

# MINOOKA FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

# Smoke Signals

The dedicated members of the Minooka Fire Protection District strive to provide reliable emergency services, public education and awareness for our customers in a cost effective and responsible manner.

## Water Safety Tips For Families

Americans increasingly head to the water for recreation, relaxation and the sun. It is very tempting to boat without wearing a life jacket—especially on nice, warm sunny days.

It is essential that everyone in or near the water, both the novice and the experienced, practice water safety habits, including wearing life jackets or personal flotation devices (PFD).

Drowning is the leading cause of fatalities involving recreational boating. Approximately 88% of people who died in boating accidents were not wearing life jackets at the time.

There is no excuse not to wear a life jacket on the water!

### Personal Flotation Devices:

Everyone in a boat must have a Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (PFD) or life jacket. Blow-up toys, water wings and air mattresses are **NOT** substitutes for a PFD.



A PFD should:

- fit secure enough so a child does not slip through when picked up by the shoulders. Adult-sized life jackets will not work for children.
- not to be considered a substitute for swimming ability.
- be tested for wear and buoyancy at least once a year.

### Boating safety:

Before you sail off into the sunset, follow these boat safety tips:



- Everyone on a boat needs a seat. Sitting or standing on the edge of a boat or letting your legs or arms hang over the edge can cause the boat to tip. If the boat tips over and it floats, hold on to it until help arrives.
- Never boat alone.
- Check weather and water conditions before going out on the water. If you hear thunder or see lightening, head for shore!
- All boats should be equipped with operational lights, a horn, and a fire extinguisher.

### Swimming Safety:

Swimming is a lot of fun and a great way to get exercise. Know how to swim before participating in any water sport. But even if you have taken lessons, you are not “water safe”. You still need to follow the water safety rules.



- Whether you are at a pool, beach, pond, lake, or other swimming area, always check for a lifeguard.
- Never allow a child to swim alone.
- Don't swim if the water feels too cold or becomes cold. It's time to get out! Hypothermia occurs when the body gets cold and loses heat faster than the body can make it. It can make you sleepy, confused and clumsy. This can also cause the muscles to cramp making it hard to swim and save yourself.

Besides the rivers that flow through the Minooka Fire District, we have several retention ponds right in our own back yards that can also be dangerous. Please remind your children that these ponds are not a place to play.

For more information on water safety, visit these websites:

[www.uscgboating.org](http://www.uscgboating.org)

[www.safekids.org/water-safety](http://www.safekids.org/water-safety)

[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

## Vacation Safety Tips:

- When staying in a hotel, take a moment to look at the fire escape plan that is located in your room. Know where the exits, stairs and fire escapes are located. **Do not** take the elevator in the case of a fire.
- If traveling by car, make sure everyone is buckled up. Have your child's safety seat inspected by a Certified Child Safety Seat Technician before you leave.
- Drink plenty of water to avoid being dehydrated.
- Don't forget the sunscreen.
- Bring identification cards for all members of the family and your insurance cards.