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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Burnaby, BC --- Despite a downward trend, drowning is still the third leading cause of unintentional death in Canada. Lifesaving Society Canada is bringing awareness to the issue of safety around the water during National Drowning Prevention Week, July 17 – 23. The 3rd week of July is chosen each year as statistics show that is the period when the highest number of drownings occur.

To date, there have been 16 drownings in BC compared to 26 at the same time in 2021. The mission of the Lifesaving Society is prevention and we are aiming for zero drownings as we know they are all preventable.

In Canada, over 400 people drown annually, making it the second leading cause of unintentional death for children and the third leading cause of unintentional death for adults. In particular, Indigenous, northern and new Canadians have disproportionately high drowning rates.

In addition, the drowning burden is so great around the world that the United Nations General Assembly passed a UN Resolution in 2021 on drowning prevention and named July 25 of each year as World Drowning Prevention Day.

During the week of July 17 – 23 the Lifesaving Society will be educating Canadians and promoting safety awareness in, on and around the water.

Statistics show that almost 70% of drowning victims never intended to go into the water and were often within 15 metres of safety. Nearly every Canadian has known someone who has drowned or had a non-fatal drowning experience, whether personally or within their community. To help reduce drowning, all Canadians are encouraged to:

- Take learn-to-swim lessons and basic first aid training.
- Wear a properly fitted lifejacket when on a boat.
- Refrain from being under the influence of alcoholic or drugs while participating in aquatic activities.
- Ensure children are under the direct supervision of an adult when around barrier-free bodies of water.
- Ensure backyard pools have four-sided fencing with a self-closing, self-latching gate.

For more information or an interview, please contact Dale Miller, Executive Director, at dalem@lifesaving.bc.ca or call 604.299.5450.