



Drowning is Preventable



You *think* that it could never happen to your family, but each year more than 800 children drown. Last year in Arizona, there were 153 water related incidents and unfortunately 49 deaths, including 16 children. Supervision is the key word when it comes to pool safety, but supervision combined with a variety of barriers and safety devices - fences, latched gates, locked doors, pool covers and more - goes even further toward drowning prevention.

According to the Drowning Prevention Coalition of Arizona, in order to be effective, it is extremely important that we, as Arizona residents, are knowledgeable of these measures not only for our children's safety but for helping to educate the community as a whole.

Block:

- The State of Arizona mandates the use of proper pool barriers (i.e., fences, motorized pool covers or self-closing, self-latching doors). Fence should be made of non-climbable material, such as iron, heavy-duty plastic or non-climbable mesh, with a minimum height of 54" and self-closing, self latching gate. A four-sided pool fence provides superior protection.
- It is important to be knowledgeable of the current building ordinance for pool barriers in your city.

Watch:

- Most drowning victims are missing for less than five minutes before their absence is noted.
- Drownings occur suddenly and without warning. There is usually no splash and no cry.
- Constant and active supervision should be practiced near all bodies of water. Drownings frequently occur in buckets, bathtubs, toilets, canals, ponds/lakes, etc.
- In most drowning incidents the caregiver admits they were away for "just a few seconds."

Learn:

- Once an incident occurs, survival depends on rescuing the child quickly, initiating proper CPR. Seconds count in preventing brain damage and death.
- Anyone responsible for a child's care should know CPR and recertify every year.
- Swimming lessons can be helpful and considered a layer of protection. Children older than three years of age should receive swimming lessons.
- However, do not consider children to be "drown proof" just because they have been enrolled in swimming lessons.

Rescue Steps:

- Yell for help -- get the child from the pool.
- Call 911.
- Begin CPR if trained. If not, follow the instructions of the 911 dispatcher

Drowning prevention tips for pool owners

- Never leave a child or grandchild unattended in the water or pool area for any reason. Don't be distracted by doorbells, phone calls, chores or conversations. If you must leave the pool area, take the child with you, making sure the pool gate latches securely when it closes.
- Always keep your eyes on the child or children, this includes visiting grandchildren. Designate a child watcher to prevent gaps in supervision, whether you or someone else, when you attend a party or have friends or family over.
- Talk with baby-sitters about pool safety, supervision, and drowning prevention.
- Post rules such as "No running," "No pushing," "No dunking" and "Never swim alone." Enforce the rules.
- Don't rely on swimming lessons or "floaties" to protect your children in the water.
- Don't assume that drowning or a drowning incident couldn't happen to you or your family.
- Don't have a false sense of security just because you think your pool area and home are secure. Always watch your children and grandchildren, whether in the house or outside.
- Encourage your neighbors to follow pool safety guidelines, including keeping their back gates and doors locked, and their pool gates securely closed and latched.

For more information, please visit the Sun City West Fire District Administration Office at 18818 N. Spanish Garden Dr., Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. to pick-up a water safety brochure