



## Short Safety Subject

Short Safety Subjects are provided by the Public Safety Business Center, Fort Bragg, NC. Our intent is to provide safety topics for the purpose of increasing safety awareness and improving safety performance. Additional Short Safety Subjects are available on the PSBC Business Management Web Site at:

[www.bragg.army.mil/psbc-bm/PubsAndForms/ShortSafetySubjects.htm](http://www.bragg.army.mil/psbc-bm/PubsAndForms/ShortSafetySubjects.htm)

### Summer Fun - Swimming



We wanted to share with you the following summer helpful hints to avoid health and safety hazards:

Summertime's warm weather prompts most people to get outside and enjoy more outdoor activities. Regardless of which activity you choose - swimming, boating, bicycling, gardening it is important to avoid health and safety hazards. The tips in this Short Safety Subject will help you avoid some of the more common hazards associated with the summer season, so you can have fun in the sun!

You will have more fun at the beach if you know how to avoid potential health hazards.

- Avoid any beach littered with trash or other debris. Garbage attracts bugs and can wash into the water. Look for water that is reasonably clear and free of floating materials and odors. Avoid swimming at beaches where there are large populations of ducks or geese. The waste produced by these birds causes high bacteria levels in the water.
- Look for movement in the water; it helps keep the water clean. Do not swim in stagnant or still water.
- Look for a sandy - not muddy - beach that has a grassy or wooded area around it. Such areas reduce surface runoff into the swimming water.
- Do not swim at any beach right after a heavy rain. Runoff following a heavy rain may result in a high bacteria count.
- When diving at a beach, exercise extreme caution. Beach water is not as clear as water in a pool, so underwater obstructions may not be visible. If there is any doubt, do not dive.

Whether swimming at a beach or at a pool, do not enter the water alone unless a lifeguard is on duty. Sadly, most deaths from drowning occur within a few feet of safety. A drowning victim trying to breathe usually cannot call for help.

If you see someone in trouble, try to reach the person with something they can hold on to, such as a jacket, belt, stick, rope, water ski, oar or fishing pole. A life preserver ring with a line attached enables you to pull the person to safety. If a life ring or a life jacket is not available, throw objects that float, such as a plastic bottle, spare tire, ball, picnic cooler or piece of wood. Be sure to throw the object within the drowning victim's reach.

If the victim is too far away to assist from shore, use a log, air mattress, surfboard, small boat, raft or anything else you can row or paddle with your hands. Help the person climb onto the float or have him hold on while you paddle back to shore. Approach a person who is in trouble in the water very cautiously. Do not let the victim pull you under.

A last option is to swim out and tow the victim back to shore, but try this only if you are a good swimmer and trained in lifesaving techniques.

When swimming toward a victim, approach the person from behind. Even strong swimmers can drown trying to help others in the water.

To learn more about lifesaving procedures, contact your local American Red Cross chapter.