



Water Safety

Take Steps to Stay Safe Around Water

Swimming is the most popular summer activity. The best thing you can do to help your family stay safe is to enroll in age-appropriate [swim lessons](#). Contact the Training Support Center at 1-800-RED-CROSS or support@redcrosstraining.org.

Follow these safety tips whenever you are in, on or around water.

Make Water Safety Your Priority

- Swim in designated areas supervised by lifeguards.
- Always swim with a buddy; do not allow anyone to swim alone. Even at a public pool or a lifeguarded beach, use the buddy system!
- Ensure that everyone in the family learns to swim well. Enroll in age-appropriate Red Cross water orientation and Learn-to-Swim courses.
- [Never leave a young child unattended near water](#) and do not trust a child's life to another child; teach children to always ask permission to go near water.
- Have young children or inexperienced swimmers wear U.S. Coast Guard-approved [life jackets](#) around water, but do not rely on life jackets alone.
- Establish rules for your family and enforce them without fail. For example, set limits based on each person's ability, do not let anyone play around drains and suction fittings, and do not allow swimmers to hyperventilate before swimming under water or have breath-holding contests.
- Even if you do not plan on swimming, be cautious around [natural bodies of water](#) including ocean shoreline, rivers and lakes. Cold temperatures, currents and underwater hazards can make a fall into these bodies of water dangerous.
- If you go boating, wear a life jacket! Most boating fatalities occur from drowning.
- Avoid alcohol use. Alcohol impairs judgment, balance and coordination; affects swimming and diving skills; and reduces the body's ability to stay warm.

Prevent Unsupervised Access to the Water

- Install and use barriers around your [home pool or hot tub](#). Safety covers and pool alarms should be added as additional layers of protection.
- Ensure that pool barriers enclose the entire pool area, are at least 4-feet high with gates that are self-closing, self-latching and open outward, and away from the pool. The latch should be high enough to be out of a small child's reach.
- If you have an above-ground or inflatable pool, remove access ladders and secure the safety cover whenever the pool is not in use.
- Remove any structures that provide access to the pool, such as outdoor furniture, climbable trees, decorative walls and playground equipment.
- Keep toys that are not in use away from the pool and out of sight. Toys can attract young children to the pool.

Maintain Constant Supervision

- Actively supervise kids whenever around the water—even if lifeguards are present. Do not just drop your kids off at the public pool or leave them at the beach—designate a responsible adult to supervise.
- Always stay within arm's reach of young children and avoid distractions when supervising children around water.

Know What to Do in an Emergency

- If a child is missing, check the water first. Seconds count in preventing death or disability.
- Know how and when to call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number.
- If you own a home pool or hot tub, have appropriate equipment, such as reaching or throwing equipment, a cell phone, life jackets and a first aid kit.
- Enroll in Red Cross [home pool safety](#), water safety, first aid and CPR/AED courses to learn how to prevent and respond to emergencies.



Warning
**Deep
water**



Warning
**Shallow
water**



No diving



**Watch Your
Children**



KEEP OUT

**SEWAGE
CONTAMINATED
WATER
EXPOSURE MAY
CAUSE ILLNESS**

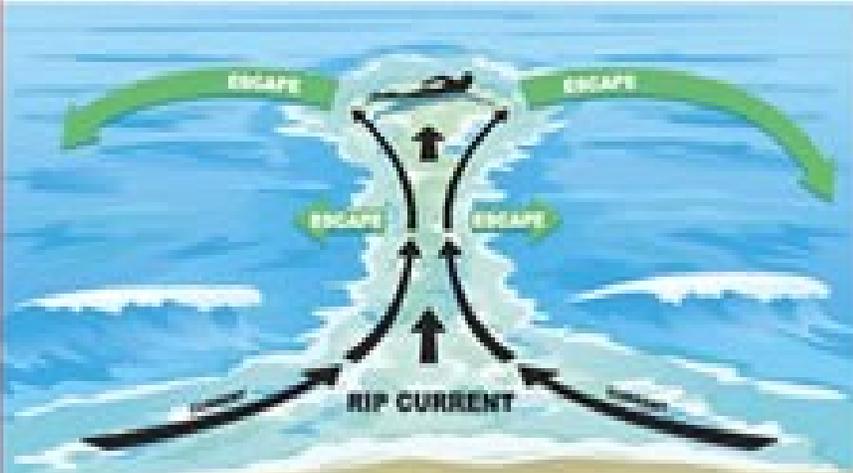


**No
swimming**



RIP CURRENTS

Break the Grip of the Rip!



