



Safety on the Shore — ShoreSafe Newsletter #23 February 2010



Water Safety

North Shore beaches are as popular as ever. They are our greatest asset and we need to keep them as the jewel in our crown. They are safe, normally clean, spacious, accessible and free. It is about as good as it could get. One tragedy could change all that and so we need to support all moves to encourage our young to learn to swim. Just before Christmas, we had the Surf Life Saving Nipper programme start at Takapuna Beach. Youngsters learnt about water and beach safety in early summer so that they could be better equipped while enjoying the water environment. Surf Life Guards from Mairangi Bay Surf Club are involved all through summer patrolling our Eastern North Shore beaches and the message is to swim between the flags for safe water. Because our life guards also use these North Shore beaches as real life training experience, they can certainly benefit by enthusiastic and helpful parents giving them support for their volunteer work. Many may be youngsters now but by the time they are 20 year olds, they will probably individually have saved many hundreds of lives.

Latest January Drowning Toll

There were nine drowning deaths in New Zealand for January 2010. A significant improvement on the 23 deaths that occurred in for January last year and the lowest number of drowning recorded for the month of January since records began in 1980.

Five of the January drowning deaths occurred in Rivers, three at Surf Beaches and one in a Harbour.

There were seven Recreational drownings. These resulted from activities such as; fishing, powered boating, swimming, boogie boarding, rafting and river crossing.

There were four deaths in the age group 35 – 44 years, all of which were males.

WSNZ General Manager Matt Claridge comments, "Statistics tell us that nine drownings in any month is very good and even better because it was recorded for the month of January, which is typically the worst month for drowning incidents to occur. Summer weather and holidays increase the number of people recreating in, on and around the water and it's pleasing to see the toll reflect a great summer to date."

"It is encouraging to note a low toll for January, but one month certainly doesn't indicate a trend. Ongoing attention to water safety fundamentals such as learning swim and survival skills, supervision and boating safety are important to ensure that drowning incidents decline ongoing."

"With a large part of summer still remaining, parents are reminded about the important role they play in influencing children's behaviour in, on and around the water. The ability to swim and survive is the most important skill anyone can possess when it comes to safety in the water."

"Parents need to provide constant supervision and be close at hand should they need to provide assistance to children. There is no room for complacency when it comes to safety around water, drowning is silent and can happen in an instant."

Contact ShoreSafe - Wayne Williams 09 489 4975 ext 113,
Fax 09 486 2928, 0274 500 478
shoresafe@acns.co.nz,



Events you can be part of:

Sun 7th March National Childrens' Day— see www.childrensday.org.nz

Wed 10th March Walk to Work Day— NSCC website for details

Mon 15 March Super City Policy Focus E Rowe & E Davies 1200-1400—Taitamariki Guide Hall, Auburn St, Takapuna

March 17th & 24th Intro to Domestic Violence Training Day at Hsn—ph 838 4834

April 21st Domestic Violence & Mental Illness/Substance abuse free course at Hsn

May 12th New Domestic Violence legislation training course at Hsn—ph 838 4834

April 1st—Older Adults Autumn Walk, Long Bay Park North End. 1030 start.

Phone Wayne for more details of these events

Water safety is no accident

Drowning is the third highest cause of unintentional injury death in New Zealand, yet they are preventable. Following a few simple guidelines can help ensure a safer and more enjoyable experience for everyone this summer.

Beach safety

A lack of appropriate adult supervision has been identified as a factor in most child drownings and research has shown that 25% of children are not adequately supervised at the beach. There is no substitute for close and active adult supervision and that means being with arms reach. Sitting on the beach talking on the phone or sunbathing is not enough.

Don't over-estimate a child's ability to cope in the open water environment, even if they have had swimming lessons.

Know about rips and currents. Even calm water beaches can be dangerous.

Swim between the flags at patrolled beaches.

Always swim with someone else.

Not all beaches are patrolled. If in doubt stay out.

