



POOL SAFETY COUNCIL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Pool Safety Council Announces 2009 Awareness Campaign

WASHINGTON, DC - January 8, 2009 – The Pool Safety Council (PSC), the authoritative voice on pool safety, entrapment, and drowning prevention, today announced a year-long campaign to highlight new legislation and compliance efforts that will prevent avoidable deaths.

The Consumer Products Safety Commission reports that an estimated 2,300 children were treated in hospital emergency rooms for pool submersion injuries in 2004. Drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death among children ages one to 14. According to Safe Kids USA, approximately 280 children younger than five drown each year in swimming pools, while thousands more are treated in emergency rooms for near-drowning each year. When a swimmer becomes stuck to a drain or suction outlet in a swimming pool, spa, wading pool, or hot tub, the force of the filtration system can be overpowering. It is called entrapment; when the supercharged suction from insufficiently covered drains pins the swimmer underwater. The pressure is so powerful that even strong swimmers can't escape, and would-be rescuers are unable to free them.

In an effort to turn the tide on these disturbing numbers, the United States Congress passed the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act. The legislation is named after the granddaughter of former Secretary of State James A. Baker, who drowned after becoming entrapped by a spa drain in 2002. Most pools can easily be brought into compliance with the installation of approved safety drain covers and an anti-entrapment device, such as a Safety Vacuum Release System, but enforcement and awareness in every community will be key to saving lives.

In the Pool and Spa Safety Act of 2007, Congress tasked the Consumer Product Safety Commission with enforcement. However, the agency has said it will need assistance at every level, from federal offices to municipalities, to ensure that our nation's pools are safe and in compliance with the life-saving law. However, public reports indicate that some officials have no immediate plans to enforce the law.

"This bill is going to save lives. We feel that PSC has an opportunity and obligation to help raise awareness about measures that can be taken to protect our children through compliance and enforcement," said John Procter, Communications Director for the Pool Safety Council. "While there is always room for improvement when it comes to safety, we urge officials at every level to inspect the public pools in their jurisdiction and make sure they are compliant. It is our hope that officials use the upcoming months to take the necessary measures to ensure that all children will be swimming in safe pools as quickly as possible."

For more information, please visit our website at: [www.poolsafetycouncil.org](http://www.poolsafetycouncil.org)

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