



NEWS RELEASE

Date: May 15, 2008
Release Date: Immediately
Contact: Karen Eubanks, Public Information Officer, 503-441-9324 (pager)

(Boaters and Swimmers Urged to Use Caution)

With hot weather approaching, many individuals may be planning to cool off in local rivers and lakes. Although the outside temperature may be hot, the temperature of local rivers and lakes remain at only about 45 degrees.

Those low temperatures pose several hazards to swimmers:

- An individual falling or jumping into extremely cold water can “involuntarily gasp” causing water to rush into their airways. Gradually wade into the water, instead of jumping or diving from cliffs and rocks.
- Hypothermia can begin to occur within 10-15 minutes and impair a swimmer. Stay close to the shoreline in case of emergency and take frequent breaks.
- Always swim with a buddy and have a cell phone handy to quickly report an emergency.
- Young children should always wear a Coast Guard-approved life jacket (pillow and handle-type); Adults should have or wear an approved life jacket when boating or fishing.
- Designate an adult to supervise all children playing in or around water. That adult should not be performing other tasks such as reading, playing cards, or talking on the phone.
- Avoid drinking alcohol while swimming, boating, skiing, or supervising children in or around water.

Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue’s Water Rescue Team is based in West Linn near the Clackamas, Tualatin and Willamette rivers. The team responds to boaters and swimmers in distress, vehicles discovered in water, and body recovery. The team is one of eight teams that make up the Clackamas County Water Consortium Team.

If You See or Hear Someone in Trouble:

- Call 911 immediately - time is of the essence!
- Try to throw the victim a flotation device, but don't become a victim yourself.
- Use landmarks to determine where you last saw the victim and where you are standing so you can take rescue crews back to the site.
- Take notice of the victim's clothing.
- Encourage other bystanders to stay on the scene

###