



# **WATER SAFETY**

Circular 831

Revised May, 1963

**Agricultural Extension Service  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute  
Blacksburg, Virginia**

# Water Safety

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Virginia's lakes, streams, seashores, and 21,000 farm ponds have become major recreation areas. Water sports such as swimming, boating, skating, water skiing, and fishing now attract young and old.

Increased water recreation activities have created many additional hazards that have resulted in more drownings. More than 100 persons drown each year in Virginia waters.

## **How and Where People Drown**

Most fall into the water, with clothes on, from piers, bridges, and stream and pond shores.

Many are swimmers, waders, and children playing around water, particularly at unguarded areas along streams and lakes.

Many others drown while boating and fishing.

About  $\frac{1}{2}$  of our people cannot swim well enough to take care of themselves in a water emergency.

Nearly  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the men, women, and children who drown are alone or with only one other person at the time of drowning.

## YOUR POND NEED NOT BE A DEATHTRAP

### Swim Safely

Mark off good swimming areas where underwater trash, bottles, rocks, snags, etc. have been removed.

Provide the swimming area with rescue equipment such as a coil of light rope tied to a wood block or ring buoy for throwing, a long reaching pole or stick, a board with rope attached, and posted first aid instructions. Also, erect a sign for the protection of the property owner.

Include shallow water area for nonswimmers and have adult supervision for small children.

(See drawing in center of this circular.)

Learn to swim well — get competent instruction.

Never swim alone — you are not that good. Don't rely on such floating devices as innertubes, air mattresses (too easy to fall off), or devices that float beyond reach or become deflated. Have qualified life guard on duty for larger groups.

Avoid swimming when overheated, overtired, or after you have just eaten.

Know what to do when someone else is in trouble in the water. Practice using all the rescue equipment.

Avoid horseplay — it is unsafe.



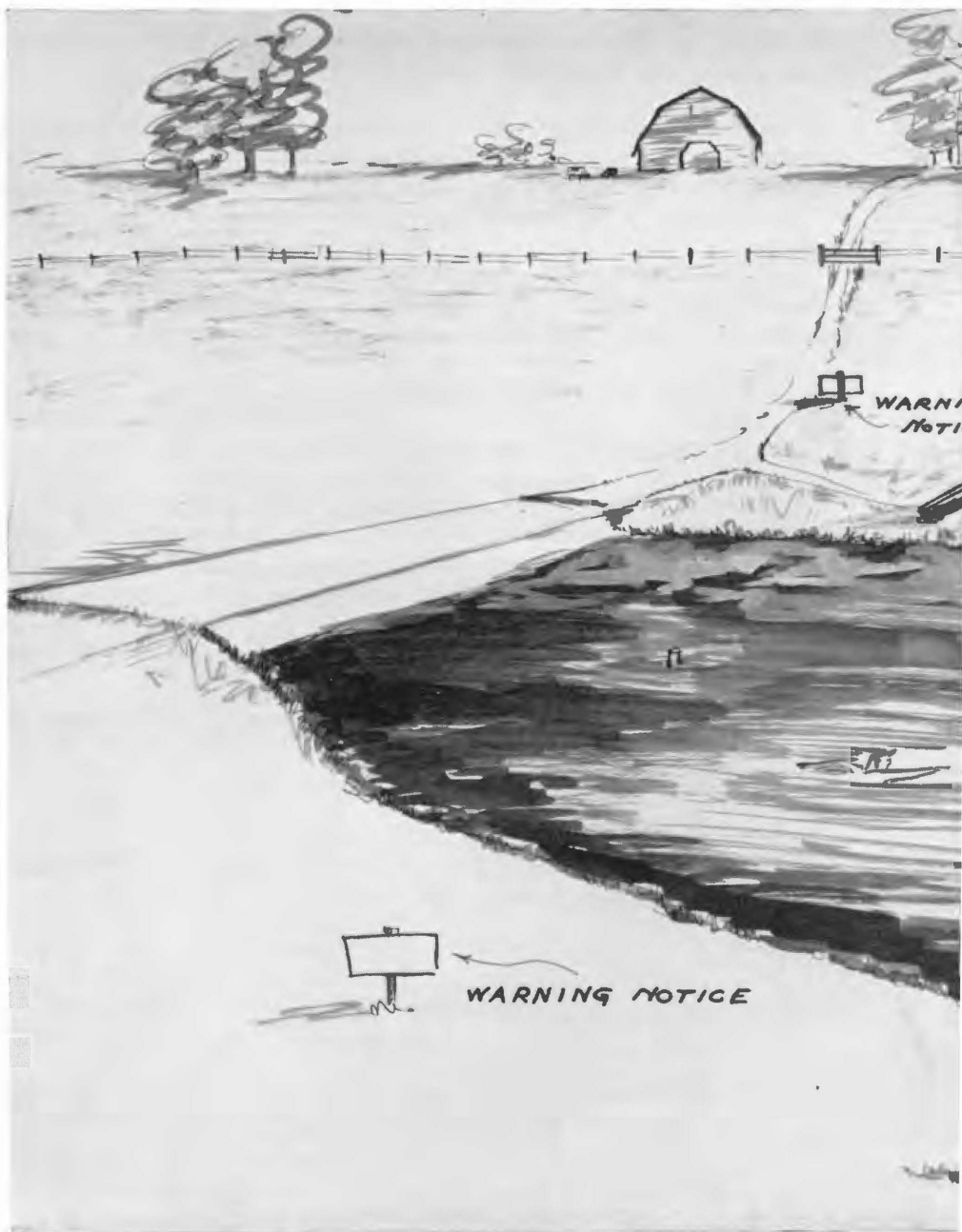
### Have Fun Skating, But:

