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Serving the Cities of Kent, SeaTac, Covington, and King County Fire District 37

Professionally and Compassionately Helping People

Be Safe on and in the Water
Remember that no one *plans* on drowning

Kent, Wash. – June 5, 2015– Some of the bet parts of living or visiting the Northwest are the easily accessible lakes and rivers, and the recreation they provide. Unfortunately those same bodies of water can pose a hazard to the unwary.

Each year over 3,000 people die from drowning nationally. In King County an average of 31 people die. In addition, drowning is the leading cause of unintentional injury death for children ages 1 – 17. One in five people who die from drowning are children 14 years old or younger, and for every death, five children are seen in emergency rooms.

If you are planning on going to a lake, river, the ocean, or a pool, the Kent Fire Department RFA asks that you please keep these safety tips in mind.

General Water Safety:
- Supervise children at ALL TIMES.
- Take swimming lessons and never exceed your abilities.
- Go to bodies of water that you are familiar with.
- Always wear a well-fitting Coast Guard approved life jacket when near or in water.
- Remember that boating/swimming and alcohol are a dangerous combination.
- Always swim with a buddy.
- Notify others of your plans to be on the water and a return time.
- Take a cell phone with you.

Rivers:
- Wear the appropriate equipment. In addition to a life jacket, consider a helmet and foot covering.
- Use a professional rafting company.
- Avoid cheap/inexpensive rafts that can be easily damaged by branches and stumps exposed on the river.
- Know that river water temperatures are typically in the low 50s.

Lakes:
- Obey boating laws and rules for the particular lake you are on.
- Watch for swimmers, those fishing, and other boats/watercraft.
- Know ahead of time about any underwater obstructions such as tree roots or branches.
- Swim at lakes that have life guards.

Pools:
- Swim at pools with life guards.
- Supervise children at all times.
- Floating or inflatable toys are not a safe substitute for a life jacket.

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