

State Auto® Claims and Risk Engineering

Water Safety

There's nothing like a pool or lake on a hot summer day to keep everyone happy. Unfortunately, 350 children under the age of five drown in pools each year nationwide, and many others die while boating.

Whether it's in your own backyard, community or hotel pool, there are measures you can take to help reduce the risk of accidental drowning.

- **Barriers** – It all begins with a sturdy fence at least four feet in height. Of course, the fence needs a self-closing and self-latching gate. Ladders for above ground pools should be removed or locked to prevent access. Finally, pool alarms that sound when anyone goes into the pool are also a worthwhile investment.
- **Supervision** – Children should never be left alone in pools or spas. A responsible person should always be within arm's reach of young kids; no one should be allowed to swim alone. Have inexperienced swimmers wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket.
- **Lessons** – Everyone should take age-appropriate swimming lessons. Courses are available from the Red Cross or other organizations.
- **Clean and Clear** – Maintaining proper chemical levels, circulation and filtration will help keep your water clean and clear. Regularly test and adjust chemical levels to minimize the risk of infections.
- **Rules** – Unless there's a lifeguard on duty, and regular diving board inspection and maintenance, rule #1 should be No Diving. Other important signage could include Swim with a Buddy, and No Running.
- **First Aid** – Appropriate safety equipment including a pool safety ring and shepherd's crook (aka life hook) should be ready and available. The responsible person should be knowledgeable about water safety, first aid and CPR.



Whether you're out on the water fishing in your rowboat, canoeing downstream or playing on your friend's luxury yacht, here are some suggestions to help keep you safe while boating.

- **Life Jackets** – The U.S. Coast Guard reports 79% of boating deaths in 2019 were due to drowning and 86% of the victims were not wearing a life jacket. It's simple ... life jackets save lives (maybe yours or a loved one's).
- **Education** – Taking a boating safety class greatly reduces the risk of accidents and injuries.
- **Alcohol** – Boating under the influence is a deadly proposition. Don't do it! The likelihood of being involved in a boating accident doubles when alcohol is involved.
- **Be Weather-Wise** – Always check local weather conditions before departure.
- **Common Sense** – Operating at a safe speed at all times (especially in crowded areas), staying alert at all times and steering clear of large vessels can help you avoid trouble.

Additional water safety help can be found here:
www.safeboatingcampaign.com/about

Resources

[American Red Cross: Home Pool Safety](#)

[National Safety Council: Small Efforts Make a Big Difference in Recreational Boating Safety](#)

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