

U.S. NATIONAL **WATER** **SAFETY** ACTION PLAN

NATIONAL IMPLICATIONS



JUNE 2023

In addition to the 99 evidence-informed Action Recommendations developed for the USNWSAP, we identified 40 national implications. These implications are activities that if undertaken at a national level facilitate uptake and implementation of Action Recommendations at the state, county, and community levels. Examples include obtaining consensus on national minimum standards or consistent core messaging, developing model laws and advocacy tool kits (resources outlining strategies for advocacy such as letters, press releases, key talking points, guidance testimony), and developing specific guidance documents to support implementation.

We encourage national-level organizations and agencies, including members of Water Safety USA, to lead action on national implications that align with their mandates in partnership with other relevant national organizations and, as appropriate, representatives from the state, county, and community levels. National-level action in the first years of the USNWSAP to address priority national implications will support the development and implementation of action plans in those jurisdictions and increase consistency of action taken. Action on the national implications will be one of the indicators of progress monitored by the USNWSAP.

For more information or to indicate interest in leading or participating in action on the national implications, please contact info@USNWSAP.org.

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National Implication	Rec ID	Recommendations Addressed
Develop an advocacy tool kit, including model laws, to support adoption and implementation of legislation mandating solutions to unsupervised access, entrapment, and electrocution around residential pools and spas.	BEE 1	Require the use of four-sided isolation fencing with self-closing and self-latching gates around residential pools and spas as the critical layer of protection to prevent drownings. Those fences and barriers should align with the Consumer Product Safety Commission's Safety Guidelines for Residential Pools.
	BEE 6	Require that new and existing residential pools and spas have mechanisms to prevent suction entrapment, in alignment with the federally mandated requirements for public pools and spas in the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act (VGBA).
	BEE 8	Adopt the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code for new and substantially remodeled residential pools and spas in its entirety, including the PHTA-7 Standard for Suction Entrapment Avoidance.
	BEE 13	Require that pool safety covers for in-ground and larger storable aftermarket pools are powered and comply with the ASTM F1346-91 Performance and Labeling Standard for the safety device.
	BEE 14	Recommend an alarm system as an adjunct layer of protection for residential and semi-private pools and spas, secondary to an existing isolation fence with a self-closing, self-latching gate.
Develop a national drowning surveillance working group to create a national drowning surveillance strategy addressing minimum datasets; develop standardized reporting tools; obtain consensus on drowning risk assessment measures; provide guidance on drowning surveillance, including the collection of sensitive information; develop and validate questions on aquatic knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors; and provide guidance on creating annual drowning reports.	DS 1	Develop and implement a national surveillance system that includes collecting, analyzing, and sharing data from standardized incident reports at aquatic venues and services to inform the design and implementation of drowning prevention efforts.
	DS 4	Develop and implement a standardized data collection tool for use in drowning investigations by law enforcement, pre-hospital care, hospitals, coroners, and similar investigators.
	DS 5	Develop and disseminate a tool to enhance media reporting of fatal and nonfatal drowning to include details on known risk factors, such as water conditions and alcohol or drug use, and evidence-based prevention strategies, such as isolation fencing, swim ability, life jacket use, and lifeguard presence.

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	DS 7	Standardize assessment and reporting of alcohol, medication, and drug use among drowning victims, those who were supervising the victim, and boat operators as a factor in drowning incidents.
	DS 8	Develop and implement guidance on standardized assessment and reporting of sensitive data, like alcohol, medication, and drug use in drowning victims, those who were supervising the victim, and boat operators involved in drowning incidents.
	DS 10	Create and disseminate a bank of standardized questions on water safety knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors for use in program evaluation and for integration into existing behavioral surveillance systems, such as Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) and Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS).
	DS 11	Develop and implement a minimum standardized data set to track enrollment and skills achieved through swim lessons, water safety training, swim instructor training, CPR certification, lifeguard certification, and boating safety certification.
	DS 13	Improve surveillance of attitudes, beliefs, and wear habits for life jackets during boating, swimming, and other water recreation to better understand life jacket effectiveness in different circumstances.
	DS 15	Create and disseminate a comprehensive annual national drowning report comprised of fatal and nonfatal data from multiple sources, including, but not limited to: WISQARS, WONDER, USCG Boating report, CPSC.
	DS 16	Create and disseminate a comprehensive annual state drowning report comprised of fatal and nonfatal data from multiple sources, including, but not limited to: WISQARS, WONDER, USCG Boating report, CPSC, state injury databases.
	WS WC 10	Develop and implement standardized measures to assess the drowning risk of all persons with disabilities (i.e., epilepsy, autism spectrum disorder, and other disabilities).

