

# NEWS from CPSC

## U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

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### **CPSC Launches National Campaign to Change the Way People Think and Act about Pool and Spa Safety**

#### ***Pool Safely* Campaign Aims to Reduce Child Drownings and Entrapments**

#### **CPSC, Olympians Hold Press Event to Release New Death and Injury Data**

**FORT LAUDERDALE, FL** - The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) today kicks-off the *Pool Safely* campaign ([www.poolsafely.gov](http://www.poolsafely.gov)), a first-of-its-kind national public education effort to reduce child drownings and non-fatal submersions, and entrapments in swimming pools and spas. At a press conference at the Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Complex today, Olympic swimmers Jason Lezak and Janet Evans joined Inez Tenenbaum, Chairman of the CPSC; U.S. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL); and Nancy Baker, mother of Virginia Graeme Baker, to officially launch *Pool Safely* and release the CPSC's annual submersion and entrapment reports.

Today, CPSC released its annual reports on children's submersion and entrapment incidents which showed:

- From 2005-2007 there was an annual average of 385 pool and spa-related drownings for children younger than 15; about 78 percent, or 299, of these children were younger than five.
- From 2007-2009, there were an estimated average of 4,200 pool or spa emergency department-treated submersions for children younger than 15; and children between the ages of 12 to 35 months represented 47 percent of estimated injuries for these years.
- About 54 percent of the estimated injuries for 2007 - 2009 and 74 percent of the fatalities for 2005 - 2007 involving children younger than fifteen occurred at a residence.

- Most reported fatalities occurred on the day of (73 percent) or within a week of (additional 23 percent) the submersion incident. Just four percent of fatal victims survived beyond a week of the submersion; these victims had severe injuries and required intensive medical care.
- There were no reported entrapment fatalities for 2009. CPSC did receive eight reports of entrapment incidents in which seven people were injured during 2009.

For the complete reports see: [Pool and Spa Submersions 2010](#) (pdf) and [Circulation/Suction Entrapments 2010](#) (pdf). The years for reported injury and fatality statistics differ as a result of the lag in fatality reporting.

"It is important to keep in mind that these numbers represent family tragedies. Preventing child drownings year round is a priority for the CPSC," said Chairman Tenenbaum. "The *Pool Safely* campaign will start a national conversation with parents and children, pool owners and operators and industry professionals about the simple safety steps they can take to protect themselves and their families in and around pools and spas. These incidents are preventable, so our mission is to change the way families think and act about pool and spa safety."

The *Pool Safely* campaign is a key part of the CPSC's efforts to carry out the requirements of Section 1407 of the [Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act](#) (PSS Act), federal legislation signed into law in 2007 mandating new requirements for pool and spa safety. It includes a requirement for a national public education campaign designed to raise public awareness, support industry compliance, and improve safety at pools and spas.

"I have been involved in the issue of pool safety throughout my career and today marks a key milestone in the ongoing fight to reduce accidental drowning," said Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz, author of the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act. "Educating communities on the potential dangers of swimming pools is a critical tool in saving the lives of our children. I am so pleased to have worked with my colleagues in Congress to provide the funds needed for implementation of this important campaign."

The *Pool Safely* campaign will deliver an important and simple message: just adding an extra safety step in and around the water can make all the difference. Your greatest water safety assurance comes from adopting and practicing as many water safety measures as possible, including: barriers that completely surround the pool with self-closing, self-latching gates; staying close, being alert, and watching children at the pool; learning and practicing water safety skills (knowing how to swim and perform CPR); and having the appropriate equipment (compliant drain covers, alarms, barriers and sensors).

The campaign will highlight the need to implement a "personal system of safety" that consists of adding as many proven water safety practices as possible in and around pools and spas.

"As a parent of young children, I know there's no single, sure-fire way to ensure their safety around pools and spas," added Janet Evans, five-time Olympic medalist in swimming. "Whether it's enrolling them in swimming lessons or simply watching them at all times, there is always one more thing I can do. The *Pool Safely* campaign offers a variety of simple steps we can all take to protect our children in pools and spas."

*Pool Safely* will serve as an information hub delivering campaign tools and resources to various outreach channels. CPSC has taken the lead by partnering with national, regional and local organizations in the children's safety and drowning prevention communities. By engaging key partners, the campaign will reach the widest possible audience and build a sustainable network that will ensure the campaign's messaging is delivered for years to come.

"Knowing how to swim helped me win gold in the water, but it takes adding as many water safety steps as possible to ensure a safe environment for children in and around pools and spas," said seven-time Olympic medalist in swimming Jason Lezak. "No matter how responsible you already are, there is always one more safety step you can take to protect your child. That is how you can *Pool Safely*."

"I understand the need to bring together the public and dedicated partners in the water safety community to begin a national conversation about water safety," said Nancy Baker, the mother of Virginia Graeme for whom the Act is named. "I am honored to be involved in the *Pool Safely* campaign and look forward to working together to promote additional water safety steps we all can take in protecting our loved ones in and around pools and spas. Simple steps save lives."

The *Pool Safely* campaign - a national public education effort by the Consumer Product Safety Commission - is proud to partner with leading organizations, including American Red Cross, YMCA of the USA, Safe Kids USA, National Drowning Prevention Alliance (NDPA), World Waterpark Association (WWA), and Abbey's Hope. For more information, visit the website at [www.poolsafely.gov](http://www.poolsafely.gov) or follow the campaign on Twitter @[poolsafely](https://twitter.com/poolsafely)

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission is charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of serious injury or death from thousands of types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. The CPSC is committed to protecting consumers and families from products that pose a fire, electrical, chemical, or mechanical hazard. The CPSC's work to ensure the safety of consumer products - such as toys, cribs, power tools, cigarette lighters, and household chemicals - contributed significantly to the decline in the rate of deaths and injuries associated with consumer products over the past 30 years.

To report a dangerous product or a product-related injury, call CPSC's Hotline at (800) 638-2772 or CPSC's teletypewriter at (301) 595-7054. To join a CPSC e-mail subscription list, please go to <https://www.cpsc.gov/cpsclist.aspx>. Consumers can obtain recall and general safety information by logging on to CPSC's Web site at [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov).