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Media Release
For immediate release



DROWNINGS CONTINUE TO OUTPACE 2010

The month of June has mirrored May in that there were five fatal drowning incidents recorded in New Zealand, reports Water Safety New Zealand. The national drowning toll for 2011 now stands at 67, 23 percent higher than at the same point in 2010 when 52 deaths had occurred.

This month's fatal incidents have been classified as: one recreational boating (Marlborough), one swimming (Auckland), two accidental immersions (Auckland and Gisborne) and a suicide (Otago).

Matt Claridge, General Manager, WSNZ, states: "Two of this month's incidents stand out for comment. Alcohol consumption has been the primary factor in a recreational boating death, and a 4 year old has been tragically lost due to a disused water tank in a rural area not being adequately secured."

Claridge continues, "Adults make their own decisions and if someone chooses to drink excessively and then undertake aquatic based activity they know the risks. However, small children have neither the ability nor the knowledge required to make a decision about their own safety. There should never be questions asked when it comes to child safety, least of all around water. The responsibility lies squarely with the parent or caregiver. Appropriate supervision is essential as is the identification of potential water hazards both within the home and in the neighbourhood. These hazards must not only be identified but they must be removed or nullified; failure to do so will see similar incidents repeated."

Ends...

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WATER SAFETY NEW ZEALAND

Formed in 1949, WSNZ is the national organisation responsible for water safety education in New Zealand.

WSNZ manages drowning prevention and water safety in communities through education. WSNZ administers proven, proactive and preventative education interventions.

WSNZ leads the Learn to Swim and Survive sector in New Zealand. The Sealord Swim For Life initiative is WSNZ's major project. WSNZ seeks to address a dramatic decline in swimming ability of our youth. Sealord Swim For Life is a comprehensive national project established to:

- Provide all children with access to the water;
- Facilitate the delivery of quality swim and survive programmes in primary schools;
- Provide the foundations for the development of a culture that produces generations of New Zealand families that are water safe.

For more information go to www.sealordswimforlife.org.nz