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Develop a multi-year comprehensive coordinated national water safety awareness campaign with consistent messaging to help educate the public. Include topics such as supervision, barriers, life jackets, and water competency, like water smarts, swimming skills, and helping others.	LG SUP 9	Develop and implement consistent national messaging for supervision strategies for parents and caregivers who have responsibility for individuals when in, on, and around the water.
	LJ 16	Obtain national consensus on consistent terminology for life jackets, personal flotation devices (PFDs), rescue devices, and other flotation devices while boating, swimming, or participating in other water-related activities, and disseminate widely.
	LJ 19	Develop and implement awareness campaigns based on national minimum life jacket educational standards to address the importance of life jacket use among high-risk groups who are boating, paddling, swimming, or recreating in the water.
	RES CPR 14	Develop and implement public awareness campaigns and educational programs on how to respond to atypical and increasing environmental aquatic hazards. This includes, but is not limited to, natural and manmade floodways, flooded roads, drainpipes, and fire hydrant clearing.
	WS WC 16	Develop and implement an annual comprehensive coordinated national water safety awareness campaign.
Develop an advocacy tool kit, including model laws, to support adoption and implementation of legislation mandating life jacket use.	LJ 2	Require that everyone wear a properly fitted U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket while on or in any human-propelled vessel. Human-propelled vessels are powered only by its occupants (e.g., canoes, kayaks, rafts, stand-up paddle boards [SUPs]).
	LJ 3	Require that all individuals under the age of 18 wear U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets on all vessels under 26 feet in length, except when below decks or in enclosed compartments.
	LJ 4	Require that states adopt or exceed the minimum federal age requirements for U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket wear for vessels under 26 feet in length (currently with any child under 13 years old).
	LJ 18	Integrate education that meets the national minimum life jacket educational standards at watercraft point of sale or rental services.

National Implication	Rec ID	Recommendations Addressed
Develop national minimum standards for CPR training in schools.	RES CPR 7	Expand CPR training in schools with age-appropriate content for grades K-12.
Develop national minimum standards for educational programs addressing water competency.	LJ 5	Develop and implement national minimum educational standards for teaching life jacket fit, type, and style; when to wear; and demonstrations, to include practice fitting and use for both boating and non-boating water recreation.
	RES CPR 5	Incorporate access to a physician medical director, as defined by National Association of Emergency Medical Service Physicians (NAEMSP), into all EMS agencies that provide lifeguard services.
	WS WC 1	Develop and implement standardized operational definitions and national minimum standards for the objective assessment of the skills and behavioral components of water competency (water smarts, swimming skills, and helping others).
	WS WC 2	Develop and implement national minimum standards, benchmarks, and evaluation criteria for evidence-informed, land- and water-based water safety education curriculums.
	WS WC 7	Develop and implement minimum national educational standards that include considerations to ensure water safety programs are delivered in a culturally competent, trauma-informed, anxiety sensitive, and historically and socially relevant manner.
Develop guidance on education around diversity, inclusion, equity (racial, geographic, ability, socioeconomic), and cultural training for all instructor training courses and educational programs.	WS WC 8	Implement and embed diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI) and cultural training in all aquatics, water safety, and marine safety organizations, beginning with leadership and expanding to all employees, volunteers, and instructor training programs.
Develop national minimum standards for educational programs addressing barriers, entrapment, and electrical safety for residential pools.	BEE 15	Develop and implement national minimum standards for targeted educational programs addressing pool and spa barriers, entrapment, and electrical safety for consumers, homeowners, and relevant professional groups. Relevant professional groups include contractors (builders and service companies), home inspectors, and real estate professionals.

