



LIFESAVING SOCIETY

*The Lifeguarding Experts*

## Drowning & Water Safety Fact Sheet

### Ontario Drowning Report 2009

The Drowning Report 2009 Update released by the Lifesaving Society, profiles the most recent statistics on Ontario drowning and water-related injuries.\* Below are the newest facts on drowning deaths in Ontario for 2005, the most recent year for which data is available.

- Nearly 500 Canadians die every year in water-related incidents.
  - Ontario accounts for 33% of the total – 164 deaths in 2005.
- In Ontario, drowning deaths increased for all age categories under 50 years of age.
  - The biggest increase was among 12-17-year-olds. Adults 18-34 years had the next highest drowning increase.
- Drowning is the second leading cause of preventable death for children under 10 years of age.
- 70% of drownings occur in open water – lakes, ponds, rivers, streams and waterfronts.
- In Ontario, 9% of all drowning deaths (14 total) occurred in private pools.
- 58% of drowning deaths occur while participating in aquatic activities such as swimming.
- 71% of drowning deaths occurred while the victims were engaged in recreational activities.
- Drownings by region:

Region	Where deaths occurred	Where victim lived
Northwest Ontario	21	9
Northeast Ontario	40	26
Southwest Ontario	30	26
Niagara	15	14
Toronto	13	24
Eastern Ontario	14	11
Rest of Ontario (Central & South Georgian Bay)	31	38
Out-of-province	-	16
<b>Total Ontario</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>164</b>



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## **Drowning & Water Safety Fact Sheet (cont'd)**

Drowning can occur quickly – in as little as 10 seconds – and is often silent. The Lifesaving Society offers these drowning prevention tips:

- Restrict and control access to the water. Enclose backyard pools on all four sides with a fence and a self-latching, self-closing gate; drain bathtubs when not in use; empty unattended wading pools and buckets.
- Wear a lifejacket when boating. Toddlers should wear a lifejacket anytime they are near water.
- Don't drink and drive your boat.
- Stay within arms' reach of young children when they are near water – in the backyard, the beach and in the bathroom.
- Go to lifeguard-supervised beaches and pools.
- Learn to swim. Enroll children in swimming lessons and in a swimming survival program such as the Lifesaving Society's Swim to Survive®.
- In the winter, check ice before going out on it – clear, hard, new ice is the safest for travel. Avoid slushy or moving ice and ice that has thawed and refrozen.

### **About the Lifesaving Society**

The Lifesaving Society, Canada's lifeguarding experts, is a national charitable organization working to prevent drowning and water-related injury through its training programs, Water Smart® public education, water-incident research, aquatic safety management and lifesaving sport. Each year over 700,000 Canadians participate in the Society's swimming, lifesaving, lifeguard and leadership training courses. For more information, please visit [www.lifesavingsociety.com](http://www.lifesavingsociety.com).

\* The Drowning Report information is sourced from the Lifesaving Society and the Chief Coroner's Office, Ontario Ministry of the Solicitor General.

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