

Program Note

Preventing Drowning: Securing Open Water Sites to Protect Every Life

Drowning is often seen as a deep-water danger, but in reality, silent threats lie much closer — in everyday places like uncovered tanks, open drains, and rain-filled pits that are often neglected, unguarded, or abandoned. Most people think drowning happens only in rivers, lakes, or the sea. But the truth is, even small amounts of water can be dangerous. A child can drown in just a few inches of water. That is why uncovered tanks, open ditches, or rain-filled pits can be deadly if not properly maintained or covered.

This program highlights an important issue that affects the safety of people, especially children — the risk of drowning at unguarded, abandoned, or poorly maintained places where water collects. These may include open water tanks, drains, pits, wells, construction sites, or low-lying areas that fill with rainwater. Many such spots are left open and unprotected, becoming silent dangers in our surroundings.

Many drowning cases involve children aged between 0–14 years. The common reasons include no adult supervision, unsafe surroundings, and not knowing how to swim. In most cases, the person who drowned was alone. This shows how important it is to keep our surroundings safe and watch out for such risky places.

Changes in weather are also making this problem worse. Heavy rains and floods are now happening more often. This causes water to collect in small open spaces, which quickly turn into dangerous spots. Even dry areas like pits or construction zones can become deep water traps after one strong rain. Without proper drainage, fencing, or warning signs, anyone — especially children — can fall into these places.

Another issue is poor maintenance. Sometimes, sites are built with good design, but are not looked after properly later. Fencing breaks, lids go missing, and drains get blocked. Many construction sites or public areas are left incomplete or abandoned, which creates long-term risks. In most cases, there is no regular

checking or fixing. This turns common places into danger zones during rainy seasons.

To make our surroundings safer and prevent such accidents, this program recommends the following steps:

1. **List and check all places where water can collect** — such as old tanks, open drains, pits, or abandoned construction areas.
2. **Cover or fence these places** so that no one can fall in accidentally, especially children.
3. **Add warning signs and lighting** near risky places, especially in busy areas, school zones, and near roads.
4. **Keep these places clean and maintained** — remove silt from drains, cover tanks, and repair broken parts before the rainy season.
5. **Create awareness in local communities** about the dangers of open water sites and what to do in case of an emergency.

Safety is not just the job of the government or city officers. Everyone — families, school staff, building owners, local workers, and community leaders — must take part. If people report open or dangerous places, action can be taken faster. Also, avoiding unsafe areas and stopping others from going near them helps reduce the risk.

Drowning accidents can be avoided if we all take simple steps to keep our spaces safe. Covering tanks, fencing pits, and checking risky areas regularly can save lives. Let's not wait for a tragedy to happen — let's act now and make sure our homes, schools, and public places are safe for everyone.