



Connie Beck, Director
Social Services | Public Health | Mental Health

news release

June 15, 2017

Life jacket loaners available countywide

The Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) is making 192 new life jackets available through loan stations at many of the county's favorite water recreation locations. Community members of all ages will be able to borrow life jackets from seven stations to wear during a day at the beach or river.

DHHS Public Health and the Water Safety Coalition of Northwestern California will celebrate the life jacket distribution at 10 a.m. on Thursday, June 22 at Woodley Island Marina adjacent to "The Fisherman" statue. Staff from the U.S. Coast Guard Humboldt Bay Station will provide tours of two of their response boats, answer questions about their missions, and demonstrate the proper way to put on a life jacket. This event is open to the public.

Between 2011 and 2016, 42 people have drowned in Humboldt County. Local waterways are very cold and have swift currents which can make it impossible to stay afloat without a life jacket. Wearing a life jacket can save a life.

Other water safety recommendations include:

- Never leave a child unattended in or near water.
- Don't drink alcohol before entering the water. Up to 70 percent of all recreational drowning incidents involve alcohol, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Beware of hazards below the surface of river water. A location that was safe in the past, could be dangerous during your next visit as trees, rocks and other debris move around in the current.
- At the ocean, choose flat beaches over those with steep slopes. Watch for sneaker waves and keep your distance from the water's edge.

Funding for the life jacket project comes through a grant from the Sea Tow Foundation. All 192 life jackets will be distributed before the June 22 celebration. Life jackets will be offered during business hours in infant to

adult sizes at the locations below. Call ahead to locations to confirm availability.

- Eureka National Weather Service Office
Woodley Island Marina
300 Startare Dr., Eureka
707-443-6484
- Dream Quest
100 Country Club Dr., Willow Creek
530-629-3564
- Early Bird Café
40640 Highway 299, Willow Creek
530-629-4431
- Tsewenaldin Inn
12482 Highway 96, Hoopa
530-625-4294
- Swimmer's Delight
Van Duzen County Park, Carlotta
707-445-7651
- Tsunami Surf & Sport
445 Conger St., Ste. B, Garberville
707-923-1965
- Tsunami Surf & Sport
1580 Upper Pacific Dr., Shelter Cove
707-923-1965.

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