National Implication	Rec ID	Recommendations Addressed
Develop a national community of practice around drowning surveillance.	DS 14	Develop and implement a local partnership strategy between community organizations working to prevent and those who respond to drowning incidents to improve drowning surveillance, enhance data sharing, and encourage data-informed prevention efforts.
Develop model lifeguard and water safety provisions for designated swimming areas on natural bodies of water.	LG SUP 2	Convene a panel of lifeguard training agencies, aquatic facility operators representing all environments, and regulators to consider the standards of care for supervision of designated swim areas in natural bodies of water, similar to how the Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC) has impacted the standard of care for public pools and spas.
Develop a coordinated national advocacy plan to increase investment in infrastructure to support swimming lessons.	WS WC 3	Build or revitalize publicly accessible pools and designated swimming areas to meet the needs of populations at higher risk of drowning.
	WS WC 4	Provide affordable water safety and swim lesson programming to meet the needs of populations at higher risk of drowning.
Develop an advocacy tool kit, including model laws, to support the adoption of best practices for education on barriers, prevention of entrapment, and electrocution in pools and spas.	BEE 2	Require government-mandated inspections upon change of ownership or substantial remodel or renovation of residential pools and spas to ensure they meet all federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and standards.
	BEE 4	Require initial and continuing education for licensed or certified professionals involved with pools or spas to support enforcement of current laws or ordinances addressing water safety and barriers, entrapment, and electrical hazards.
	BEE 5	Require that building code officials and home inspectors receive regular continuing education to properly enforce current state and local requirements intended to prevent drowning, entrapment, and electrocution.
	BEE 10	Require annual inspection of commercial aquatic facilities that use electricity, including pools, spas, docks, and marinas, to ensure maintenance and proper working order of all electrical systems, including the bonding system and other electrocution prevention measures.

National Implication	Rec ID	Recommendations Addressed
Develop model laws or an advocacy tool kit to support national labeling standards for barriers and other pool and spa safety products. Once standards are developed, provide in a national database for consumers easily accessible product installation, use, and maintenance instructions, written or digital, by primary and secondary pool barrier manufacturers.	BEE 11	Develop and implement national labeling standards for barriers and other pool and spa safety products.
	BEE 17	Require manufacturers of pool fences and secondary safety barriers (e.g., pool safety covers, alarms) to provide easily accessible hard copy or digital instructions on product installation, use, and maintenance. Ensure instructions are available to consumers.
Develop a coordinated national advocacy plan for national standards for testing flotation devices used for nonboating water recreation, including swimming.	LJ 6	Develop and implement a national minimum standard for testing flotation devices used for nonboating water recreation, including swimming, to ensure they reduce potential risk of drowning when used properly.
Develop an advocacy tool kit to support the adoption of the Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC) into state legislation.	LG SUP 1	Extend adoption by authorities having jurisdiction over public pools and spas of the Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC), specifically the lifeguard and water safety provisions.
Develop national guidance on the development, implementation, and evaluation of life jacket loaner programs.	LJ 11	Increase access to life jackets for all ages through life jacket loaner stations at boat ramps, open water swimming venues, and designated water access points.
Develop national guidance on incorporating a physician medical director into the current models of local emergency medical service agencies with lifeguards.	RES CPR 5	Incorporate access to a physician medical director, as defined by National Association of Emergency Medical Service Physicians (NAEMSP), into all EMS agencies that provide lifeguard services.
Develop guidance for State Attorney Generals and Agencies regarding drowning data sharing.	DS 17	Disseminate information to organizations managing existing data sources regarding how drowning-related data can be shared to support drowning prevention while staying within regulatory guidelines, including, but not limited to, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPPA) Privacy Rule.
Develop national guidance on use of syndromic surveillance for drowning.	DS 6	Support the use of syndromic surveillance to identify emerging trends in drowning.
Develop national guidance on lifeguard assessments and audits.	LG SUP 5	Recommend that aquatic facilities conduct regular lifeguard assessments and audits.
Develop a national public-facing portal to collect verified drowning stories.	DS 9	Collect and disseminate verified drowning and rescue narratives to provide context to quantitative data for water safety education.

