



PRESS RELEASE

United States Veteran Reserve Corps.
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1st Indiana Battalion, United States Veteran Reserve Corps, Issues Water Safety Tips

Lafayette, IN – The 1st Indiana Battalion of the United States Veteran Reserve Corps, an Army-style Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) headquartered out of Lafayette, Indiana wants to remind the general public about life-saving water safety tips for those wishing to enjoy Lake Michigan.

"We need to remember that Lake Michigan, while beautiful and enjoyable, is also dangerous. Of all the five Great Lakes, it is the lake with the most fatalities," Lieutenant Colonel Kenneth Dobert stated. So far, this year, twenty-two people in total have drowned in Lake Michigan.

According to the Great Lakes Water Safety Consortium in Ann Arbor, Michigan, wind directions play a role in making Lake Michigan dangerous. West to east winds generate larger waves and tend to create rip currents. This, coupled with its parallel coastlines adds to the dangers.

When swimming, people should be mindful of the following:

1. **Never jump off or swim near structures such as piers or break walls.** These areas can contain currents which can pull swimmers away from the shore.
2. **If caught in a current, swim parallel and out of the current, then make your way to shore.** Swimming against the current will lead to exhaustion, swimming with the current increases your distance from shore.
3. **If you feel yourself drowning turn on your back, float, and remain calm.** Feel the current, conserve energy, and then swim parallel to the current.
4. **Know and be mindful of hyperventilation and hypoxic blackouts.** Panic can cause an individual to pass out.
5. **Use Coast Guard approved flotation devices for your appropriate height and weight.**
6. **Know the colors!**

Great Lakes Beach flag warning system



Red Flag = STOP

Stay on the beach, do not enter the water and do not swim.



Yellow Flag = CAUTION

Watch for dangerous currents and high waves.



Green Flag = GO

Enter the water, but stay aware of changing conditions.

Great Lakes and inland water safety tips

Dangerous Currents Avoid Dangerous Areas:

- Stay in designated swim areas.
- Avoid swimming near piers and breakwalls. Many fatalities have occurred.



If trapped in a dangerous current:

- Swim to the side, out of the current, and then to shore.
- If in danger, call for someone to throw a life ring or anything that floats.



Danger Zone - No Swimming

- Swim in designated area, away from this structure.
- If trapped, call for help.
- Call for someone to throw life ring or anything that floats.
- Get to ladder, if possible.



Danger Zone - No Swimming

- Swim in designated area, away from this structure.
- If trapped, call for help.
- Call for someone to throw life ring or anything that floats.
- Get to ladder, if possible.



Dangerous Current Beware of Strong Outlet Current



Caution, fatalities have occurred!

If trapped in a dangerous current:

- Swim to the side, out of the current, and then to shore.
- If in danger, call for someone to throw a life ring or anything that floats.



Dangerous Current Beware of Strong Channel Current



Caution, fatalities have occurred!

Do not attempt to swim to the island.

If trapped in a channel current:

- Swim to the shore, not to the sandbar connecting the beach and island.
- If in danger, call for someone to throw a life ring or anything that floats.



If swimmer is in distress:

- Yell or blow a whistle to call for help
- Dial 911
- Keep the victim in sight
- Use available safety equipment, staying on shore if possible
- Put on a life jacket if you must enter the water

RESCUE BAG



- Release throw bag. Remove a short amount of rope from top of bag.
- Hold rope securely. Throw rope-filled bag to, or past, victim using underhand motion.
- Put victim to safety once they grasp the rope.

RESCUE RING



- Hold rope securely. Ensure rope is uncoiled or open loop is open (if available).
- Throw ring to, or past, victim using underhand or sidearm motion.
- Wait for victim to grab ring. Then pull them to safety.



These safety tips can keep our "Third Coast" safe and enjoyable for all.

The United States Veteran Reserve Corps. is a team of volunteer soldiers, both veterans and nonveterans from Illinois and Indiana, operating as a Community Emergency Response Team. They are trained through the State Guard Association of the United States and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to respond to natural disasters and other emergency events.

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