

Water Safety

In many communities Memorial Day is when most swimming pools are opened. We have had some unusually warm days for May and some may have been ready for use before the “official beginning of pool” season. School will be out soon and kids are ready for carefree summer fun. For those who have backyard pools or spas or access to the community pool, take some time to remind your young people of pool safety rules. Keep in mind safeguards need to be applied to any body of water, including ponds, lakes, rivers and water retention basins.

Consider: according to Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates, early 300 children under the age of 5 drown in swimming pools and spas each year, and more than 3,000 end up in the emergency department victims of near drowning. The following are tips from the agency to help safeguard your children around the pool.

- Constantly monitor children around water. Always have a designated “pool watcher” on duty and preferably one that is trained in water rescue.
- Many adults do not know how to swim, so learn to swim and make sure your children learn too. Do not depend on “water wings” or inflatable float toys for young children.
- Establish water safety rules for your home pool and make sure everyone abides by them. When at a water park or the community pool be sure to review those rules and follow them as well. Failure to do so may result in the offender being asked to leave. Make sure your children know how and where to dive safely, use the water slide and that they must stay away from drains and other suction devices.
- Keep small children from wandering into your backyard pool area by erecting a 4’ high barrier with self-closing and self-latching gates. Ensure they are always closed. If you allow neighborhood children to use your pool establish a method so they know when they are allowed such as raising a flag. All other times is family time.
- Be prepared for an emergency by learning CPR, first aid and basic water rescue skills. Make sure your water safety and rescue equipment is in good condition and ready for service. Keep a phone available or with you at all times.

Now is the time to review your CPR and first aid skills if you have had previous training. There has been a change in the way CPR is done. There are a number of people who are interested in taking the class and one will be scheduled when school is out. I would like to see everyone of our church body trained in CPR and first aid. Please email me at judykeck@embarqmail if you would like to be included.