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Breath holding activities and games can cause drowning. Drowning may occur during these activities because of low carbon dioxide and low oxygen (which triggers unconsciousness) according to [Shallow Water Blackout Prevention](#), and education and information Website. Hyperventilation done before breath-holding lowers carbon dioxide abnormally, allowing individuals to hold their breath longer. But the lower carbon dioxide levels rob the body of its built-in mechanism to tell the breath-holder to breathe before going unconscious and taking water into the lungs. Organizations such as the [National Swimming Pool Foundation](#) and the [YMCA of the USA](#) warn that some competitive, repetitive underwater breath-holding practices heighten the risk of shallow water blackout and drowning. Organizations should educate patrons and staff to help prevent drowning caused by shallow water blackout

A national [Heat Illness Campaign](#) has initiated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The program intends to educate workers and their employers about the hazards of working outdoors in the heat. Online resources include [educational materials](#), a curriculum for [workplace training](#) and [print ads](#) in color and black & white, all available in English and Spanish. Multiple copies of heat campaign publications can be ordered from OSHA's [Website](#). OSHA is also partnering with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on weather service alerts to incorporate worker safety precautions when heat alerts are issued across the United States. NOAA is also including pertinent worker safety information on its [Heat Watch Web page](#).

New ADA regulations will effect pools and require lifts or other access options. Starting May 15, 2012, all public swimming pools in the US must be equipped with assisted entry systems. As part of the 2010 Standards for Accessible Design, regulations of the Accessible Design for Recreational Facilities will require all public pools and spas to be outfitted with an ADA compliant swimming pool lift or sloped entry. Pool lifts will be required for public pools (open to the public at any time or receiving funding or revenue from the government or membership dues) with a perimeter of greater than 300 linear feet (91.4 m). Pools greater than 300 feet will need two means of assisted entrance, while those less than 300 linear feet will only require one assisted entry system - either a swimming pool lift or sloped entry. For those pools requiring two assisted entries, a transfer wall, transfer system or stairs will be necessary in addition to a pool lift or sloped entrance. Wading pools, wave pools, leisure rivers and spas will also need a lift, sloped entry, transfer wall or transfer system. Specific information about the requirements is available from www.ADA.gov or your pool professional. A hot line (800-514-0301) has also been established to help clarify the laws. Read more [HERE](#).

Some infections can spread quickly at camps and sports programs. MRSA (Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus Aureus*) and other skin infections are highly transferable. MRSA infections, as with all staph, are usually spread by having contact with someone's skin infection or personal items they have used, like towels, bandages, or razors that touched their infected skin. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends frequent hand washing (with soap and water), maintaining a clean environment, avoiding sharing of personal items and the use of personal protection in health centers as key procedures in preventing the spread of infections such as MRSA. The American Camps Association (ACA) recommends that programs establish good hygiene policies, train staff and partner with local health agencies to ensure outbreaks do not occur. More information is available from the [CDC](#) and in the [Online Resource Library](#).

Flip flops are an extremely popular style of footwear for many nonprofit's staff members. However, not only can they be considered an unprofessional form of workplace footwear; they also carry a more serious risk. This style of shoe is associated with a number of problems, injuries and accidents. The American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons ([ACFAS](#)) reports that flip-flops are linked to a growing number of heel problems among teens and young adults. Unlike sturdy shoes, flip-flops aren't good for extensive walking because they offer no arch support, heel cushioning, or shock absorption. Wearers can suffer foot pain due to lack of arch support, tendinitis, and even sprained ankles if they trip. Because they offer little protection, wearers are at greater risk for stubbed toes, glass cuts, puncture wounds, or having a heavy object dropped on the foot. Flip-flops can also impair a driver's control if they come off the foot and lodge under the brake or gas pedal, according to the American Automobile Association ([AAA](#)). Organizations should consider when and where this and other style of footwear are appropriate. Flip-flops are most likely only appropriate in wet areas and when not worn for extended periods of time. Appropriate footwear can help staff to be more comfortable, perform their responsibilities more effectively and of course protect them from injury. Sturdy shoes should be required for most positions and safety shoes or boots are appropriate for some specialized job functions. By monitoring the attire and footwear of employees and volunteers, organizations can help control accidents, slips and falls and other injuries. More staff safety information is available in the [Online Resource Library](#).

This Month's Topics:

Shallow Water Blackout

Heat Illness Prevention

ADA Requirements for Pools

Controlling Infections

Proper Footwear