



STATE OF MARYLAND

# DHMH News Release

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

*Larry Hogan, Governor - Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor – Dennis R. Schrader, Secretary*

---

*Office of Communications  
Christopher Garrett  
410-767-6490  
Brittany Fowler  
410-767-1368*

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

### **Healthy & Safe Swimming Week: Maryland promotes safe fun in the water**

**Baltimore, MD** (May 22, 2017) – National Healthy and Safe Swimming Week runs May 22-28, 2017, the week leading up to Memorial Day, the unofficial start of summer. The Secretaries of Maryland’s Departments of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Environment, and Natural Resources encourage all Marylanders to take note of swimming safety tips to ensure a safe and healthy swimming experience – no matter where they swim.

“With Memorial Day approaching, many Marylanders are gearing up for pools to open and for trips to the beach,” said Health and Mental Hygiene Secretary Dennis R. Schrader. “We’re reminding residents to include safety in all their water activities this season – be it the pool, beach, river or elsewhere.”

Environment Secretary Ben Grumbles listed the Maryland Healthy Beaches [website](#) and smartphone app as examples. “From Memorial Day to Labor Day, the Maryland Healthy Beaches website and app deliver updated information on conditions at the nearly 200 monitored beaches in Maryland, and it provides the dos and don’ts for swimmers to stay healthy and waters to keep clean,” said Secretary Grumbles. The app is available for download via the [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#).

Natural Resources Secretary Mark Belton said his department is firmly committed to protecting Maryland’s parks, waterways and people as residents enjoy activities throughout the state. “Maryland offers access to some of the nation’s best water recreation opportunities; it’s imperative for everyone to help reduce the potential for danger by observing all water safety rules,” Secretary Belton said.

Swimming is one of Maryland’s most popular sporting and leisure activities. This year’s campaign will increase awareness of the simple things people can do to prevent the most common and serious health and safety risks associated with recreational water activities – drownings and injuries, sunburns and potential infections:

- Never swim alone;
- Be vigilant about small children’s activities and whereabouts;
- Use swim vests on all children at the beach, and for weaker swimmers in pools;
- Don’t swallow pool or beach water;
- Change children’s diapers often, to minimize the risk of contaminating water;

-more-

- Don’t swim when you have diarrhea;

- Follow the package directions when using pool chemicals;
- Stay out of the water if it has a strange color;
- Reapply sunscreen frequently through the day;
- Drink plenty of fluids;
- Use bug/mosquito spray as needed – especially as Maryland [takes steps to guard against the Zika virus](#);
- Learn how to avoid and to escape rip currents and;
- Save contact information for emergency personnel in your cell phone.

It is easy to stay safe and healthy while enjoying the water. Keep your family healthy and safe this summer season, and enjoy all that Maryland's recreational waters have to offer.

For more information, contact the Health and Mental Hygiene's Environmental Health Hotline at 1-866-703-3266, or email [dhmh.envhealth@maryland.gov](mailto:dhmh.envhealth@maryland.gov). You also can find current information on Maryland's beaches on the [Healthy Beaches website](#). Additional information is available on the [Health and Mental Hygiene's safe and healthy swimming site](#).

###

*Marylanders who need help finding substance-use-disorder treatment resources should visit [MdDestinationRecovery.org](http://MdDestinationRecovery.org) or call the Maryland Crisis Hotline, which provides 24/7 support, at 1-800-422-0009. For information on many of the policies currently implemented to fight substance use disorder and overdose in Maryland, see <http://goo.gl/KvEzQw>. If you know of someone in need of treatment for a substance use disorder, treatment facilities can be located by location and program characteristics on our page at <http://goo.gl/rbGF6S>.*

*The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is the State agency that protects Maryland's public health. We work together to promote and improve the health and safety of all Marylanders through disease prevention, access to care, quality management, and community engagement. Stay connected: [www.twitter.com/MarylandDHMH](http://www.twitter.com/MarylandDHMH) and [www.facebook.com/MarylandDHMH](http://www.facebook.com/MarylandDHMH).*