Pool Safely: Simple Steps Save Lives

The summer is a time of fun for many children as they head from classrooms to playgrounds and swimming pools. Unfortunately, summertime also marks an increase in the number of childhood drowning deaths and injuries. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates each year nearly 300 children younger than five drown in swimming pools and spas and more than 3,000 that age go to hospital emergency rooms due to non-fatal submersion injuries. An unknown number of these hospitalizations result in permanent disability, including brain damage. These deaths and injuries are preventable.

The *Pool Safely* Campaign

The *Pool Safely* campaign is a national public education effort to reduce child drownings and non-fatal submersions, and entrapments in public swimming pools and spas. The campaign was developed to carry out the requirements of Section 1407 of the *Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act (P&SS Act)*, federal legislation signed into law in 2007 mandating new requirements for public pool and spa safety, including a public education campaign designed to raise public awareness, promote industry compliance, and improve safety at pools and spas.

CPSC is working to ensure drowning and entrapment prevention and pool and spa safety become critical public safety priorities by:

- building public awareness with a strong national campaign based on a personal call-to-action
- promoting and enforcing industry compliance with federal safety requirements
- unifying the voices of many diverse water safety groups working toward the same goal
- building partnerships with nonprofits, communities and professional organizations to ensure sustainability of the initiative

How Do You *Pool Safely*?

The greatest water safety assurance in swimming pools and spas comes from adopting and practicing as many water safety measures as possible, including: staying close, being alert, and watching children in and around the pool; learning and practicing water safety skills (know how to swim and practice CPR); and having the appropriate equipment (compliant drain covers, alarms, fences and other barriers and sensors). Adding that extra safety step in and around the water can make all the difference. *You can never know which safety measure will save a life – until it does.*

Pool Safely – CPSC's innovative public education campaign – will create a platform for a national conversation about drowning prevention and water safety. It will provide information and resources to the public and targeted stakeholders to use in promoting the adoption of additional proven safety steps that can save lives in all pools and spas. The campaign will raise public awareness of the various water safety measures available to encourage behavior change and support industry compliance with the law. The campaign will focus on five outreach channels to deliver the message:

> **Industry:** Industry associations will serve as an information "hub" delivering the campaign's safety messages to consumers and those interacting with the industry.
> **Partners:** National, regional and local partnering organizations will play an essential role in disseminating campaign information into communities and among networks to make the campaign sustainable.
> **Consumers:** The campaign will develop a variety of informative outreach materials that will be distributed to consumers through multiple channels.
> **Media:** National, state and local media will be targeted at multiple points throughout the campaign to present diverse opportunities for coverage.
> **Government:** The campaign will coordinate information and provide resources to state and local governments to promote enforcement of the Act and to educate their constituents.

The *Pool Safely* campaign is a call-to-action for consumers and industry to adopt additional proven water safety steps and join a national conversation about pool and spa safety by sharing best practices and other life-saving information.