Rip currents are powerful currents of water moving away from shore. They can sweep even the strongest swimmer out to sea.

IF CAUGHT IN A RIP CURRENT

- ◆ Don't fight the current
- ◆ Swim out of the current, then to shore
- ◆ If you can't escape, float or tread water
- ◆ If you need help, call or wave for assistance

SAFETY

- ◆ Know how to swim
- ◆ Never swim alone
- ◆ If in doubt, don't go out

More information about rip currents can be found at the following web sites:

www.ripcurrents.noaa.gov
www.usfa.org



USE RIVER WITH CAUTION

Hazards include undercurrents, dams, weirs and submerged objects.

Never boat or wade alone

Always wear a lifejacket

DANGER!



Swift Current

DANGER

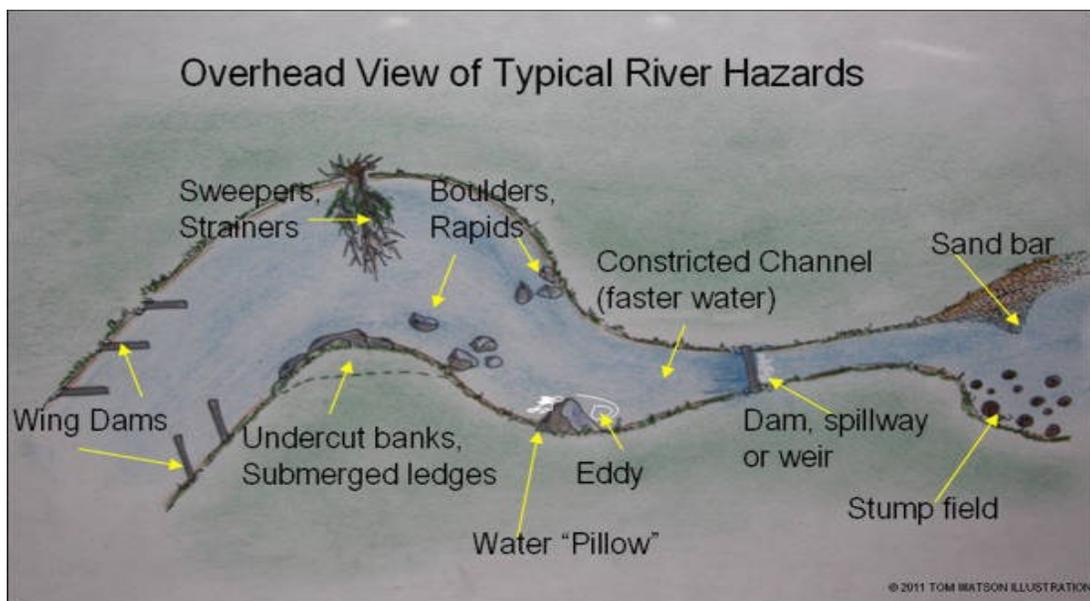
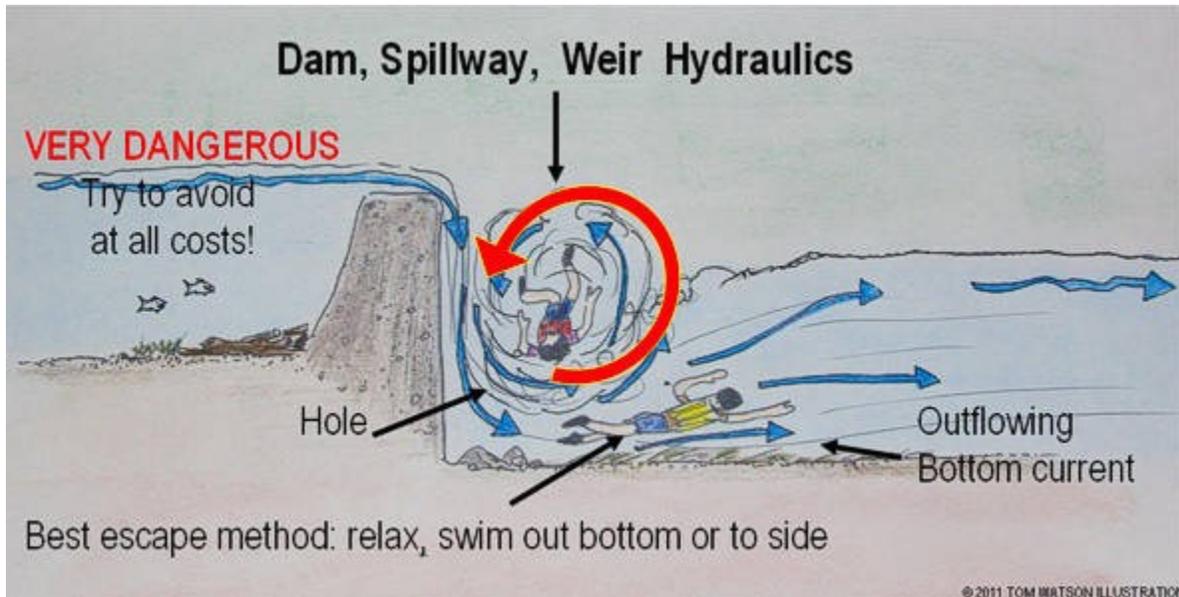
STRONG UNDERCURRENT



