

Currents

Newfoundland and Labrador – December 2025

Water Smart® in a nutshell

While the Lifesaving Society has always been focused on drowning prevention, in 1988, the organization established a dedicated area of focus with funding and priorities – this marked the formalization of Water Smart.

The Lifesaving Society's ongoing public education campaign aims to make Canadians "Water Smart." The campaign's target groups, messages, and priorities are based on the Society's analysis of its annual drowning data and other relevant research. The Water Smart campaign encourages individuals in high-risk target groups to exercise safe and responsible behaviour in and around water to prevent water-related injuries. Our Water Smart drowning-prevention campaign is funded through donations, community fundraising events and sponsorships.

Water Smart within Lifesaving Society programs

Not only is Water Smart education embedded in the skills of the Swim for Life program, but we also provide Water Smart education materials electronically so you can deliver drowning-prevention messages in a variety of formats. This means you can reach the whole family and deliver appropriate information when it's most relevant, according to the time of year and candidate experiences.

Water Smart in your community

Water safety is not just something we need to learn at the pool – most drownings occur when people aren't intending to go in the water. If you are passionate about the water, use our tips and resources to take water safety beyond the pool and educate the whole community about staying safe around the water.

Think about how you and your organization can get involved in sharing Water Smart messages and activities within your community:

- National Drowning Prevention Week
- World Drowning Prevention Day
- Lifejacket fitting days
- Cold-water and ice-safety information sharing
- Backyard pool safety clinics
- Water Smart at camps
- Messaging on your website
- Social media content
- Content on your report cards
- Messaging on facility displays
- Be creative and share!



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The Lifesaving Society is a charitable organization

In Canada, a charitable organization is a legally recognized group set up solely for charity, such as reducing poverty, advancing education or religion, or serving the community. To become a registered charity, an organization must be approved by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and dedicate its resources to these goals. Registered charities can issue tax receipts and must spend a minimum amount on their charitable activities.

Key characteristics of a charitable organization

Charitable organizations share several key characteristics that distinguish them from other types of entities, these include:

- **Exclusively charitable purposes:** All activities must fit into one of four categories: relieving poverty, advancing education, advancing religion, or other community benefits.
- **Governing documents:** The founding documents must clearly state these purposes.
- **Public benefit:** The organization must serve the public, not private interests.
- **Aligned activities:** The organization's work must directly support its stated purposes.

Mission & vision of the Lifesaving Society

The Lifesaving Society, as a charitable organization, advances education and works to benefit the community in drowning prevention.

- **Mission:** To prevent drowning and water-related injuries.
- **Vision:** A Canada free from drowning and water-related injuries.

All initiatives undertaken by the Lifesaving Society are guided by its mission and vision. It is essential that every program and service is designed to support these foundational objectives. Participants and instructors alike are encouraged to reflect on how the courses they have attended, the programs they have delivered, and the events or activities they have engaged in contribute to fulfilling the Society's mission and vision.

Question: How does your work or volunteering contribute to the mission and vision of the Society?

National Ice Safety Day

Did you know that 35% of drownings in the Maritimes occur during the colder months (October–April)?

The Lifesaving Society Canada has designated, March 1, 2026, as National Ice Safety Day and we need your help to spread Water Smart Ice Safety messaging on this day and throughout the colder months!

Here are some quick ways to start:

- Swim for Life Affiliates – Share the colouring sheet found in your Swim resources and check our [Ice Safety](#) messaging here!
- Help spread awareness at your facility by creating posters, activity stations and special events to share Water Smart Ice Safety messaging.
- The Canadian Safe Boating Council (CSBC) offers a series of Cold Water Awareness videos with tips on how to prepare for and survive in cold water, including the important 1–10–1 principle. Visit [csbc.ca](#) for these and other important water safety campaigns.

Be sure to mark your calendars and prepare your messaging for National Ice Safety Day on March 1!



Understanding drowning: the importance of accurate terminology

Defining drowning and related terms

Various terms such as near drowning, secondary drowning, dry drowning, struggler, and DNS frequently appear in media, training sessions, and everyday discussions surrounding incidents of drowning. Each term serves to describe specific circumstances related to drowning, and it is crucial to understand their precise definitions for clear communication.

