

For release 16 January 2012

PoolSafe Achieves Record Numbers

The unseasonable weather so far this summer has not stopped swimming pools around the country from putting safety first. New Zealand public pools are taking safety seriously as is evident in the record number of facilities that now have obtained the **PoolSafe**[®] safety endorsement.

PoolSafe[®] is a New Zealand Recreation Association (NZRA) and Water Safety New Zealand (WSNZ) programme incorporating a range of initiatives aimed at reducing the number of water related injuries in and around New Zealand pools. These initiatives include educational resources, public awareness campaigns and a Quality Management Scheme for public pools. NZRA and WSNZ have proactively developed many industry standards over the past few years to increase the professionalism of pool operation and management. This scheme is an independent assessment of a pool's management and operation in accordance with these industry standards.

Of New Zealand's 214 public pools, 138 are now part of the PoolSafe scheme. NZRA's Aquatics Project Manager, Alison Law, highlights the importance of this achievement, "People should be able to expect that their local swimming pool is a fun, safe environment for them and their families. With more and more pools obtaining the PoolSafe stamp of approval, this expectation is becoming more of a reality."

WSNZ's Interim Chief Executive Matt Claridge adds, "Public pools are the gateway for most New Zealanders to learn water safety skills. It is pivotal that they are safe and that there are uniform standards and consistency across all pools. The increase in the number of pools operating at a PoolSafe level will ensure this is the case."

The two organisations also remind pool users that while you are enjoying all of the fun and excitement of your local swimming pool, keep in mind the Pool Alone policy that all public pools in New Zealand are



required to adhere to: *Children under 8 must be actively supervised by a caregiver 16 or over. Actively supervised means watching your child at all time; able to provide immediate assistance.*

“Lifeguards are an important safety feature, but they are not intended to replace the close supervision of parents or caregivers. Tragically many drowning deaths occur in the few seconds that parents are distracted. The role of a lifeguard is to ensure that people are safe in the water – they are not babysitters,” adds NZRA’s Law.

“Remembering this policy when you are taking your family for a swim this summer will help our pools to remain safe and fun places for everyone to enjoy,” asserts WSNZ’s Claridge.

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New Zealand Recreation Association is a not for profit industry member organisation committed to promoting recreation and providing professional services to the recreation sector.

NZRA represents professionals who work with public swimming pools, parks and open spaces, recreation facilities and recreation programmes. We believe recreation is vital to the wellbeing of New Zealanders.

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