

Public Safety Announcement – Water Safety

The communities of Boscawen, Canterbury, and Concord, NH want to remind the public that swimming and boating in rivers or water bodies with a current can be extremely dangerous. There have been two fatalities and several water rescues on the Merrimack and Contoocook Rivers in the past month. With the normal recreational areas being closed due to COVID-19, there is increased public use of remote river areas with no lifeguards on duty.

Please use caution when swimming or boating on any water bodies, but be extra careful when you are on or in moving water. Even if a river looks calm, there can be fast-moving undercurrents. Always enter unknown or shallow water cautiously, feet first.

Here are some additional safety tips:

- Personal flotation devices (PFDs) are always strongly recommended, even if you are a strong swimmer.
- Know the location or name of the area you are in so that you can identify it to 9-1-1 if you have an emergency.
- Check with those that are familiar with the area to identify areas with current or steep drop-offs.
- Don't swim alone – always have a swim buddy.
- Learn CPR and rescue techniques. Review the steps to hands-only CPR (no mouth to mouth resuscitation needed) here from the American Heart Association, which can help save a life and be used until help arrives: <https://cpr.heart.org/en/cpr-courses-and-kits/hands-only-cpr/>.

Our Fire and EMS personnel want you to enjoy summer water activities safely. While drowning deaths peak among one and two year olds, drownings continue to be the second leading cause of preventable death through age 15. According to the National Safety Council, 353 people age 5 to 24 drowned in 2017.