

WATER SAFETY MATTERS

Why is water safety important?

In the United States, drowning is the leading cause of accidental death for children between the ages of one and four years and the second most common cause of accidental death for children between the ages of five and fourteen years. so it is absolutely crucial that all kids know about water safety at a young age.

Florida Statute 1003.225 (2)

Beginning with the 2022-2023 school year, each public school shall provide, to a parent who initially enrolls his or her child in the school, information on the important role water safety education courses and swimming lessons play in saving lives. The information must be provided electronically or in hard copy and must include local options for age-appropriate water safety courses and swimming lessons that result in a certificate indicating successful completion, including courses and lessons offered for free or at a reduced price. If the student is 18 years of age or older, or is under the age of 21 and is enrolling in adult education classes, the information must be provided to the student.

Water Safety Programs (Private or Group)

Aqua Mobile
info@aquamobileswim.com

Coast Aquatics
coastaquatics@gmail.com

Emerald Coast Scuba
ecsdivedestin@gmail.com

Gulf Coast Swim School
swimecff@gmail.com

The ROC Pool
ecfitnessfoundation.org/crestview

Bitty Bubbles Swim School
bittybubbleswimschool@gmail.com

Destin Aquatic Center
ecfitnessfoundation.org

Freeport Swim Lessons
parks@freeportflorida.gov

Panama City Aquatic Center
pcbfl.gov

Water Safety Programs (Free/Reduced Pricing)

Destin Aquatic Center
ecfitnessfoundation.org

Additional Resources

MySwimLife.com

InfantSwim.com

Fun4EmeraldCoastKids.com/Sports-Programs/Swimming-Lessons

WATER SAFETY MATTERS

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO!

TEXT SAFETY TO 31279 FOR SURF CONDITIONS

BEACH FLAGS

*Entering the Gulf during double red flag conditions can result in a \$500 fine and criminal charges. Absence of flags does not assure safe waters. Swim at your own risk. For emergencies call or text 911.

For more information, visit BeachSafety.com.

-  **DOUBLE RED FLAGS**
WATER CLOSED TO PUBLIC*
-  **RED FLAG - HIGH HAZARD**
High Surf and/or Strong Currents
-  **YELLOW FLAG - MEDIUM HAZARD**
Moderate Surf and/or Currents
-  **GREEN FLAG - LOW HAZARD**
Calm Conditions, Exercise Caution
-  **PURPLE FLAG - STINGING MARINE LIFE**
Man O' War, Jellyfish, Stingrays

Beach Safely in South Walton

For a complete guide on Walton County's beach rules, visit BeachSafety.com.

 **Glass containers and littering are prohibited**

 **Vehicles, dogs, and bonfires require permits***

 **Obey all beach flag warnings**

 **Items left on the beach overnight will be discarded**

 **Keep off the dunes**

 **Removal of sand, water or vegetation is strictly prohibited**

 **Sea turtle nesting season is May 1 through October 31**
Visit SouthWaltonSeaTurtles.com for more information

*PERMITS MAY BE OBTAINED THROUGH THE WALTON COUNTY ADMINISTRATION OFFICE. (850) 892-8155.

RIP CURRENTS

Rip currents are powerful currents of water that can sweep even the strongest swimmers out to sea.

Identify a rip current

- Darker color surf, indicating deeper water
- Murky brown water caused by sand stirred up on the bottom
- Smaller unorganized waves, alongside more evenly breaking waves over a sand bar
- Waves breaking further out to sea on both sides of the rip current

What to do if you're caught in a rip current

- Don't panic or swim against the current
- Float with the current until it subsides
- Swim parallel to shore and diagonally back in

What to do if someone else is caught in a rip current

- Have someone call 911, give accurate landmarks (beach safety flag poles are numbered)
- Do not enter the water, you too will be caught in the current
- Throw them a flotation device
- Try not to lose sight of the victim

Lifeguards are available at Regional Beach Accesses March 1 - October 31 with limited roving coverage year round. Lifeguards are provided by South Walton Fire District and funded as a part of the Visit South Walton Beach Safety Program.

Regional Beach Accesses include Miramar Beach, Dune Allen, Fort Panic, Ed Walline, Gulfview Heights, Blue Mountain, Van Ness Butler Jr., Santa Clara and Inlet Beach.

