



Robert P. Astorino, Westchester County Executive

NEWS RELEASE

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ASTORINO ADVISES SAFETY FIRST AT COUNTY BEACHES Parental Supervision is Key; Swim Only in Guarded Areas, Drink Water and Apply Sunscreen Often

As Westchester County beaches prepare to open for the season this weekend, County Executive Robert P. Astorino and Health Commissioner Sherlita Amler, MD, want residents to follow some sound advice to keep their families safe at the shore.

“Westchester County beaches will be staffed this weekend with a full roster of lifeguards, but parents and guardians are our first line of defense,” Astorino said. “Please always keep your eyes on your children when they are in or near the water and be sure they swim only when and where lifeguards are on duty.”

County beaches open Saturday and county pools are set to open June 26. Westchester County’s popular Learn-to-swim program is offered at Tibbetts Brook Park in Yonkers and Saxon Woods Pool in White Plains. For more information or to register for the program, go to westchestergov.com/parks. Swimming lessons are also offered at many Ys and at municipal pools.

“Knowing how to swim is not only a great skill to have but it can lead to a lifetime of fun and recreational fitness, and can even save your life,” Astorino said.

Drowning is the leading cause of unintentional injury death among children ages 1 to 4 years old and the second leading cause of unintentional injury death among children ages 5 to 9 years old, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Sunburn and stroke can also cause health risks. Beach goers should always take precautions to stay hydrated and protect their skin from the effects of the summer sun.

“Be sure you and your family drink lots of water throughout the day at the pool or shore to avoid heat exhaustion,” said Sherlita Amler, MD, Commissioner of Health. “Wear a hat and sunglasses, avoid the midday sun and reapply sunscreen with a sun protection factor of at least 15 every two hours, especially after you swim or sweat, to avoid sunburn.”

More

Dr. Amler had additional water safety advice for parents.

“It’s also critical to always stay within arm’s reach of infants and toddlers in the water and to always keep your eyes on children playing in or near the shore,” Amler said. “Pool floats, inner tubes, water wings and noodles are no substitute for close supervision. Swimming and alcohol, just like boating and alcohol, don’t mix.”

Amler also offered the following tips to stay safe around pools and beaches this summer:

- Learn how to swim and teach your child how to swim.
- Don’t swim in pools or lakes that are closed.
- Never leave a child unattended in or near the water and always watch your children closely around all bodies of water.
- Designate a water watcher to supervise children in the pool, spa or at the shore. This person should not be reading, texting, using a smart phone, or otherwise distracted.
- Learn how to perform CPR on children and adults.
- Keep children away from pool drains, pipes, and other openings to avoid entrapments.
- Ensure any pool and spa you use has drain covers that comply with federal safety standards, and, if you do not know, ask your pool service provider about safe drain covers.
- At the beach, never fight currents; swim parallel to shore and at an angle if you find yourself in a rip current.

For more health and safety tips, visit www.westchestergov.com/health and www.westchestergov.com;

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