**NO FISHING,
BOATING, SWIMMING**

Rivers and lakes frequently contain many hazards which are not easily seen. These hazards can include but are not limited to:

Underwater rocks, sudden changes in depth, holes, underwater sticks and snags, unexpected swift current, and other dangers.



Be aware of hypothermia!!!

TREATMENT IN THE FIELD

BODY SIGNS/SYMTOMS

TEMP. (rectal)

37.5°C NORMAL

36 FEEL COLD

Seek dry shelter, replace wet clothing with dry including socks, gloves, hat, cover neck, insulate whole body including HEAD from cold. Exercise but avoid sweating. External warmth (bath, fire) ONLY if CORE TEMP. above 35°C. Warm sweet drinks and food (high calories).

35 SHIVERING

BODY CORE TEMPERATURE BELOW 35°C = HYPOTHERMIA = HOSPITAL

	NO EXERCISE, HANDLE GENTLY, REST. NO EXTERNAL WARMTH (except to chest, trunk, eg. Hiebler Jacket). Warm sweet drinks and calories.
34 CLUMSY IRRATIONAL CONFUSED (may appear drunk)	Internal warming via warm moist air (exhaled air, steam) or warm moist oxygen (40 - 42°C at mask).
33 MUSCLE STIFFNESS	Monitor pulse, breathing. Restrict all activity, lie down with feet slightly raised.
32 SHIVERING STOPS, COLLAPSE. TRANSFER TO HOSPITAL. URGENT.	
31 SEMI CONSCIOUS	Nothing by mouth. Check airway remains open.
30 UNCONSCIOUS No response to painful stimuli	May tolerate plastic airway, put in recovery position, check airway, turn every 2 hours to protect skin, monitor pulse and breathing.
29 SLOW PULSE AND BREATHING	Slow mouth-to-mouth breathing, at victim's own rate (may be very slow).
28 CARDIAC ARREST No obvious pulse or breathing Pupils dilated	Check airway. CPR, with mouth-to-mouth breathing. Aim for normal CPR rates of 12-15 breaths/min. and 80-100 compressions/min. but slower rates of 6-12 breaths/min. and 40-60 compressions/min. may be adequate. Continue for as long as you can.

BELOW 28°C. NO VITAL SIGNS, COLD. DO NOT GIVE UP TREATMENT.

NOTE: NOT DEAD UNTIL WARM AND DEAD!

Avoid rapid rewarming and **HANDLE GENTLY AT ALL TIMES.**

Core temperature may lag behind skin temperature and continue to drop, so keep monitoring.



Learn water safety. Wear a proper fitting personal floatation device. Don't take unnecessary risks. Respect the water.