Make sure the ice is solid enough for skating.

Have a skating buddy.

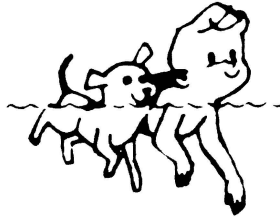
Have rescue equipment available and know how to use it.

# These Precautions Will Make



# Your Pond Safer for Swimming





## **Boating Can Be Safe**

Most small wooden boats, which are not waterlogged, and metal or fiber glass boats with adequate flotation devices will float when swamped or capsized. In case of emergency, stay with the boat until help arrives. Test the buoyancy of your boat before loading passengers by swamping it in shallow water.

Do not overload. Know the capacity of your boat. Weight of passengers, not the number of seats, determines a safe load. Make this test in shallow water of your pond or stream. Boat sides should always be well above the water line.

Don't stand up in the boat, whether the boat is moving or standing still. Hold boat sides firmly when changing seats. Be careful entering and leaving the boat.

Equip your boat with Coast Guard-approved life preservers.

Wear a life vest or have a seat cushion life preserver attached to your body by a line when riding in a small boat. Be sure you know how to use the cushion.

Don't overpower your boat. A motor too powerful for the boat will always cause trouble.

"Hot-rod" operation should not be permitted.



**BOATING—Hang on to the overturned boat—it floats.**

## BACK PRESSURE-ARM LIFT METHOD OF ARTIFICIAL RESPIRATION AS TAUGHT BY THE AMERICAN RED CROSS



1. Place hands



2. Swing forward



3. Lift arms

**REPEAT 12 TIMES PER MINUTE**

**Position of the Subject**—Place the subject in the face-down position. Bend his elbows and place the hands one upon the other. Turn his face to one side, placing the cheek upon his hands.

**Position of the Operator**—Kneel on either the right or left knee at the head of the subject, facing him. Place the knee at the side of the subject's head, close to the forearm. Place the opposite foot near the elbow. If it is more comfortable, kneel on both knees, one on either side of the subject's head. Place your hands upon the flat of the subject's back so that the heels of your hands lie just below a line running between the armpits. With the tops of the thumbs touching, spread the fingers downward and outward.

**Compression Phase**—Rock forward until the arms are approximately vertical and allow the upper part of your body to exert slow, steady, even pressure downward upon the hands. This forces the air out of the lungs. Your elbows should be kept straight and the pressure exerted almost directly downward on the back.

**Expansion Phase**—Release the pressure, avoiding a final thrust, and commence to rock slowly backward. Place your hands upon the subject's arms just above the elbows, and draw his arms upward and toward you. Apply just enough lift to feel resistance and tension at the subject's shoulders. Do not bend your elbows, and as you rock backward, the subject's arms will be drawn toward you. Then drop the arms to the ground. This completes the full cycle. The arm lift expands the chest by pulling on the chest muscles, arching the back, and relieving the weight on the chest.

The cycle should be repeated 12 times per minute at a steady, uniform rate. The compression and expansion phases should occupy about equal time, the release periods being of minimum duration.

## MOUTH TO MOUTH METHOD OF ARTIFICIAL RESPIRATION



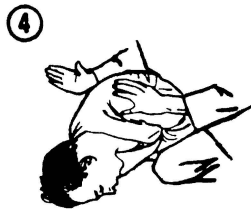
Remove any foreign matter from the mouth. Then tilt the head back until the chin is pointed upward.



Hold the jaw in a "jutting out" position.



Place your mouth tightly over victim's mouth and close his nostrils with your other hand. Blow into victim's mouth until chest rises. Remove your mouth and allow air to come out. Repeat.



If unable to get air into lungs of victim, and head and jaw positions are correct, suspect foreign matter in the throat. Roll victim onto his side and slap him on back several times. Wipe out mouth. Then repeat the first 3 steps.

For adults—blow 12 times per minute

For children—blow gently 20 times per minute

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### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author gratefully acknowledges many helpful suggestions from the National Safety Council and the American Red Cross in the preparation of this circular. Appreciation is also expressed to J. A. Waller Jr., who originally prepared Circular 831.