



MEMORANDUM

To: Audrey Thompson, Director of Parks and Recreation
Matt Smith, Interim Fire Chief

CC: Michael Callahan, Deputy Director Parks and Recreation
Sean Malloy, Sp. Operations Field Chief

From: Tim Carter, Athletic and Lakefront Division Manager

CC: Water Safety Plan - Lighthouse Beach

Date: Monday, August 31, 2026

Summary:

Per (430 ILCS 175/25) Sec. 25 – High-Incident Drowning Areas, the City of Evanston is required to create and disseminate (post on website) a water safety plan for areas identified as having a high incidence of drownings.

Over the past five years, the City of Evanston has enhanced water safety measures across all lakefront locations and continues to evaluate and improve safety protocols both before and after any drowning-related incidents. In accordance with the Act, the following measures have been implemented at Lighthouse Beach as well as all Evanston beaches.

Action Item	Status	Date
Joint in-water training between EFD and PRCS staff	Completed	May 2023
Replaced aging lakefront radios, established direct contact to 911 dispatchers.	Completed	May 2023
Install liferings at beach entrances	Completed	October 2023
Purchased drones for three fire engines to support water rescue operations.	Completed	October 2023

Established Swim Flag Program	Completed	May 2024
Update and posted lakefront rules signage	Completed	May 2024
Created "Danger - Water Closed" A-frames at beach entrances on high wave days	Completed	May 2024
Installed PTZ Camera at South Blvd. Beach and Lighthouse Beach to assist the Fire Department in search and rescue	Completed	June 2024
Established free life jacket loaner program	Completed	June 2024
Created water safety graphics for social media and e-news	Completed	July 2024
Share lakefront radio capabilities and channels with NU Sailing Staff for enhanced safety and emergency communications	Completed	May 2025
Trained nine members Evanston Police Dept in surface water rescues and staffed Marine 21 with members of EPD	Completed	May 2025
Created life jacket safety video for social media and e-news	Completed	June 2025
Communicated and shared water safety information with neighboring municipalities	Completed	June 2025
Added additional life ring at the breakwalls of all beaches	Completed	June 2025
Add emergency gate for first responders on Lighthouse Beach breakwall	Completed	August 2025
Trimmed trees at the water plant to establish a clear line of sight between the camera and the south side breakwall at Lighthouse Beach	Completed	October 2025
Trained 50% members of the Evanston Fire Department in water rescue techniques	Completed	April 2026
Trained 4 additional members Evanston Police Dept in surface water rescues and staffed Marine 21 with members of EPD	Completed	April 2026
Add large "NO SWIMMING WITHOUT	Completed	May 2026

LIFEGUARDS” to center lifeguard chairs at each beach		
Add large “PEOPLE HAVE DROWNED HERE” sign to breakwall at Lighthouse Beach	Completed	April 2026
Apply for and earn United States Livesaving Association Certification	Completed	June 2026
Public Communication & Hazard Awareness	Completed	June 2026
Enhanced Presence from EPD on High Wave Days	Completed	June 2026
Installed PTZ Camera at Lee St. Beach to assist the Fire Department in search and rescue.	Completed	July 2026