

**Mission:**

To protect, promote & improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county & community efforts.



**Rick Scott**  
Governor

**John H. Armstrong, MD, FACS**  
State Surgeon General & Secretary

**Vision:** To be the **Healthiest State** in the Nation

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**SAFETY FIRST AT THE POOL THIS SUMMER**

*~ Learn the layers of protection ~*

**TALLAHASSEE**—The summer season official begins Sunday and the Florida Department of Health is reminding Floridians to practice pool safety by using the layers of protection this summer. In Florida, drowning is the leading cause of death among children ages 1-4. The [Waterproof FL](#) campaign aims to educate residents and visitors in order to prevent childhood drowning in our state.

“Swimming in a pool is a great way to escape the summer heat while being active,” said State Surgeon General and Secretary of Health. “It’s essential that swimmers and water watchers learn about the layers of protection.”

Pool time can be a lot of fun, but it’s important to incorporate safety with the use of layers of protection to prevent a fun summer day from becoming an emergency. The layers include: supervision, barriers and emergency preparedness as a safety net, keeping a child safe and helping to prevent a drowning.

**LAYER 1: SUPERVISION**

Supervision, the first and most crucial layer of protection, means someone is always actively watching when a child is in the pool. For children ages 1–4, the majority of drownings occur in residential swimming pools.

**LAYER 2: BARRIERS**

A child should never be able to enter a pool area unaccompanied by a guardian. Barriers physically block a child from the pool. Barriers include child-proof locks on all doors, a pool fence with self-latching and self-closing gates, as well as door and pool alarms. Pool covers may also be used but make sure it is a professional cover, fitted for your pool. A simple canvas covering can be a drowning hazard and entrap a child in the water.

**LAYER 3: EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

The moment a child stops breathing, there is a small window of time in which resuscitation may occur, but only if someone knows what to do. Even if you’re not a parent, it’s important to learn CPR. The techniques are easy to learn and can mean the difference between life and death. In an emergency, it is critical to have a phone nearby and immediately call 911.

**Florida Department of Health**

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The Department of Health recommends, at a minimum, using a combination of the barriers described above to help ensure your pool is equipped with approved safety features. You can learn more about the layers on the [Waterproof FL website](#).

In 2011, the Injury Prevention Section launched the *Waterproof FL: Pool Safety is Everyone's Responsibility* campaign. The department works alongside partners, advocates and parents to continue to promote safe pool habits. The number of drowning deaths for 2009-2013 for 1-9 year olds was reduced by five percent compared to the previous five year period of 2004-2008.

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The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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