

June 21, 2004

**\*\*URGENT MESSAGE TO IRVINE HOMEOWNER ASSOCIATIONS\*\***

**Drowning is 100% preventable!** With summertime upon us, it is vital that we educate homeowners, parents, grandparents and babysitters on the dangers associated with backyard swimming pools and spas. Drowning is the leading cause of accidental death for Orange County children under age five. Many more children are victims of near drowning. So far this year, there have been 2 drownings and 8 near drownings of children age five and under. Last year alone, there were 26 near drownings and six drowning-related deaths in Orange County. This is a countywide crisis that requires everyone's help in reducing this needless tragedy.



Children drown without a sound. You think you will hear a child splash or their cry for help. In fact, drowning is a silent event and can occur in swimming pools, spas, lakes, the ocean and even in as little as two inches of water. ***Adult supervision is imperative whenever you have children in or around a pool or other body of water.***

The Orange County Fire Authority and the Irvine Police Department have taken a very proactive approach in reducing the number of drowning incidents and has formed a community partnership to deliver an aggressive awareness campaign designed to make parents more aware of the dangers and causes of childhood drowning.

The Fire Authority offers drowning prevention programs for small community groups. If you are interested, please feel free to contact Kymbra Steig, Community Relations and Education Specialist for the Orange County Fire Authority, at (949) 559-7540. Additionally, the OCFA has formed a partnership with the American Red Cross to deliver CPR classes at a reduced rate. For information, contact the American Red Cross at 714-481-5355.

We can make a difference. As partners in preparedness, the Orange County Fire Authority and the Irvine Police Department have prepared drowning prevention and awareness safety packets for the residents of Irvine. These packets are free and are available to the first 500 people who request them. Please contact (949) 724-7079 or e-mail [pmcnally@ci.irvine.ca.us](mailto:pmcnally@ci.irvine.ca.us) if you are interested.

Sincerely,

Chip Prather,  
Fire Chief

David L. Maggard, Jr.  
Police Chief