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**NEWS RELEASE**

## **EPFD Water Safety Tips**

**El Paso Firefighters and the Drowning Prevention Coalition of El Paso remind the public to be safe around water**

*El Paso, Texas* – Now that swimming pool season is upon us, the El Paso Fire Department and the Drowning Prevention Coalition of El Paso would like to offer the public these water safety tips:

- Drowning is one of the leading causes of unintentional, injury-related deaths in the United States and is the second leading cause among children ages 1-14.
- The majority of fatal and non-fatal drownings occur in residential swimming pools and open water sites.
- Children can drown in as little as one inch of water and therefore are at risk of drowning in wading pools, bathtubs, buckets, toilets, spas and hot tubs. Drowning usually occurs quickly and silently.
- Child drownings can happen in a matter of seconds and typically occur when a child is left unattended or during a brief lapse in supervision.
- Never leave a child unattended near water in a pool; there is no substitute for adult supervision.
- Designate a “water watcher” to maintain constant watch over the children in the pool during gatherings.
- Door and windows should be armed to alert adults when opened. Doors should be self-closing and self-latching so children won’t wander off.
- Keep a phone poolside so that you don’t have to leave the pool to answer the phone. Call 9-1-1 immediately if help is needed.
- Do not use flotation devices as substitutes for supervision.
- If a child is missing, always check the pool first. Seconds count.
- Remove toys from in and around the pool when not in use.
- Do not consider children “drown proof” because they’ve had swimming lessons.
- Don’t use floating chlorine dispensers that look like toys.
- Store all chemicals away and out of the reach of children.

For a list of these and other summer safety tips, please visit <http://www.elpasotexas.gov/fire-department/divisions/fire-prevention>.

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