



April 15, 2011

Centers for Disease Control
and Prevention (CDC)
Atlanta GA 30333

Dear Colleague:

The week of May 23–29, 2011 marks the seventh annual **Recreational Water Illness and Injury (RWII) Prevention Week**. **RWII Prevention Week** is an ideal time to increase awareness of recreational water-associated illnesses and injuries; promote healthy and safe swimming practices in your community; and encourage public pool operators, beach managers, the media, residential pool owners, and the public to initiate action. You might have noticed something new in this year's campaign: the addition of the word "injury." In recognition of the opportunity to address recreational water-associated injuries, we are pleased to announce that our injury prevention colleagues are joining in RWII Prevention Week, adding to our already strong collaboration between epidemiologic and environmental health staff at the agency.

This year's **RWII Prevention Week** focuses on acute otitis externa (AOE or "swimmer's ear"). The Waterborne Disease Prevention Branch analyzed national healthcare provider and insurance claims data on AOE and will summarize the findings for a Mortality and Morbidity Week Report (MMWR) to be published in May 2011. This article will describe the epidemiology of AOE in the United States, estimate associated healthcare costs, and summarize suggested prevention measures.

Web-based resources for **RWII Prevention Week** 2011 include training for environmental public health officials on pool inspection and design and evaluation of untreated recreational water (e.g., lakes); CDC fact sheets, brochures, and web pages focused on preventing water-related injuries; new guidelines on swimmer's ear prevention; and new Healthy Swimming web pages on animals and pools. To encourage and support your **RWII Prevention Week** efforts, we have provided a health promotion toolkit and a sample press release.

We hope you will find these resources useful as you engage your community in **RWII Prevention Week** awareness and educational activities. We also ask that you please forward this message and its attachments to your aquatic health program staff so that they can be involved in this important public health initiative.

Additional information about Recreational Water Illness and Injury Prevention Week 2011 can be found at www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/rwi/rwi-prevention-week/.

This letter is also a great opportunity to update you on the development of the Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC). The MAHC is designed to be a data-driven, best practices-based, open-access national model for aquatic facilities that will be available to state and local partners for voluntary adoption. Volunteers from public health, the aquatics industry, and academia have been drafting MAHC modules on topics ranging from ventilation to water quality. To date, the Operator Training and Air Quality & Ventilation Modules have been posted for public comment. The MAHC leadership is actively seeking state and local input on draft modules posted at www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/pools/mahc/structure-content/. We encourage you to provide feedback.

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