

Circular Details	Circular No 18-36 / 20 November 2018 /A623828
Previous Circular	Circular No 17-31
Who should read this	General Managers / Water Safety staff
Contact	Policy Team / (02) 4428 4100 / olg@olg.nsw.gov.au
Action required	Information

Promoting Water Safety during the 2018-19 Swimming Season

What's new or changing

- The 2018-19 swimming season has now commenced.
- Councils play a crucial role in promoting water safety and in minimising risks associated with aquatic locations under their care and control.

What this will mean for your council

- Councils are encouraged to promote water safety awareness at key times during the swimming season to help reduce drowning risks in backyard swimming pools, public pools, beaches and other public waterways.

Key points

Examples of water safety initiatives that many councils successfully conduct:

- Free 'Active Family Fun Days' at public swimming pools with activities focussing on water safety and survival skills.
- Free 'Come and Try It' classes in learn to swim and lifesaving, including lessons targeted at recently arrived migrant and refugee families.
- Mail-outs to pool owners within their local government area that may include resources relevant to backyard pools.

General key water safety messages councils can promote:

- Actively supervise children in and around water. Teach water awareness and enrol your children in water familiarisation classes.
- Restrict access to backyard pools. Ensure pool gates and latches are in working order, and never prop open gates.
- Always swim between the flags. No flags mean no lifesavers.
- Wear a life jacket.
- Never swim alone.
- Never swim under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- If someone is in trouble, don't jump in. Throw them a floatation device and seek help.
- Learn how to resuscitate. Enrolling in a CPR course and refreshing skills annually mean you will have the skills to act in an emergency. Effective CPR can often be the difference between life and death.

Keep Watch partnerships councils can participate in:

- Councils may be interested in becoming a Keep Watch partner with Royal Life Saving Society NSW (Royal Life), which will provide a range of support information and campaign material (electronic and hard copy) for councils to personalise and deploy across their LGA. Contact Royal Life for further information: (02) 9634 3700 or nsw@royalnsw.com.au.

Councils can participate in the 'Be Water Safe, Not Sorry' campaign:

- 'Be Water Safe, Not Sorry' is a state-wide NSW Government advertising campaign involving print, radio and social media developed in partnership with Royal Life and Surf Life Saving NSW. The second season of this campaign is due to launch in mid-November and will run throughout the 2018-19 summer period.
- Key themes are parental supervision of children around water, encouraging swimming between the flags and highlighting the dangers of swimming after taking drugs or alcohol.
- The NSW Office of Emergency Management (OEM) can provide social media tiles, personal stories and poster artwork to councils interested in promoting this campaign locally.
- For more information, or to sign up to receive further updates, please contact Jeremy Hillman, OEM Communications Manager on 0476 821 246 or jeremy.hillman@justice.nsw.gov.au.

Where to go for further information

- For further information and resources on water safety, visit: www.watersafety.nsw.gov.au.
- Royal Life Saving Australia run the Keep Watch campaign and have a range of useful information and resources available at www.royallifesaving.com.au/programs/keep-watch-toddler-drowning-prevention-program.
- OLG publishes Practice Note 15 – Water Safety to assist councils minimise risks associated with aquatic locations under their care and control and includes a section on water safety awareness activities: www.olg.nsw.gov.au/content/water-safety-practice-note-15-update.

Tim Hurst
Chief Executive