

Water Safety Ireland is the statutory and voluntary body established to promote water safety in Ireland.

Registered Charity: CHY 16289



**To safely enjoy our inland waterways, it is important to follow these simple safety guidelines.**

**CANALS** - Stay away from the edge, as canals are man made and have very steep sides. If you fall in it can be very difficult to climb out. Locks are dangerous places - the water is very deep.

- Keep away from the sides.
- Ringbuoys can often be found on the canal bank. If they are tampered with they will be of little use to a drowning person. Do not remove them. They could save a life, yours or your friend's. Report missing ringbuoys on [www.ringbuoys.ie](http://www.ringbuoys.ie)
- Never walk on ice-covered canals. If someone falls in, use a rope or stick or piece of clothing to reach them.
- Never drink canal water even if it looks clean.

**RESERVOIRS** - These are deep and cold, and often have sudden changes in depth.

- Never go to a reservoir alone - you may fall in and have no assistance to get out.
- Never play near reservoirs.

**GRAVEL PITS** - These are sometimes used as bird sanctuaries but they are dangerous places.

- They are cold and very deep. Do not enter even if the water looks inviting. Weeds often grow thickly beneath the surface.
- Gravel sliding down steep sides makes climbing out difficult.
- Even good swimmers have drowned in gravel pits.

**PIERS** - Be very careful walking along piers that you do not trip or be blown into the water by the wind.

- When fishing, make sure that an adult is always with you.
- Never reach out after tangled fishing lines in case you fall into the water.



**SÁBHÁILTEACHT UISCE NA hÉIREANN,  
AN BÓTHAR FADA, GAILLIMH, ÉIRE, H91 F602.**

WATER SAFETY IRELAND, THE LONG WALK, GALWAY, H91 F602.  
091-564 400 | LOCAL: 1890 420 202 | [www.watersafety.ie](http://www.watersafety.ie)



**WATER SAFETY  
ON INLAND  
WATERWAYS.**

# REMEMBER THESE RULES.

**Ice** - Remember that even if ice is a foot thick in one area on a lake, it can be less than one inch thick just a few metres away.

## Lakes and Wetlands

- Cold water in lakes and wetlands can be very dangerous. It is often much colder beneath the surface than you think. Getting in suddenly can give you a cold shock. If you feel cold, get out of the water straight away or you could suffer from Hypothermia.
- The bottom of lakes and wetlands can be soft and uneven. Look out for submerged objects.
- Large lakes and rivers may look calm, but remember wind will create choppy waves that make it dangerous to swim or go out in a small boat.
- Do not use floating toys on lakes or wetlands - you can be easily blown away from shore and away from safety.

## Construction sites

- You cannot tell how deep a hole is if it is water filled.
- Ground churned up by digging machinery can be very soft and become water filled, acting like "quicksand".
- Sides of trenches can collapse.
- Stay away from construction sites!

## Cliffs

- Keep clear of cliff edges, as they can be slippery when wet or loose underfoot.
- If you see someone in difficulty, tell an adult and stay clear of the edge.
- Remember – stay SAFE and Stay Away From the Edge.
- Never jump from cliffs into water.

**In an Emergency, dial 999 or 112 on your mobile or nearest telephone.**

**Rivers** - Rivers have swift currents and very deep areas. Tragedy can be avoided if you check it's safe before you enter the water. It's smart to ask an adult who knows the area; a lifeguard, a shopkeeper, caravan park owner or someone who lives nearby. They are most likely to know the dangers and safest spots.

- Check to ensure you know where ringbuoys are placed.
- Never wade into a river to retrieve an item that has fallen in.
- Do not jump off bridges — even if you see friends do it.
- Never push a friend into the water "for a laugh".
- Be careful of slippery grass by the water's edge.
- Keep your eyes open to avoid tripping over things.
- Never swim in fast flowing water. Check first by throwing in a twig to see how fast the current is travelling. Remember that the current can be faster under the water and river currents are often stronger than they appear.
- If you are caught in a current, float on your back and travel downstream feet first to protect your head.
- Beware of submerged objects — they can be very dangerous. Watch out for trees, branches, rocks and rubbish. Always enter the water feet first.
- Do not play near the edge of overhanging riverbanks at the water's edge. It can crumble away suddenly.

**Leisure centres and parks** - can contain swimming pools, paddling pools, model boat ponds and boating lakes. All are safe, if you follow the rules.

- Go swimming with someone who can swim well.
- Stay within your depth.
- Learn to swim and always watch out for those who cannot.
- Wait for an hour after meals before swimming.
- Do not retrieve model boats by wading in.
- Do not swim in the dark and check first for a Lifeguard.



**Beware of submerged objects. Always enter the water feet-first.**



**Cold water in lakes can be dangerous - it is often much colder beneath the surface.**



**Don't play near the banks of a pond edge or riverbanks - they can crumble away suddenly.**



**Do not retrieve model boats by wading in.**



**Never walk on ice-covered waterways.**



**Reeds and grasses often hide a pond's edge.**



**Going fishing? Make sure an adult is with you.**

**ENJOY YOURSELF.  
COME HOME SAFELY.**