

May 2021



S.A.F.E. Newsletter

Water Safety



Fishing, swimming, surfing and water skiing all have one thing in common. They all take place in, on or around water and they are lots of fun. Water activities are a way to have a good time with your friends or your family and great ways to stay cool. Take along the below safety tips along with your common sense to get wet, make waves, and have an awesome time.

Top Ten Tips:

- **DO learn to swim** – being a strong swimmer is necessary.
- **DO take a friend along** – you never know when you might need help so a friend around is safer and more fun.
- **DO know your limits** – watch out for the “too’s” – too tired, too cold, too far from safety, too much sun, too much hard activity.
- **DO swim in supervised (watched) areas only** – follow all signs and warnings.
- **DO wear a life jacket when boating** – jet skiing, water skiing, rafting or fishing.
- **DO stay alert to water currents** – they can change quickly! If caught in a strong current, do not fight it. Swim parallel to the shore until you have passed through it. If you find it hard to move around, head to shore. Learn to recognize and watch for dangerous waves and signs of rip currents – water that is a weird color, really choppy, foamy, or filled with pieces of stuff.
- **DO keep an eye on the weather** – if you spot bad weather (dark clouds, lighting), pack up and take the fun inside.
- **DO NOT mess around in the water** – pushing or dunking friends can easily get out of hand.
- **DO NOT dive in shallow water** – if you do not know how deep the water is, do not dive.
- **DO NOT float where you cannot swim** – keep checking to see if the water is too deep or if you are too far away from the shore or the poolside.



Water Wisdom

Icy

If the water is cold, a wetsuit can be your best friend. Wearing it will make you feel more comfortable, and you will keep your body temperature from dropping in the danger zone.

Floaters vs. PFDs

Q: Can blow-up objects such as rafts work like life preservers?

A: No. Although they float, they will not do the trick.

Did You Know?

Water covers 80 percent of the Earth!

Lifeline

If you see someone struggling in the water, go get help. You can also throw out a life preserver or other object that floats. **BUT DO NOT JUMP IN YOURSELF!** If you jump in without anyone else around, who will help you save YOU if there is a problem?

Boating and Jet Skiing



Skimming over the water is a great ride and a great summertime way to make some cherished memories with family and friends. To make sure you do not come across any bumps with law enforcement while on the water you will need to know the rules and regulations. These rules can vary from state to state but it is a need-to-know in order to enjoy your time.

Stay alert! When you are riding, keep a lookout for other boats, jet skiers, water skiers, divers, and swimmers. Who has the right-of-way? Generally, drivers should keep to their right when they are passing other boats – just as you do when you are driving.

Always ride at a speed that will let you stay in control so you can stop or go another way if you need to. It is also not a good idea to jump wakes (tracks in the water left by other boats or jet skis) or speed through choppy water, because it is easy to lose control.

Do not drive a boat or jet ski if you have been drinking alcohol and do not ride with a driver who has.

In Arkansas, anyone born on or after January 1, 1986, operating a motorboat, PWC, or sailboat, is required by law to take an Arkansas Boater Education course and receive the boater education card, which has to be carried at all times. In order for an individual to operate a PWC, they need to be 16 years old.