

# WATER SAFETY AND DROWNING PREVENTION MONTH

**WHEREAS**, this year, the month of May 2026 has been designated as Water Safety and Drowning Prevention Month through a collaborative effort across the country to promote water safety and drowning prevention; and

**WHEREAS**, each year, drowning incidents result in hundreds of emergency room visits, including hospital stays and potential life-altering and permanent disabilities of Orange County residents and visitors; and

**WHEREAS**, the California Department of Public Health reports 3,693 deaths due to drowning from 2016 to 2023 among Californians, and 3,631 hospitalizations and 7,477 emergency room visits for non-fatal drowning. Furthermore, drowning is the leading cause of death for children ages 1-4.

**WHEREAS**, preliminary data from the Orange County Fire Authority showed 78 drowning incidents in 2025 in Orange County, including thirty-six fatalities and 42 non-fatal incidents.

**WHEREAS**, the Orange County Health Care Agency advocates for water competency through safety education, emphasizing the understanding of local aquatic hazards, risk judgment and self-assessment of abilities, and recognition and response to a person in distress in the water. This includes the practice of safe rescue and CPR with rescue breathing.

**WHEREAS**, the Orange County Health Care Agency acknowledges and supports the work of the Jasper Ray Foundation and the Orange County Drowning Prevention Coalition to reduce drowning across Orange County, including water safety events slated for summer 2024 at locations throughout the county.

**WHEREAS**, the Orange County Health Care Agency has its own considerations and context for drowning prevention, including 42 miles of coastline attracting both residents and visitors alike, and optimal weather inviting nearly year-round swimming.

**WHEREAS**, the Orange County Health Care Agency acknowledges and supports the work of the Jasper Ray Foundation, Orange County Drowning Prevention Coalition, and the Orange County Health Care Agency's Injury Prevention Program to reduce drowning across our county, including water safety events slated for summer 2026 at locations throughout the county.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Orange County Board of Supervisors does hereby proclaim the month of May 2026 as "Water Safety and Drowning Prevention Month" and commend Orange County Health Care Agency, the Jasper Ray Foundation, and the Orange County Drowning Prevention Coalition for their efforts to prevent drowning of Orange County residents and visitors, as well as for their efforts to remind everyone to be safer in and around the water this summer and all year long.