National Implication	Rec ID	Recommendations Addressed
Develop a standardized process for risk situational assessment to identify where enforcement of mandatory life jacket wear would have the greatest impact.	LJ 10	Develop and implement a risk assessment process to identify situations and locations where required life jacket wear and enforcement would have the greatest impact on drowning rates.
Develop an awareness campaign on the importance of both compressions and ventilations for cardiac arrest due to drowning or other hypoxic etiologies.	RES CPR 8	Highlight the importance of both compressions and ventilations for cardiac arrest due to drowning or other hypoxic etiologies in all CPR training beyond the level of compression-only CPR.
Develop an advocacy tool kit to support changes to the federal consumer protection regulatory process to ensure that pool and spa environments and products address the prevention of drowning and entrapment.	BEE 7	Update the federal consumer protection regulatory process to ensure that pool and spa environments and product features are properly engineered to prevent drowning and entrapments.
Develop an advocacy tool kit to support the adoption of the most recent edition of the National Electric Code (NEC) for construction and maintenance of residential pools, spas, other home aquatic venues, marinas, boat docks, and boat yards.	BEE 9	Adopt the most recent edition of the National Electric Code (NEC) for construction and maintenance of residential pools, spas, other home aquatic venues, marinas, boat docks, and boat yards to prevent water-related electrocution.
Develop a model policy or advocacy tool kit to support the requirement of a Certificate of Conformity by manufacturers to document that their pool and spa barrier and safety product meets the applicable standards and requirements defined in federal or state law.	BEE 12	Require that new and existing residential pools and spas have mechanisms to prevent suction entrapment, in alignment with the federally mandated requirements for public pools and spas in the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act (VGBA).
Develop a coordinated national advocacy plan for a standard for a singular connection type for carbon dioxide (CO2) cartridges for inflatable flotation devices.	LJ 7	Develop and implement a standard for a singular connection type for carbon dioxide (CO2) cartridges for inflatable flotation devices.
Develop a community of practice around best practices in water safety programming.	DS 12	Develop and implement a mechanism to increase the quality, quantity, availability, and accessibility of information on existing programmatic efforts in water safety.

National Implication	Rec ID	Recommendations Addressed
Obtain national consensus on recommendations for use of life jackets and flotation aids while participating in open water recreational activities.	LJ 9	Develop and implement national recommendations for use of life jackets and flotation aids while participating in open water recreational activities, including, but not limited to, swimming, jumping, and floating during non-boating related activities, or while swimming off boats, platforms, aquatic play structures, or other watercraft under the auspices of organizations and agencies.
Obtain national consensus on recommendations for use of life jackets while boating, swimming, or participating in other water-related activities.	LJ 8	Develop and implement national recommendations for use of life jackets, personal flotation devices (PFDs), rescue devices, and other flotation devices while boating, swimming, or participating in other water-related activities.
Obtain consensus on minimum national standards for adaptive aquatics learn-to-swim instructor training and certification.	WS WC 6	Develop and implement national minimum standards for adaptive aquatics learn-to-swim instructor training and certification.
Expand policies within National Incidence Management System (NIMS) by integrating pre-plan aquatic response into existing training.	RES CPR 1	Develop and implement policies that integrate aquatic response of professional aquatic rescuers with lay rescuers within National Incidence Management System (NIMS) and local National Response Frameworks.
Develop guidance for public health inspectors to support adherence to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines for all public aquatic facilities, particularly with respect to equipment and facility design.	WS WC 5	Enforce adherence to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guidelines by all public aquatic facilities, particularly with respect to equipment and facility design.
Develop a model needs assessment to support water competency programming decisions.	WS WC 18	Deliver water competency training that meets the needs and resources of specific communities. This includes, but is not limited to, training that considers language, culture, local bodies of water, socioeconomic factors, and disabilities.
Develop national minimum standards for drowning protocol for EMS agencies.	RES CPR 4	Develop and implement a template for an evidence-based drowning treatment protocol for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agencies that includes Basic Life Support (BLS), Advanced Life Support (ALS), and other credentialed certification levels.

National Implication	Rec ID	Recommendations Addressed
Develop national minimum standards for lifeguard supervision courses.	LG SUP 4	Convene a panel to develop and implement national minimum educational standards for lifeguard supervision courses, including pre-service and in-service lifeguard training, applicable for various man-made and open water venues, similar to the format in the Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC) for public pools and spas.
Develop a national minimum standard for training of Public Safety Personnel involved in water rescue.	RES CPR 2	Develop and implement national standard operating procedures for responding to water rescues for all Public Safety Personnel. Include, for example, use of specialized personnel to evaluate hazards and perform certain functions (i.e., swift water, ocean, ice, mud rescue).
Develop a national minimum standard for watercraft-based emergency response training, including search and rescue, for lay people.	RES CPR 11	Develop and implement or expand existing watercraft-based emergency response training for lay people, including search and rescue.
Develop a national minimum standard for educational curriculums addressing water rescue by public safety personnel.	RES CPR 9	Teach public safety personnel the risks, benefits, and alternatives in performing safe water rescues in varied conditions.
Develop a national minimum standard for lifeguard and water rescue EMS certification.	RES CPR 3	Recommend lifeguards and water rescue emergency medical system professionals have in-person training, certification, and recertification by an agency approved by a national body or government organization.

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