Drowning is defined as the process of experiencing respiratory impairment due to submersion or immersion in liquid. When drowning is fatal, it results in death. In cases of non-fatal drowning, the respiratory impairment is halted before death occurs. Non-fatal drowning incidents can lead to outcomes ranging from complete recovery with no injuries to severe injuries or permanent disability.

Although drowning is most commonly associated with fatalities, non-fatal drownings are much more frequent than drowning deaths each year. Individuals who survive a non-fatal drowning may face significant health challenges, sometimes lasting throughout their lives.

The importance of accurate terminology

Using the correct terminology when discussing drowning is essential for several reasons. It helps prevent misinformation, ensures proper medical diagnosis and treatment, improves data collection and research, and facilitates clear communication among healthcare professionals, emergency responders, and the public.

Inaccurate terms such as “dry drowning” or “near drowning” can be misleading, potentially leading to misdiagnosis, delays in appropriate treatment, and confusion about what constitutes the actual drowning process – which is specifically defined as respiratory impairment resulting from submersion in water.

Preventing misinformation

Employing medically correct terminology reduces unnecessary fear and misunderstanding. For instance, terms like “dry drowning” and “secondary drowning” have caused undue public alarm and increased anxiety, especially among parents, sometimes resulting in unnecessary medical consultations.

Accurate language also provides the public with reliable information about the real risks associated with drowning, emphasizing that drowning is defined by respiratory impairment, rather than by distinctions based on timing or the amount of water involved.

Ensuring proper diagnosis and treatment

Using appropriate terminology allows healthcare providers to assess drowning incidents accurately and deliver suitable treatment, which can minimize unnecessary procedures such as imaging or antibiotics in cases where there are no symptoms.

Standardized medical records and terminology help ensure that individuals who develop symptoms after a drowning incident receive timely and effective diagnosis and care. Furthermore, outdated terms like “near-drowning,” “dry drowning,” and “wet drowning” have been retired from medical usage, as they do not accurately reflect the physiological processes or causes involved in drowning.

Improving data collection and research

Unified terminology increases the integrity of data collected about drowning incidents. Organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) have adopted standard definitions of drowning to improve the quality and reliability of research in this area.

Consistent use of terminology enables researchers to analyze pooled data more effectively, advancing injury surveillance and supporting the development of robust prevention strategies.

Facilitating clear communication

Standardization of professional language is crucial for all parties involved in drowning prevention, including the public, medical professionals, and advocates. A common understanding of terminology helps ensure a coordinated response across different groups, which is vital for effective intervention and prevention efforts.

All about the *Program Guide*

The Lifesaving Society *Program Guide* contains comprehensive information designed to assist all participants. Whether you are enrolled in a course, serving as an instructor, or acting as an affiliate, the *Program Guide* outlines standards and provides essential details to facilitate successful participation.

Here are a few questions that can be answered by the *Program Guide*:

As a Candidate:

- What prerequisites must be met to enrol in a course?
- What resources are required for participation?
- How should challenges encountered during a course be resolved?
- How do I recertify my qualifications?

As an Instructor, Examiner, or Trainer:

- Am I qualified to teach or evaluate a course?
- Which resources are necessary to deliver this course?
- Are there specific facility requirements for conducting the course?
- What is the process for verifying prerequisites?
- What are my responsibilities regarding completion of test sheets?

As an Affiliate:

- What steps are involved in becoming an affiliate?
- What resources are needed to deliver a program?
- What qualifications must staff hold to instruct designated courses?
- How should issues involving examiners be addressed?
- What is Inside Tracker, and how is it used?
- Is adherence to program standards mandatory?
- What do I need to start offering Lifesaving Sport in my organization?

We encourage everyone to take a few a bit of time to have a look. There is a wealth of information ready for you to use.



2026 PRICES AND FEES

The complete 2026 price list will be posted in January on the Society's website under [Find a Form](#).

Affiliates will be sent their annual affiliate fee and swim license renewals in the new year. Affiliate fee and swim license prices can be found on the detailed price list linked above.

July 19-25, 2026

National Drowning Prevention Week

LIFESAVING SOCIETY