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Media release

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Safely enjoy the pool this summer with your kids

Media advertising has started today encouraging enjoyment and safe supervision at swimming pools this summer.

The series of advertisements have been produced to raise awareness that public pools are fun and safe places to go, but stress that there's a role for parents and caregivers to actively supervise their kids, says chief executive of the New Zealand Recreation Association, Brendon Ward.

"The water is a fantastic place for kids and adults to interact and learn. So the message we are sending out is that your child is your responsibility – and it's much more fun for everyone if you're in the water with them," he said.

Matt Claridge from Water Safety New Zealand agrees.

"Swimming pools are an ideal environment for children to learn swimming and survival skills. Parents can and should actively involve themselves by being in the water and making it fun, it's important that everyone enjoys the water safely.

"Lifeguards are there to watch over everyone in the facility and respond in an emergency," says Brendon Ward. "But they are not a babysitting service, and lifeguards are there to prevent life-threatening incidents occurring."

The advertising is scheduled as many parents return to work and look for activities to entertain their kids during the day.

"This is traditionally the time of year that kids are left unsupervised at the pool. The warm weather combined with school holidays makes swimming pools an inviting place to occupy the youngsters."

Matt Claridge says the message is simple and applicable to all aquatic environments. "Always supervise children near water – ALWAYS."

A link to the radio ads can be found on the NZRA aquatics homepage <http://www.nzrecreation.org.nz/Default.aspx?section=aquatics>

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About NZRA

NZRA is a not-for-profit industry organisation committed to promoting recreation and providing professional services to the recreation sector. The sectors that NZRA represents include public swimming pools, parks and open spaces, recreation facilities and recreation programmes. Our vision is that Recreation is vital to the wellbeing of New Zealanders.