Boat Safety

Wear a lifejacket. It is the skipper's responsibility to ensure there is a correctly-fitting lifejacket on board for all persons.

Avoid alcohol. It can impair judgement and significantly reduce your survival rate should you end up in the water.

Lodge a trip report - tell someone where you are going and when you plan to return.

Conditions at sea can change quickly, without warning. Check the latest marine and weather forecasts before you go out and at frequent intervals.

Carry at least two forms of reliable communication, such as waterproof hand-held VHF radio, mobile phone (in your pocket in a waterproof bag), flares or EPIRB. If you can't contact anyone they can't rescue you.

Knowledge is invaluable – take a boating education course.

Visit www.watersafe.org.nz for further water safety information.



Bike Wise Month - February 2010

February 2010 saw a huge selection of fantastic, fun-filled, safe cycling events nationwide, that many kiwi's enjoyed. Maybe you didn't get on a bike or maybe you'd like to teach your kids to ride or perhaps you've been thinking about riding to work. Here' a good tip to get started: cycle somewhere once per weekend for the next four weeks and then reassess your cycling direction after that. Try a short 10 minute ride at first and decide if it should be longer or less. It could be that you love cycling already so try being proactive in encouraging others. The government has announced a new plan to promote cycling on paths within school grounds. This can surely be only good for our young ones in that the skill development will build safe cycling habits and healthy living.



Partnered by:

Ministry of Health

North Shore City Council

School and Early Learning Centre Zone Safety

Most work place injuries occur in the first few weeks of being in new employment. This is because of the lack of safety knowledge coupled up with the unfamiliar environment and its patterns.

This is also the case for new students and parents when school recommences each year. Going to school and at the school surrounds, there are potential dangers and it is worth that extra effort to become aware of local school rules and the do's and don'ts. I am referring to foot traffic as well as those travelling by motor vehicle. Car parks are well known for acquiring dents and dings but a child involved isn't just a trip to the panel beater; it can be life changing for the child and the family. If the weather is wet, then that can make the situation even worse as then there is a requirement to rush between shelters. Up the speed, increase the risk.

Best practice would indicate that walking to school is safest and has many other benefits like good exercise and opportunity for verbal communication. If a vehicle is used then it is important to establish some good guidelines about the drop and pick-up zones. If you are involved in this activity, take a little time to do a 'recce' of this area and know where the path of the buses is in relation to where the cars need to go. What are the safe places to uplift and drop off children? Will the child really suffer if he or she has to walk an extra 100 metres? Find out what the procedure is if there is a safety concern you have noticed and who is the first point of contact in the reporting procedure.

Always remember that the World Health Organisation emphasizes that all children of this world have a right to grow and mature in a safe environment and while that may be difficult in many countries, it definitely should not be in NZ. You, family and friends, can be part of that process.

North Shore is a great place to live, work and enjoy life. It's a Safe Community. We are part of a safe New Zealand becoming injury free.

Who does what in respect of injury?

At least 80% of injury deaths and serious injury in New Zealand occur in six main areas. The **lead** agencies for these six identified national injury prevention priority areas are:

- ⇒ **Assault** - Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Social Development
- ⇒ **Suicide and deliberate self harm** - Ministry of Health and Ministry of Youth Development
- ⇒ **Workplace injuries (including occupational diseases)** - Department of Labour
- ⇒ **Drowning** - ACC
- ⇒ **Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes** - Land Transport Safety Authority
- ⇒ **Falls** - ACC

These organisations can be located in the front of your phone books under Government departments.

Look after your back and it will look after you.

Your health is your wealth. Remember these statements and it's like good insurance. A total of 268 bales stacked one by one and one good back at the end of the day.

This is me 'making hay while the sun shines'.

Wearing a back/abdominal support makes this work a breeze. I recommend them for all heavy lifting work if you want that extra protection.

ShoreSafe Coordinator



Please forward this newsletter on to someone you know. We can be better at embracing safety as a sensible thing to do.