



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

news release

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Life Jacket Loan Program available for a second year

Summer officially kicks off this week. As you plan to enjoy local rivers, beaches and lagoons, make water safety a priority. Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services' (DHHS) Life Jacket Loan Program is making more than 150 life jackets available to borrow at 11 of the county's most popular waterways.

Wearing a life jacket can save a life. Between 2011 and 2018, more than 50 people drowned in Humboldt County. Local waterways are very cold, have swift currents and can make it impossible to stay afloat without a life jacket. The United States Coast Guard says that, to work correctly, a life jacket must be the appropriate size for the intended user, be in good condition and, most importantly, be worn.

In addition to wearing a life jacket, other safety considerations 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 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Be aware of hazards below the surface of river water. Trees, rocks and sunken objects can move after high flows. A location that was familiar and safe in the past could be dangerous during your next visit.
- At the ocean, choose flat beaches over those with steep slopes. Watch for sneaker waves and keep your distance from the water's edge.

The Life Jacket Loan Program is made possible by a 2017 grant from the Sea Tow Foundation. Life jackets range from infant to adult sizes and are available at the locations listed below. Call ahead to confirm availability.

- Big Lagoon Park (weekends only)
510 Big Lagoon Park Rd.
Trinidad, CA
707-445-7652
- Dream Quest
100 Country Club Drive
Willow Creek, CA
530-629-3564

- Early Bird Café
40640 Highway 299
Willow Creek, CA
530-629-4431
- Eureka National Weather Service
300 Startare Drive
Eureka, CA
707-443-6484
- Freshwater Park
3100 Freshwater Road
Eureka, CA
707-445-7652
- Grizzly Creek Redwoods State Park
16949 Highway 36
Carlotta, CA
707-777-3683
- Humboldt Redwoods State Park
Burlington Visitors Center
Avenue of the Giants
Weott, CA
707-946-1811
- Richardson Grove State Park
1600 Highway 101
Garberville, CA
707-247-3318
- Tsewenaldin Inn
12400 Highway 96
Hoopa, CA
530-625-4294
- Tsunami Surf & Sport
445 Conger Street, Building B
Garberville, CA
707-923-1965
- Van Duzen County Park
Swimmer's Delight Park Drive
Carlotta, CA
707-445-7652

For more information, call DHHS's Healthy Communities Division of Public Health at 707-268-2132 or visit humboldt.gov/1647/Life-Jacket-Loan-Program.

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