



**COLLIN
COUNTY**



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Recent drownings prompt area health authorities to call for vigilant pool safety

(McKINNEY, Texas) -- Health authorities here are cautioning backyard and public swimming pool owners to take a closer look at water safety measures in the wake of three accidental drowning deaths of young children in the last month.

In a span of three weeks, three children – all age 5 or younger – died in drowning-related incidents. One incident occurred in backyard swimming pool, and two in community or public pools, prompting health officials to call for pool owners and parents across the county to help avoid more poolside tragedies this summer.

“We just can’t stress enough how important it is for everyone to keep a close eye on kids around pools, especially in the summer months,” said Brittany Pollard, a health care analyst for Collin County.

Each year, hundreds of Texans die in accidental drowning incidents. About one in four of those incidents claim the life of a child under age 14. In Collin County last year, the Medical Examiner’s Office logged two accidental drownings: one involved an infant in a bathtub; the other a child under 5 in a backyard pool.

Authorities are asking the public to be vigilant around private and public pools, and to review the following water Safety and drowning prevention advice:

- Always supervise children closely around any body of water.
- Consider posting a “water watcher” system, with adults who know how to swim and who keep an eye out for kids in and around the pool in alternating shifts.
- Never swim alone or in unsupervised places. Swim with a buddy or when a lifeguard is present.
- Use appropriate personal flotation devices according to child’s age, weight, and size. *Water wings, noodles, or inner-tubes* are toys and are not designed to keep swimmers safe.
- Enrolling yourself and your children in swimming classes is helpful, but that’s not a guarantee to prevent someone you love from drowning. Close supervision and barriers around pools are still needed even after children learn how to swim.
- Learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation. CPR skills can make a difference in the survival of an individual while waiting for paramedics to arrive.
- Install a four-sided, isolation pool-fence with a self-closing and self-latching gate around home swimming pools.
- Remove toys from the pool immediately after use. This will prevent children from entering the pool to retrieve the toys.
- Lastly, if a child is missing, check the pool first. Seconds count!