



**US Army Corps
of Engineers
Fort Worth District**

News Release

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Corps of Engineers encourages public to call ahead before visiting lakes

FORT WORTH, Texas – The Fourth of July is one of the busiest holidays for recreation areas at America's rivers and lakes. However, with 23 of the 25 lakes in Texas operated and maintained by the Corps' Fort Worth District well into the flood pool due to recent rains, many parks, boat ramps, campgrounds and beaches are closed. Anyone wishing to visit a lake should go to the following link to find out about facility closures at <http://www.swf-wc.usace.army.mil/drought/drought.htm> or **to be sure, phone ahead**. Visit <http://www.swf-wc.usace.army.mil/cgi-bin/rcshtml.pl?page=Recreation> for contact information at each lake.

Those who are able to get to their favorite spots are reminded that the current flooding situation is producing even more hazards on the lakes, dangers that can get people in plenty of trouble. If you are a boater, be aware that there are floating or submerged debris and dangerous currents in previously calm waters. Water levels are much higher so the usual landmarks are not visible. Be especially alert to changing weather, supervise children and wear life jackets.

Boaters! Before Getting Underway:

Know your boat and know the rules of the road. Take a safe boating course. Visit <http://www.cgaux.org/> View the Texas Parks and Wildlife state regulations governing boating at <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us> . Consider the size of your boat, the number of passengers and the amount of extra equipment that will be on board. *Don't overload the boat!*
Be aware of floating or submerged hazards.
Follow manufacturer's suggested procedures *before* starting up the engine.
Wear your life jacket – don't just carry one on board.
Leave your alcohol behind. Increase your safety, not your risks!
Check the weather forecast.
File a float plan with a member of your family or friend.

Swimmers!

Drowning is the second leading cause of accidental deaths in persons 15-44 years of age. Surprisingly, two-thirds of those who drown never had the intention of being in the water. Watch your children at all times when around the water. Never dive into lakes and rivers ... the results can be tragic.
Never rely on toys such as inner tubes and water wings to stay afloat.
Don't take chances by over-estimating your swimming skills.
Reach or throw a flotation device to help someone in trouble. Don't go in the water!
Swim only in designated areas.
Never swim alone.
Please make your visit to any recreation area a safe and enjoyable one. Taking water safety precautions saves lives.

Please remember:

Wear a life jacket at all times when in or near the water.
Never rely on toys such as inner tubes and water wings to stay afloat.
Don't take chances by overestimating your swimming skills.
Swim only in designated swimming areas.
Never swim alone.
Reach or throw, but don't go in the water to help someone in trouble.

The Corps offers this final thought: Please make your visit to any recreation area a safe and enjoyable one. And remember, water safety saves lives.

