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## MEMORIAL DAY: FLORIDA HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICIALS ENCOURAGE FLORIDIANS TO REMEMBER WATER SAFETY



**Contact:**

Communications Office

[NewsMedia@flhealth.gov](mailto:NewsMedia@flhealth.gov),

850-245-4111



**Tallahassee, Fla.**— Yesterday, State Surgeon General Dr. Scott Rivkees joined the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission off the Panama City coast to discuss boating and drowning prevention safety ahead of Memorial Day weekend.

"Let's celebrate the start of summer and Memorial Day after a challenging year, while remembering to celebrate safely." said State Surgeon General Scott Rivkees. "Drowning is the number one cause of accidental death among children ages 1 to 5. It is absolutely vital to remember crucial safety steps to prevent injuries, remembering to follow guidance from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and your local public safety officials."

This week, May 24-30, is [National Healthy and Safe Swimming Week](#) and National Safe Boating Week, and the Florida Department of Health (Department) always encourages residents and visitors to [practice safe swimming and boating habits](#).

Remember to:

- Be vigilant. Never leave children or vulnerable adults unattended in or near the water.
- Use barriers to deter unsupervised access at pools. This includes keeping fences closed and including alarms in the water.
- Identify a Water Watcher – a responsible adult who is easily identified as the person responsible for keeping eyes on children and adults in the water. Free Water Watcher tags are available for download on [WaterSmartFL.com](http://WaterSmartFL.com).
- Know how to swim before getting in the water – it is never too late to learn how.
- Have enough life jackets on boats for all individuals onboard.

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

The Florida Department of Health, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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