



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®



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## **Milestone 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Water Resource Festival :** **Fun & Safety On the Red River**

### **Life Air Rescue & Coast Guard to Participate With Local Law Enforcement**

**Imagine the Life Air helicopter hovering just a few feet above the Red River as rescue boats fly by. This will be the scene at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Ark-La-Tex Water Resource Festival held on Friday and Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> at the Louisiana Boardwalk in Bossier City, La.** The event is designed to promote boat and water safety, as well as public education about the Red River.

Presented by the Aquatic and Wildlife Education Foundation and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in conjunction with the Louisiana Boardwalk, **the Life Air Rescue Helicopter & U.S. Coast Guard Swift Boats** will conduct a **SARS demonstration** near the downtown Texas Street bridge.

**The simulated rescue with Life Air Helicopter is set for 1:30 pm on Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup>** with the best viewing from the Louisiana Boardwalk. Also participating are the **Caddo-Bossier Sheriff Red River Joint Task Force, Homeland Security, Bossier City Fire Dept.**

**The Festival begins Friday, May 7<sup>th</sup> at 10am, with an expected 1,400 school kids from Caddo and Bossier parishes** learning about water safety, along with fish and waterfowl biology, water resources and more.

The two-day event is free to the public, from 10am-2pm on Friday and 10am-4pm on Saturday, with free parking at the Louisiana Boardwalk Garage.

**Water Resource Festival exhibitors also include:** the U.S. Coast Guard; Shreveport and Bossier City Fire Departments; Caddo Sheriff & Bossier Sheriff Red River Joint Task Force; American Red Cross; U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; Louisiana State Police; the Shreveport Sail & Power Squadron; NOAA Weather; Homeland Security and the Office of Emergency Preparedness; Northwest La. Fly Fishers; Shreveport Environmental Affairs; and the J. Bennett Johnston Regional Visitors Center.

Because the state of Louisiana is known as "the sportsman's paradise," this event will provide an anticipated 18,000 visitors better knowledge of the pleasures, yet potential dangers of our most valuable resource, known as water.

### **For More Info**

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(See accompanying pages for Hypothermia Demonstrations & Details)

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### **Hypothermia Kills:**

**The silent killers, drowning and hypothermia**, have no set range on age, however the leading fatality statistics show males between the ages of 18-35 account for nearly 50% of recorded deaths.

**More than 90% of individuals that drown are not wearing a lifejacket.** "Life is harder when we make poor choices". Chose life, chose to wear your lifejacket.

### **"The Chill That Kills" is Preventable:**

**Hypothermia is preventable**, and during the 2010 Water Resource Festival, visitors will receive knowledge that can potentially save their lives.

**Lifejackets save lives.** It's been proven that lifejackets save lives. A good float coat is also a must in wintertime, as it increases one's survival rate in exposed situations.

**Hypothermia is one of those very present dangers** in Louisiana from October to January. According to Brandi Bradford, Corps of Engineers Lead Ranger, "Hypothermia is an extremely deadly situation. Cold water immersion is the #1 cause of hypothermia. The youth and the elderly are the most likely victims, yet it has no target audience."

With duck hunting and other popular water activities happening in the fall, males are the primary hypothermia fatalities. Hypothermia is caused by a decrease in body temperature, so prolonged exposure to temperatures under our normal 98.6 can be the onset of the deadly cycle.

Once a body encounters the chilling water the first response is a gasp which is known as "cold gasp". The response loses needed energy for survival. Cold shock will follow in 3 to 5 minutes.

Shortly after this the body loses the ability to swim, function of brain and body organs will follow. **Death occurs in approximately 30 minutes** depending on the person's size.

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**Tell-Tale Signs of Hypothermia:**

**First: watch for the “umbles”** – stumbles, mumbles, fumbles, and grumbles which show changes in motor coordination and consciousness.

**Shivering:** This occurs in waves of violent then pausing with the pausing increasing in length until shivering ends with victim collapsing. If shivering can be stopped voluntarily, mild hypothermia, ask the person a question that requires reasoning; like counting backwards.

**Erratic breathing or shallow breathing can also develop.**

**Hypothermia Prevention:**

**Lifejackets insulate the survival organs** helping to prevent hypothermia. With hunting season rapidly approaching, most victims of drowning and hypothermia never had the intention of being in the water. If you're in or around the water, you should be equipped with a lifejacket.

**Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries have made it mandatory** that all persons under the age of 16 wear a lifejacket. Hopefully, this law will carry over to the adult age of 18 as most good habits do.

**People ask “what lifejacket should I use”?** According to Lead Ranger Brandi Bradford, “Mostly I respond with “the one that you will wear”.

**Lifejackets are made for different recreational activities.** Choose the lifejacket for that activity, size it for yourself, make sure it is Coast Guard approved and wear it.

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