



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**90 Days of Summer Safety: Stay Cool in the Pool**

**July 15, 2009** (*Fort Worth, Texas*) For many, beating the Texas heat involves staying cool in the pool. However, each year nearly 300 children nationwide under the age of five drown in residential and public pools and spas, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. In 2008, MedStar EMS responded to more than 50 drowning/near-drowning incidents.

**Prevent drowning:**

- Learn to swim and teach your children to swim. Enroll in age-appropriate water orientation and learn-to-swim courses, as well as first aid and CPR courses.
- If you have a pool, secure it with appropriate barriers—many children who drown in home pools were out of sight for less than five minutes and in the care of one or both parents at the time. Install a four-sided barrier, such as a fence with self-closing gates completely surrounding the pool.
  - If the house forms the fourth side of the barrier, install alarms on doors leading to the pool area to prevent children from wandering into the pool or spa. Also install safety covers and perimeter or in-water alarms as additional layers of protection.

**Practice safe habits in and around the water:**

- Teach children to always ask permission to go near water.
- Actively supervise children whenever around water – even if lifeguards are present. Momentary distractions such as phone calls, using the restroom or someone at the door can provide enough time for a child to access the pool and quietly slip under water.
- Do not use air-filled or foam toys, such as “water wings”, “noodles”, or inner-tubes, in place of life jackets. These toys are not designed to keep swimmers safe. Have young children or inexperienced swimmers wear U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets around water, but do not rely on life jackets alone.
- Remove floats, balls and other toys from the pool and surrounding area immediately after use. The presence of these toys may encourage children to enter the pool area or lean over the pool and potentially fall in.
- Know how and when to call 9-1-1.

**Know how to respond to water emergency:**

- If a child is missing, check the water first. Seconds count in preventing death or disability.
- If someone is in the water and needs help, reach or throw something out to them - don't go in unless you are trained.
- Call 9-1-1.
- Have rescue and first aid equipment available at the pool, such as reaching or throwing equipment, a cell phone, life jackets and a first aid kit.

**90 Days of Summer Safety**

MedStar EMS encourages the community to enjoy their summer activities safely through 90 Days of Summer Safety. Each week from June 15 through September 7 a new summer-themed safety topic will be highlighted with tips and information. Topics include firework safety, drunk driving awareness, and tips for avoiding heat stroke. Check [www.medstar911.org](http://www.medstar911.org) each week for the latest Summer Safety topic.

**About MedStar**

MedStar is the exclusive emergency and non-emergency ambulance service provider to 15 Tarrant County cities including Blue Mound, Burleson, Edgecliff Village, Forest Hill, Fort Worth, Haltom City, Haslet, Lakeside, Lake Worth, River Oaks, Saginaw, Sansom Park, Westover Hills, Westworth Village, and White Settlement. Established in 1986, MedStar provides advanced life support ambulance service to 421 square miles and more than 860,000 residents in Tarrant County. MedStar responds to about 100,000 emergency calls a year with a fleet of 47 ambulances.

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