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## **Houston Apartment Association encourages swim safety at end-of-summer parties**

**HOUSTON** – (August 22, 2019) – A drowning can happen quickly and quietly, anywhere to anyone. With record-high temperatures and the end of summer fast approaching, Houstonians are cooling off at area pools, lakes and beaches. It is important we draw attention to teaching kids necessary water skills and what parents and guardians can do.

### **Ten people die each day from unintentional drowning, and on average 2 of them are under the age of 14.**

Drowning is the leading cause of accidental injury deaths among kids under the age of five and the second leading cause among children under 14. Many incidents affect toddlers and mostly happen in natural bodies of water and swimming pools, but some take place when children are left unattended in bathtubs, spas or even near buckets of water. It only takes minutes for a child to drown when adults are not paying close attention. 75 children have already drowned in Texas in 2019, with 21 fatal drownings in the Greater Houston area (14 in the Harris County), and many more near-drownings. The Houston Apartment Association urges the parents to be vigilant.

“Drowning is preventable, and we have seen a dramatic reduction in the number of apartment drownings in recent years, but we remain proactive,” said Starla Turnbo, Houston Apartment Association’s president. “With more than one million Houstonians living in apartments, HAA focuses on swimming lessons for children and educating parents about the importance of proper supervision.”

As Houstonians enjoy the end of summer, HAA urges everyone to follow these water safety tips:

- Never leave children near water without adult supervision
- Do not allow children to swim alone
- Young children should always be within an arm’s distance of a supervising adult in the water
- Assign an adult as “water watcher” – the person committed to supervising the pool area
- Paddling pools are just as dangerous - a single inch of water covering a child’s mouth and nose can cause drowning
- Always secure access to swimming pools. All apartment pools have fences and self-closing and latching gates preventing children from entering the pool area unattended – notify management immediately if they are not in a working order and make sure the gate closes properly after you enter the pool area.
- Learn the location and how to use available safety devices – all apartment pools are equipped with devices intended to prevent death or injury. These items include drain covers, a shepherd’s hook and a reaching pole, a throwing rope, and a ring buoy. If any of these devices are missing or in disrepair, please notify management immediately.
- Be a good neighbor, if you see any unattended children at the community pool, urge them to leave the pool area and report the incident to the manager immediately.

**About the Houston Apartment Association:**

The Houston Apartment Association is a professional trade association that serves individuals and businesses involved in the ownership, construction, management, maintenance and operation of apartments and other rental dwellings in the Houston area. See [www.haaonline.org](http://www.haaonline.org) for more information.

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