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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Parks and Recreation Department provides tips for National Water Safety Month

Kerrville, Texas (May 5, 2022) –May is National Water Safety Month and the Kerrville Parks and Recreation Department would like to provide some helpful tips to educate the community on water safety as we prepare to cool off in the water this summer. With education, vigilance and taking special precautions, water related incidents can be avoided.

Did you know drowning is the No. 1 cause of unintentional injury-related death for children 15 and under. Water-related incidents can be prevented by following simple safety procedures:

- **Provide constant visual supervision** – Parents/responsible adults should always actively watch children around water. It does not take long for a child (or anyone) to become distressed in water. This includes the bathtub. A good rule of thumb for young children is to keep them within arm's reach and to focus only on the child with no distractions (phones, other people, etc.). Never assume that a child is safe in water toys, including rings, floats,

noodles and kickboards. The child could lose control and find themselves unable to reach safety.

- **Teach children how to be safe in and around the water** – Prevention starts with the self-accountability of the swimmer and parents of young children. Review common pool rules and explain why they are a rule. Comprehension of rules is easier when you understand the purpose for it as well. For example, running is not allowed at pools because it is a slip-and-fall hazard. In addition, if you have a residential pool, ensure that appropriate barriers are in place to prevent a child from falling in the pool.

- **Introduce your children to the lifeguards and explain what their job is** – Remember, lifeguards are not babysitters. They are trained to prevent and respond to aquatic emergencies. Children can be comforted to know that lifeguards are there to help, if needed, and also to enforce rules to keep everyone safe at the pool. Just be sure to visit with the lifeguards when they are down from stand so as to not distract them from surveillance of the water and guests. Aquatics management is more than happy to visit with pool guests and explain the services they provide.

- **Learn to swim** – Be proactive in regards to water safety and sign up for swim lessons if you or your child cannot swim. It's important to note that a certificate from passing swim lessons does not ensure against drowning. However, it does help provide the tools, experience and knowledge base to be comfortable and safe in and around water. Panic is one

of the major causes of drowning and even a good swimmer can drown. Do not go in water if you do not know how to swim.

- **Wearing U.S Coast Guard approved life jackets** – Wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved Personal Flotation Device (especially for weak or non-swimmers, on a boat, or in open water).

It is imperative that the flotation device fits accurately.

- **Stay away from water drains** – The powerful suction from drains can trap someone underwater. Encourage children not to swim near or play with drains or drain grates.

- **Learn C.P.R. and first-aid skills** – Knowing critical lifesaving techniques can make a difference between life and death in the event of an incident.

- **Never swim alone** – It is good to always have someone supervising the area in case an emergency arises. It is also advised not to consume alcohol while swimming as it can impair judgement and motor skills.

- **Teach children to wait for a grown-up before entering the water** – Never let children in a body of water without some kind of supervision. If a child cannot swim, have him/her wear a personal flotation device, and an adult should enter the water with them to help ensure their safety is top priority.

- **Do not play breath holding games** – This creates a higher risk of passing out underwater (shallow water blackout). Follow pool and facility rules.

- **Be careful when swimming in natural bodies of water** – Open water can be difficult to see through, and unseen objects may be present that can cause injury (enter feet first). In

addition, natural bodies of water can have a current that can be overwhelming and difficult to navigate. Know where you are swimming and swim only in designated areas. Make sure the body of water matches your skill level. A pool is different than a river, lake or ocean. Do not jump, dive or enter the water from bridges or dams in the Kerrville park system.

- **Take breaks when needed** – Swimming is great exercise and can cause you to get tired faster than expected. Eat snacks, stay hydrated and apply sunscreen often.
- **Anyone can be at risk of drowning** – Don't assume a child/adult who knows how to swim isn't at risk for drowning. Everyone should be supervised in the water, no matter what their swimming skills are.

Looking to learn to swim? The Kerrville Parks and Recreation Department provides swim lessons starting at age 6 months and up. Private and group lessons are available now at the Olympic pool for \$45 a session. Three sessions of group lessons will be offered this summer. This is a great way to introduce your infant or child to the water, learn basic swimming techniques, or even refine skills. You can visit the city's website at www.kerrvilletx.gov/1579/Swim-Lessons for additional information regarding swim lessons or the activities going on this summer at the Olympic pool, or events at your local parks! Stay safe and have fun as the days begin to get warmer!

For more information, contact the Parks and Recreation Department at (830) 257-7300, recreation@kerrvilletx.gov, visit the city's website at www.kerrvilletx.gov, or follow us on Facebook at City of Kerrville TX – City Hall or Instagram at cityofkerrville.



2022 Sessions

Session 1: May 31 - June 10
Registration Deadline: May 27

Session 2: June 14 - June 24
Registration Deadline: June 10

Session 3: July 5 - July 15
Registration Deadline: July 1

Olympic Pool

601 Olympic Drive

Register online, in person, or over the phone!

\$45
per session



Learn to swim with Kerrville Aquatics! Classes are held Tues. - Fri.

Classes may change depending on demand.

Visit our website for class availability and level descriptions!

Morning Classes: 11 a.m. | Evening Classes: 6:30 p.m.

Ask about our fun Private and Semi-Private Lessons!
Availability is limited.

Swim lessons follow the Jeff Ellis Swimming Program.
Get Outdoors. Be Active. Play.

ASK ABOUT OUR JUNIOR LIFEGUARD CAMP AND MERMAID CLASS!

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