

THE CORPORATION OF THE
CITY OF WHITE ROCK
CORPORATE REPORT



DATE: July 21, 2025

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: John Woolgar, Director, Recreation and Culture

SUBJECT: National Drowning Prevention Week 2025

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive the report titled “National Drowning Prevention Week 2025” from the Director of Recreation & Culture for information.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

National Drowning Prevention Week is taking place July 20 to 26, 2025. This important public awareness campaign is initiated by the Lifesaving Society of Canada and includes daily themes each day to educate Canadians on drowning prevention. In addition, World Drowning Prevention Day, led by the World Health Organization, occurs on July 25, 2025. Nearly 400 Canadians and 236,000 people across the globe drown each year. The City of White Rock is taking part in these important initiatives by providing education to residents and hosting events throughout the week to promote water safety.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the City’s participation in National Drowning Prevention Week (NDPW) July 20 to 26, 2025 and the local initiatives taking place to support this important public awareness campaign. Due to the peak number of water-related incidents each year, the Lifesaving Society of Canada chooses the 3rd week of July as NDPW. This is a public awareness campaign each year to build community and media support for the drowning prevention cause.

National Campaign Information

NDPW provides an opportunity for local Water Smart® experts to promote the Society’s messages of safety on the water and to encourage everyone to think ahead before heading for their favourite lake or river. Pools and waterfronts throughout BC & Yukon help to communicate preventative drowning information and promote water safety education through public events and media campaigns.

Drowning is a leading cause of unintentional death in Canada. On average 400 Canadians drown each year and 236,000 people drown globally. The World Health Organization's Global Report on Drowning Prevention (2024) states that two of the key ways to prevent drowning is through education, teaching swimming skills and water safety training.

NDPW has chosen seven key themes to focus education and initiatives on based on the major risk factors identified in the Lifesaving Society's 2024 Annual Drowning Report which aims to reduce drownings. The themes include:

- **The Drowning Problem.** Over 400 Canadians die in preventable water-related incidents annually. Even one drowning is one too many.
- **Supervise Children.** Always directly supervise children around the water - if you are not within arms' reach, you've gone too far.
- **Boating Safety.** Don't boat alone and always wear a lifejacket when in a boat.
- **Learn to Swim.** In most drownings, the victim never intended to go in the water and was often close to safety – could you survive a sudden and unexpected fall into the water?
- **Stay Sober In, On, and Around Water.** Alcohol consumption is a factor in many water related fatalities. Both alcohol and cannabis use impair balance, judgment, and reflexes. Stay sober when in, on or around the water.
- **Open Water Safety.** Make smart choices before going in, on or around the water.
- **Just Keep Learning.** You can save a life - yours, and someone else's. Take a learn-to-swim, lifesaving or first aid class today.

Local Participation

White Rock is a seaside community that hosts many beachgoers each year and contains many swimming pools in private residences and condominiums throughout the municipality. National data shows that most drownings occur in natural waterways and backyard swimming pools. Therefore, it is important to educate residents how to safely recreate in these spaces. The City will be providing public education in several ways during NDPW:

- Engaging residents in water safety education online through social media.
- Activating the waterfront by offering water safety training sessions at West Beach.
- Educating summer camp program participants on water safety.
- Offering informational sessions on CPR and proper lifejacket use .
- Lighting up the White Rock Pier to be blue on July 26 to recognize NDPW.

In coordination with NDPW, staff organized the first White Rock Waterfront Lifesaving Club. Partnered with the Lifesaving Society of BC. This program takes place every Monday evening throughout July at West Beach. Participants learn basic waterfront safety, swimming proficiency, and lifesaving sport skills. On August 9, White Rock will be hosting the Schon Cup Surf Lifesaving Championships. This event is open to the public and tests athletes in lifesaving skills and athletic endeavours.

Hosting all these education sessions will allow the City to provide crucial water safety information to residents that will help prevent accidental drownings in the community.

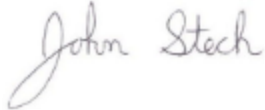
COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

An education campaign will be supported by the City of White Rock communications team. This includes E-Newsletter, social media feeds, and promotional posters.

CONCLUSION

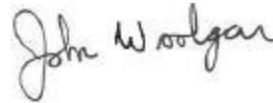
NDPW is taking place in July 20 to 26, 2025 and the City of White Rock will be supporting the public awareness campaign through programming and social media communications. These local and national initiatives provide an important foundation in preventing accidental drownings across the country.

Respectfully submitted,



John Stech
Manager, Community Recreation

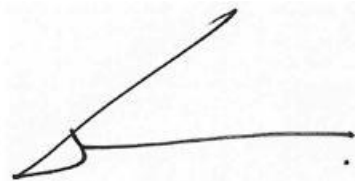
Reviewed and approved by,



John Woolgar,
Director, Recreation & Culture

Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer

This corporate report is provided to Council for information purposes.



Guillermo Ferrero
Chief Administrative Officer