

STATE OF ILLINOIS

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Proclamation

**WHEREAS**, drowning is the leading cause of accidental death for children ages one through four, accounting for nearly one-third of all accidental deaths of toddlers and pre-school children; and,

**WHEREAS**, drowning is the second leading cause of death for children ages one through 14 and claims the life of an average of two children per day in the United States; and,

**WHEREAS**, child drowning can occur in seconds in pools, bathtubs, hot tubs, decorative garden ponds, and even buckets that contain as little as two inches of water; and,

**WHEREAS**, 21 Illinois children lost their lives to accidental drowning in 2012 including 10 in swimming pools, six in lakes, two in ponds, two in rivers and one in a bathtub; and,

**WHEREAS**, for every child that drowns, five more are victims of near-drowning that requires emergency medical care, often leading to hospitalization and causing long-term brain damage that can include: memory loss, learning disabilities, and permanent loss of basic functioning that results in a permanent vegetative state; and,

**WHEREAS**, inadequate supervision of children, which includes neglect that results in drowning, is the third-leading cause of all child deaths indicated by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services; and,

**WHEREAS**, it is important to recognize that constant adult supervision is needed when children are near or in water; and,

**WHEREAS**, the state's "Get Water Wise...Supervise!" campaign urges the public to prevent childhood drowning and life-altering near-drowning by providing adult supervision whenever children are near or in water; and,

**WHEREAS**, the "Get Water Wise...Supervise!" campaign is a collaborative effort of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, Prevent Child Abuse Illinois, the American Red Cross Illinois Capital Area Chapter, the Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Illinois Department of Public Health, the Illinois Child Death Review Team, and other community partners that recognize that childhood drowning is preventable if proper adult supervision is provided; and,

**WHEREAS**, the use of floatation devices and inflatable toys cannot replace parental supervision because such devices can suddenly shift position, lose air, or slip out from underneath, leaving the child in a dangerous situation; and,

**WHEREAS**, adults need to practice "Reach Supervision" by staying within an arm's length reach of young children and not rely on substitutes; and,

**THEREFORE**, I, Pat Quinn, Governor of the State of Illinois, do hereby proclaim May 2013 as **CHILDHOOD DROWNING PREVENTION MONTH** in Illinois, and do hereby encourage all parents and caregivers to learn and practice proven child water safety precautions, ensuring the safety of all Illinois children.

*In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Illinois to be affixed.*



*Done at the Capitol, in the City of Springfield,*  
*this TWENTY-NINTH day of APRIL, in*  
*the Year of Our Lord two thousand and*  
*THIRTEEN, and of the State of Illinois*  
*the one hundred and NINETY-FIFTH*

*Deese White*  
 SECRETARY OF STATE

*Pat Quinn*  
 GOVERNOR