

After spate of recent drownings, Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency offers safety tips

"This summer when swimming in lakes, ponds, and other natural bodies of water, be aware of tree limbs, rocks or other obstacles and steep drop-offs that can take you by surprise.

Safety tips for natural bodies of water

Natural bodies of water are more dangerous than they look because there may be:

- Steep drop-offs that can take you by surprise
- Invisible currents that can sweep you away or tire you out
- Tree limbs, plants, rocks and other obstacles that you can get stuck on
- Cold water that can shock your system and impair your ability to react
- More distance to reach that island than you think
- Poor visibility in the water, which can make it hard for you to see where you are and for other people to see you

Stay safe when visiting any natural body of water:

- Look for signs that say "No Swimming." If you see a sign, don't go into the water past your ankles.
- Call 911 immediately if you think someone is drowning.
- Do not try to rescue someone from the water unless you are trained in water rescue.
- Ask someone in your group to stay sober, out of the water, and diligent about keeping an eye on the people in the water.