

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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May 5, 2014

Subject: NATIONAL DROWNING PREVENTION MONTH

The month of May is the beginning of warmer weather which brings a larger number of people to the water. This brings an increase in drowning tragedies; therefore May is officially National Drowning Prevention Month. Drowning is a leading cause of unintentional injury death worldwide, and the highest rates are among children. Unfortunately, Florida leads the nation in drowning deaths in children between the ages of one and four and Brevard County ranks 8th in the state. It takes less than thirty seconds for a child to drown.

Simple water safety steps can save lives. You should stay close, always be alert and watch your children at all times. Seconds count so all parents, caregivers, and children should learn and practice survival swimming skills, CPR and have life-saving equipment such as life rings and jackets available for use. You should use barriers such as fencing, pool alarms, or covers. It is also important to avoid drain entrapments. Do not let your children play or swim near drains or suction outlets.

Bringing awareness to life saving drowning prevention methods is critical to reducing the number of drowning deaths in Brevard County. The Florida Department of Health – Brevard County Environmental Health Services has teamed up with the Florida Department of Health's Office of Injury Prevention in participating in the *WaterproofFL* Campaign to help educate families on drowning prevention. We have also partnered with Clear Channel Media and Entertainment to broadcast drowning prevention messages on Lite Rock 99.3 and IHeart Radio. These messages are currently being broadcasted to Brevard County residents and thousands of tourists through June 2014. In addition, we have provided drowning prevention brochures to mother/baby wards at 2 local area hospitals and all 3 Department of Health clinic sites. On April 29, 2014 Coast Guard Officials, Josh the Otter®, Swim Safe Forever Brevard, and DOH - Brevard officials were recognized by the Brevard County Board of County Commissioners as they approved a County Resolution that declared May as Water Safety and Drowning Prevention Month in Brevard County.

To obtain more information on drowning prevention, please visit our website at www.brevardeh.com and click on 'Public Swimming Pools and Bathing Places'.

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Florida Department of Health

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