



News Release
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Kids Don't Float Life Jacket Program, May 23

Sacramento, CA – Summer is almost here and that means more people will be heading for local waterways to swim, wade, and recreate in the water. Besides sunscreen, beach umbrellas and towels, aqua fans must also have life jackets for all children under the age of 13. Sacramento County Regional Parks, the American River Parkway Foundation, Sacramento Metro Fire Department, City of Sacramento, and the Drowning Accident Rescue Team (DART) remind everyone that safety comes first in and around our waterways and are launching the “Kids Don't Float” life jacket program on the American River Parkway.

The American River Parkway Foundation will again provide the life jackets throughout the summer. Up to 2,500 lifesaving floatation devices will be available at seven locations on the American River Parkway. An additional 750 lifejackets will be provided by the City of Sacramento at one location on the American River and one location on the Sacramento River.

“This is our fourth year of providing life jackets for the ‘Kids Don't Float’ program,” stated Dianna Poggetto, Executive Director of the American River Parkway Foundation. “Our mission is to support the preservation of the Parkway but we also want to support the safety of the people who use it.”

The Foundation is also providing new signage at the life jacket distribution sites. Each sign features the message that kids don't float and if they are under age 13 they must wear a life vest per the Sacramento County Ordinance and are invited to borrow a vest and return it. The signs are in English, Russian, and Spanish languages.

The signs will be introduced and the Kids Don't Float campaign will be started on Friday, May 23, 10 a.m., at the Lower Sunrise Recreation Area on the American River Parkway. The Drowning Accident Rescue Team is scheduled to demonstrate water rescue techniques at Friday's event.

“Regional Parks has a long standing relationship with the American River Parkway Foundation and the ‘Kids Don't Float’ program is just one of our partnership endeavors,” stated Jeff Leatherman, Director of Regional Parks. “We are grateful to the foundation and to our law enforcement/safety partners including Sacramento Sheriff's Department, Sacramento Metro Fire and the Drowning Accident Rescue Team, and the City of Sacramento Department of Parks and Recreation.”

The life jacket locations are: (American River) Ancil Hoffman Park, Discovery Park (two locations), River Bend, Howe Avenue, Paradise Beach, Sunrise and Watt Avenue Accesses and Sand Cove on the Sacramento River. Also, [several fire stations in the area](#) have a life jacket loaner program. (<http://www.dbw.ca.gov/BoaterInfo/LifeJacket.aspx>)

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Parents and guardians are encouraged to purchase life jackets for their children prior to going in the water. However, if that isn't possible or if the life jacket is forgotten at home, all are welcome to borrow and return them at any of the river or fire stations located in Sacramento County.

Even though the river flow is low, strong currents exist below the surface and the water temperature is cold. Swimmers and waders are reminded that the river is a real danger even though it may look harmless.

Throughout the Memorial Day weekend, alcohol consumption and possession of open containers will be prohibited on the shore and river on the American River Parkway between Watt and Hazel Avenues beginning Saturday, May 24 through Monday, May 26. Parking fees will be increased at County Parks from \$5 to \$8 per vehicle, and \$10 to \$13 for vehicles towing motorized watercraft.

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