

# NZ Drowning Deaths Holiday Period 2021/2022



*Drowning data is sourced from Water Safety New Zealand's DrownBase™ and the figures provided are provisional as at 9am 05/01/22.*

- The provisional total of preventable drowning deaths within New Zealand in 2021 is 74. [The full provisional drowning report for 2021 is due out on 17 January 2022.]
- There were a total of 74 preventable drowning deaths within New Zealand in 2020.
- YTD (1 December 2021 – 5 Jan 2022), the summer drowning fatality toll is 28 (20 in Dec 2021 8 in Jan 2022 YTD).

*Preventable fatalities include recreational and non-recreational drowning deaths. They do not include those fatalities classified as 'other' (arising as a result of road or air vehicle accidents, homicide, suicide or of unknown origin) as these are not considered applicable to the prevention and rescue efforts of the water safety sector.*

- The five year average preventable drowning death totals for the previous five year holiday periods 2016/17 to 2020/2021 is 5 per holiday period.
- The total number of preventable drowning deaths for the holiday period 2021/2022 is 14, a 180% increase on the five year average.
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*Note: the holiday period for 2021/2022 starts at 4pm on Fri 24 Dec and ends Wed 5 Jan at 6am.*

Holiday period	Preventable drowning deaths total
2016 / 2017	10
2017 / 2018	8
2018 / 2019	3
2019 / 2020	6
2020 / 2021	5
2021 / 2022	14

- Rivers (6) accounted for 43% of the 2021/2022 drowning deaths over the holiday period. The five year average for River drowning fatalities in the holiday period is 1.
- Half of the river drowning deaths (3) over the 2021/2022 holiday period were aged 25-34.
- Two thirds (4) of the River drowning deaths over the 2021/2022 holiday period occurred while swimming.
- There were 16 River drowning deaths in New Zealand in 2021. The five year average for River drowning deaths is 17.
- Beaches (4) accounted for 29% of the 2021/2022 drowning deaths over the holiday period. The five year average for Beach drowning fatalities in the holiday period is 2.
- All of the Beach drowning deaths (4) over the 2021/2022 holiday period occurred while swimming.
- There were 23 Beach drowning deaths in New Zealand in 2021. The five year average for Beach drowning deaths is 23.
- Swimming (9) accounted for 64% of the 2021/2022 holiday period drowning deaths. This is up 200% on the five year average for Swimming holiday period drowning deaths, which is 3. On

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average, Swimming usually accounts for 40% of the holiday period toll, with swimming at Beaches and Rivers the most common environment for incidents.

- There were 23 Swimming deaths in New Zealand in 2021. The five year average for Swimming drowning deaths is 18.
- All but one of the 2021/2022 holiday period drowning fatalities occurred in the North Island (93%). This is similar to previous years where an average of one drowning fatality occurs in the South Island per holiday period.
- Manawatu-Wanganui had four drowning deaths (all in the Manawatu River), Waikato (2 River and 1 Beach) and Auckland (all at Beaches) had three drowning deaths each.
- Two of the 2021/2022 holiday period drowning fatalities were aged 05-14. This is usually the age group with the lowest drowning toll with an average of 3 drowning deaths per year.

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