



Dear Colleague:

The week of May 18–24, 2009 marks the fifth annual **Recreational Water Illness (RWI) Prevention Week**. Since this is the week prior to the traditional start of the summer swim season, RWI Prevention Week will be an opportunity to increase awareness in your community related to recreational water illnesses and healthy swimming practices.

The theme for this year's **RWI Prevention Week** focuses on injuries associated with pool chemicals. These preventable injuries lead to thousands of emergency room visits each year. Pool chemical-related injuries are associated with both public and residential pools, and many occur during the summer swim season. CDC has posted prevention recommendations on the Healthy Swimming website (www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming) and is collaborating with New York State on an *MMWR* report to be published in May. Stay tuned for the laminated pool chemical safety poster, which you will be able to order for free and give to operators of public aquatic venues and residential pool owners. Additionally, to help state and local health departments educate the public about good healthy swimming behaviors, CDC's Healthy Swimming Program has printed one MILLION new brochures. These brochures are also available for free and can be ordered on the Healthy Swimming website as of the week of April 19th. **RWI Prevention Week** is an ideal time to reach out to public pool operators, beach managers, the media, residential pool owners, and the public with prevention messages to raise awareness and initiate action.

Additional information about Recreational Water Illness Prevention Week 2009 can be found at http://www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/rwi_prevention_week.htm

We have provided you with a health promotion tool kit, a list of proactive steps to prevent community-wide cryptosporidiosis outbreaks, and a sample press release to be used as a source for ideas and actions for your community's own local efforts in concert with national publicity planned for this week. Please forward this message to your aquatic health program staff so that they can be involved in this major Healthy Swimming Program Initiative. This is an excellent opportunity to bring attention to this important environmental health program, as well as assist in helping your community members stay healthy.

CDC's Healthy Swimming Program continues the longstanding collaboration between epidemiologic and environmental health staff at the agency. Let us know about the activities in your area related to Recreational Water Illness Prevention Week by sending emails to ehsb@cdc.gov.

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