

Water Safety

With the recent weather, you may be tempted to cool down by swimming in a lake or the sea or some other natural body of water.

While that's all well and good, it is important to know whether the water is safe and what to do if something goes wrong. Keep reading to find out how to keep yourself and others safe

What are the dangers?

- The water is often colder than you'd think, causing your muscles to lock up. Just because you can swim in a heated pool doesn't mean you can swim in cold water
- The water is often deceptively deep.
- There are no lifeguards
- There's no telling what's in there: there could be broken glass just waiting to get stepped on
- There could be hidden currents beneath the surface, which could pull you under

Swimming at the beach

At the beach, there are various flags which tell people whether its safe to swim or not:

- Red and yellow flag: A lifeguard is on patrol
- Red flag: dangerous to swim, so don't go into the water.
- Black and white checker flag: an area zoned for surf crafts, so is unsafe for swimmers.

Children should always be supervised by an adult. An adult can point out dangers or help if there's any trouble.

What should I do if I see someone in difficulty?

If you see someone in difficulty in the water, use your mobile or go to the nearest telephone and dial 999. Ask for the Fire and Rescue Service at inland water sites and the Coastguard at the beach.

Look for any landmarks that you could describe to the operator, and explain as clearly as possible where you are. If there is something you could reach out to the person with, such as a branch, lie on the bank and keep yourself safe whilst you try to reach them.

NEVER lean out over the water or enter the water to try and help - you are likely to get into difficulty yourself.

For more information, visit www.manchesterfire.gov.uk/safe4summer