Healthy and Safe Swimming Week 2018
Key Healthy and Safe Swimming Messages for State or Local Press Release

The following information summarizes a variety of healthy and safe swimming messages, intended to be customized to best meet each state or local community's priorities and needs before distributing. States or local communities may choose which messages to highlight in a press release from the table below when observing Healthy and Safe Swimming Week.

For Release *[date]*

Contact: Name, title
Phone/e-mail

Healthy and Safe Swimming Week 2018

<City, State> — The week before Memorial Day (May 21–27, 2018) is Healthy and Safe Swimming Week. The goal of this awareness week is to maximize the health benefits of swimming by minimizing the risk of illness and injury. Just 2.5 hours of physical activity every week, including water-based physical activity, can benefit everyone's health. Each of us plays a role in preventing illnesses and injuries linked to the water we swim in and share, this summer and year-round.

Why Is This Important?	A Few Simple but Effective Prevention Steps We Can All Take

Illnesses caused by the germs in the places we swim:
In 2000–2014 (the last year for which national data are available), ~500 outbreaks were linked to swimming in pools, hot tubs/spas, and water playgrounds. Most of the outbreaks caused by germs were caused by *Cryptosporidium* (or "Crypto" for short), *Legionella*, or *Pseudomonas*.
 	
Pool disinfection chemicals (bromine, chlorine) can kill most germs in public pools, hot tubs/spas, and water playgrounds within minutes at concentrations recommended by CDC and typically required by state and local health departments. But Crypto can survive for days at these chlorine concentrations. Diarrheal incidents in the water can easily spread Crypto and cause outbreaks if the contaminated water is swallowed. *Legionella* and *Pseudomonas* live in biofilm (slime on wetted surfaces). This means they are protected and can grow even when pool disinfection chemical concentration is properly maintained. Lungs can get infected with *Legionella* when breathing in contaminated water droplets produced by hot tub/spa jets. Water contaminated with *Pseudomonas* can cause hot tub or swimmer's ear on exposed skin.
 	
Healthy swimming is not just about the steps the pool operators and pool inspectors take—so let's all do our part to help keep ourselves, our families, and our friends healthy this summer and year-round.
 	
For more info, visit www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming.
	Everyone:
	• Don't swim or let your kids swim if sick with diarrhea.
	• Check the latest public pool, hot tub/spa, and water playground inspection scores online or onsite.
	• Do your own mini-inspection before getting into any pool, hot tub/spa, or water playground.
	  • Check to make sure that the water's pH and bromine or free chlorine concentration are correct*.
	  • For additional inspection steps, visit https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/materials/infographic-inspection.html
	
	*Use test strips to test pH and bromine or free chlorine concentration. Most superstores, hardware stores, and pool-supply stores sell pool test strips. Follow the manufacturer's directions. CDC recommends pH 7.2–7.8 and free chlorine concentration of at least 3 ppm in hot tubs/spas and at least 1 ppm in pools and water playgrounds OR bromine concentration of at least 4 ppm in hot tubs/spas and at least 3 ppm in pools and water playgrounds.
	
	FREE printed English and Spanish Healthy Swimming brochures are available at www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/materials/brochures.html.
	
	Healthy Swimming Factsheets
	www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/materials/fact-sheets.html.

Drowning:	**Keep swimmers safe in the water.** • Make sure everyone knows how to swim.

Each day, two children younger than 14 years die from drowning. Drowning is a leading cause of death for children 1–4 years old. For more info, visit www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Water-Safety/waterinjuries-factsheet.html.	• Use life jackets appropriately. • Provide continuous, attentive supervision close to swimmers. • Know CPR. **Prevent access to water when pool is not in use.** • Install and maintain barriers like 4-sided fencing. • Use locks/alarms for windows and doors.
Injuries Caused by Mishandling Pool Chemicals: Pool chemicals are added to maintain water quality (for example, to kill germs). Each year, however, mishandling of pool chemicals when treating public or residential/backyard pools, hot tubs/spas, and water playgrounds leads to 3,000–5,000 visits to U.S. emergency departments. For more info, visit www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/aquatics-professionals/preventing-pool-chemical-events.html.	**Operators and residential owners should:** • Read and follow directions on product labels. • Wear appropriate safety equipment such as goggles when handling pool chemicals. Check product labels for directions on what to wear. • Secure pool chemicals to protect people, particularly young children, and animals. • Add pool chemical poolside **ONLY** when directed by product label and when no one is in the water. **Prevent violent, potentially explosive, reactions.** • **NEVER** mix different pool chemicals with each other, particularly chlorine products and acid. • Pre-dissolve pool chemicals **ONLY** when directed by product label. o Add pool chemical to water, **NEVER** water to pool chemical. **FREE** printed and laminated poster on safe storage and poster on safe use available at www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/materials/posters.html.
Harmful Algal Blooms: Algae can grow in warm, nutrient-rich fresh- and marine water. An abundant growth of algae that harms people or animals is referred to as a harmful algal bloom (HAB). HABs in fresh- and marine water can produce toxins that cause a variety of symptoms including skin irritation, coughing, sneezing, diarrhea, stomach pain, numbness, and dizziness. Symptoms vary depending on the type of HAB toxin and the type of exposure, such as skin contact, ingestion by eating food or drinking water contaminated with HAB toxins, or breathing in tiny droplets or mist contaminated with HAB toxins. For more info, visit www.cdc.gov/habs.	**Avoid water that contains harmful algal blooms—when in doubt, stay out!** • Look for water body or beach advisories from local public health authorities or beach managers. If the beach is closed, stay out. • Don't swim, water ski, or boat in areas where the water is discolored or where you see foam, scum, or mats of algae on the water's surface. • Avoid entering or swimming in bodies of water that contain or are near dead fish or other dead animals. • Keep children and pets from playing in or drinking scummy water. • Get out and rinse off with clean water as soon as possible, if you swim in water that might contain a harmful algal bloom. • Rinse off pets, especially dogs, immediately, if they swim in scummy water. Do not let them lick the algae off their fur.
***Naegleria fowleri* "The Brain-eating Ameba":** *Naegleria fowleri* is a microscopic ameba (a single-celled living organism) that is commonly found in warm freshwater such as lakes, rivers, and hot springs. If water containing the ameba goes up the nose forcefully, the ameba can invade and cause a rare and devastating infection of the brain called primary amebic meningoencephalitis (PAM). For more info, visit: www.cdc.gov/parasites/naegleria.	*Naegleria fowleri* infection is rare. The only certain way to prevent an infection due to swimming is to stay out of freshwater. However, you can reduce your chance of getting an infection by limiting the amount of freshwater going up your nose. To limit the amount of freshwater going up your nose: • Hold your nose or use nose clips when taking part in freshwater-related activities. • Avoid putting your head underwater in hot springs and other warm freshwater bodies. • Avoid water-related activities in all warm freshwater bodies during periods of higher than normal water temperature. • Avoid digging in or stirring up mud and scum while taking part in water-related activities in shallow, warm freshwater.