

PROCLAMATION



State of Florida
Collier County
City of Marco Island

NATIONAL DROWNING PREVENTION AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS, Florida continues to rank first in the nation for child drowning incidents, and in Collier County drowning remains the leading external cause of death for children 1-4 years old; and

WHEREAS, the NCH Safe & Healthy Children Coalition of Collier County, comprising more than 70 local agencies dedicated to improving child health and prevent injury, remains steadfast in its mission to reverse these alarming trends; and

WHEREAS, the Coalition has implemented a comprehensive, evidence-based drowning prevention strategy informed by the National Drowning Prevention Alliance, emphasizing that true safety requires multiple layers of protection including physical barriers, high quality swim instruction, effective rescue skills, and CPR training; and

WHEREAS, as a cornerstone of this effort, the Coalition launched SWIM Central in March 2012, providing critical water safety education and, since its inception, has delivered more than 106,861 lessons to 12,921 children throughout Collier County; and

WHEREAS, in February 2014, the Coalition expanded its prevention initiatives with the "Kids Don't Float...Give Them Something That Does" Life Jacket Loaner Program, which now maintains 18 accessible loaner stations at lakes and beaches across the county, each stocked with 20 properly fitted life jackets in a variety of sizes; and

WHEREAS, the Coalition welcomed Stewie the Duck, its water-safety mascot, in 2016, engaging families and young children in fun, memorable, and effective safety education; and

WHEREAS, drowning prevention lays the foundation for a healthy lifelong relationship with the water, supporting physical activity, family recreation, and community well-being;

NOW, THEREFORE, it is proclaimed by the City Council of the City of Marco Island, Florida, that May 2026 be designated as Drowning Prevention Awareness Month in the City of Marco Island.

DONE AND ORDERED THIS 20th day of April, 2026.

Darrin Palumbo, Chairman

ATTEST

Joan Taylor, City Clerk