with you.
- Learn to Swim. Formal swimming lessons can protect adults and children from drowning. However, even when children have had lessons, constant supervision is needed.
- Teach older children to always swim with a buddy and where lifeguards are on duty.
- Don't use air-filled or foam devices in place of life jackets. These toys are not designed to keep swimmers safe.
- When the pool is not in use, remove the steps and take all toys away from the pool area.
- Keep a first aid kit stocked and available near the pool.
- Teach children how to dial 9-1-1 and how to get help in an emergency. Make sure children know their address.
- Keep a cell phone in the pool area in case of emergency.
- Obtain certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). In the time it takes for paramedics to arrive, your CPR skills could save someone's life.

