



water safety  
Scotland

# Press release

**08/06/2023**

## **Press Enquiries**

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## **Water Safety Scotland produces series of advice codes for water users**

Water Safety Scotland (WSS) has produced a series of safety codes that offer important advice pertaining to a number of popular water-based recreational activities. Five activities were selected by examining data from the Water Incident Data (WAID) and are designed around the same three-steps as the more general water safety code.

Experienced and casual users can examine the advice given and hopefully make wiser and more informed decisions when undertaking the activities of angling, stand-up paddleboarding, kayaking/canoeing, sub-aqua diving and open water swimming. Each code is available to view and download from the WSS website.

A spokesperson for WSS said: "It is vitally important for water users to be well-informed before undertaking recreational activities in or on the water. Our activity-specific advice codes will be promoted throughout Scotland to try to ensure that the advice is seen by those who would most benefit from learning it. Our hope is that this will reduce the number of incidents that we see each year"

With summer now upon us, WSS also want to raise awareness of cold water shock (CWS). While it can be tempting to enter the water in warmer weather, the temperature of Scotland's open water remains very cold and sudden immersion can lead to CWS.

CWS can affect even the strongest swimmers as it overwhelms the ability to breathe and to swim, which can lead to drowning.

With more hot weather on the way, it is important to learn how to keep safe around water, follow local safety guidance and to avoid alcohol on and near waterways.

Last year, 45 people sadly lost their lives to accidental drowning in Scotland; the majority of which were in inland open waterways such as rivers, canals and lochs (62 per cent).

To help reduce drowning fatalities, WSS is highlighting the three-step water safety code:

- Stop and Think, Spot the Dangers
- Stay Together, Stay Safe
- In an Emergency, Call 999.

On 25 July, in recognition of World Drowning Prevention Day, WSS will be hosting a free Water Safety Open Day at Helix Park, Falkirk between 11am – 3pm. Visitors to the event are invited to visit information and activity stands and watch various demonstrations. The Helix Park lagoon will offer opportunities for the public to watch the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service (SFRS) and the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) as well as Newfoundland water rescue dogs in action.

The water safety code can be accessed online [here](#) and has been translated into the seven most widely-spoken languages in Scotland. The five activity-specific codes can be accessed [here](#).

#### Notes to editors

- World Drowning Prevention Day was created after the United Nations General Assembly passed a Resolution in 2021 on Global Drowning Prevention ([A/RES/75/273](#)) designating July 25 as World Drowning Prevention Day.
- Water Safety Scotland was founded by RoSPA in 2014 and is a partnership organisation whose purpose is to influence, coordinate and lead the aims set out in [Scotland's Drowning Prevention Strategy](#)
- The five activity-specific codes can be found here: [Water Safety Scotland | Activity Safety - Multiple Topics](#)
- Water Safety Scotland's water safety code can be found here: [WSS Water Safety Code & Language translations \(watersafetyscotland.org.uk\)](#)
- The Water Safety Open Day has been generously funded by Scottish Water, RoSPA, SFRS, Scottish Canals and Police Scotland.
- 2022 data for Scotland can be accessed via this trend report: [Data Reports | Water Safety Scotland](#)