



Charlie Crist
Governor

Ana M. Viamonte Ros, M.D., M.P.H.
State Surgeon General

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 30, 2007

Contact: Kevin Cate
(850) 245-4111

STATE SURGEON GENERAL REMINDS SWIMMERS TO PLAY IT SAFE DURING LABOR DAY WEEKEND

TALLAHASSEE—The Florida Department of Health (DOH) is encouraging swimmers in Florida to take proper precautions to ensure a safe and fun Labor Day weekend. Residents and tourists are reminded to play it safe by following swimming precautions and taking note of marine life and harmful algal blooms.

"There is no better place to enjoy Labor Day weekend than our state," State Surgeon General Ana M. Viamonte Ros, M.D., M.P.H. said. "Floridians and visitors should have an injury free weekend by following simple swimming precautions and being aware of the potential dangers associated with swimming."

The following precautions are advised to decrease the possibility of infection and injury when enjoying fresh and saltwater amenities:

- **No Diving** - Diving into shallow water can result in permanent injury or death.
- **Wear nose clips or hold your nose when swimming, jumping or diving in any fresh water** - Closed nostrils reduce your risk of infection by amoeba, which is a rare but life threatening condition.
- **Do not swim in warm standing water, such as ponds, storm water retention areas or in areas posted "No Swimming"** - Bacteria and other harmful organisms thrive in warm, standing water. Seek prompt medical attention if you become ill after swimming in freshwater.
- **Avoiding areas with obvious algal blooms** - Contact with algal blooms may cause skin rash, runny nose and burning eyes.
- **Avoid feeding or contact with wildlife** - Natural areas are home to many animals including snakes, raccoons, otters and alligators. Keep your distance.
- **Protect others** - Discarded glass and trash can cause injury to bathers and wildlife, don't litter. Always swim with a partner and supervise children.
- **Be water safe** - Do not go into the water unless you know how to swim. Never swim if you are impaired and never enter the water during or when expecting a storm.

For more information visit the CDC Healthy Swimming website at
<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/>.

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