



NEWS RELEASE

LENNY CURRY, MAYOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CITY, JAXPARKS LAUNCH WATER SAFETY PROGRAM FOR SUMMER **SPLASH Squad to Provide Water Safety Education and Swim Lessons to Youth**

JACKSONVILLE, Fla., May 27, 2016 – From the ocean to rivers, swimming pools to ponds, water has a substantial presence throughout Jacksonville and its communities. With such easy access to water, water-related education and awareness are important in keeping citizens safe. As *Healthy and Safe Swimming Week* (May 23 – 29) concludes, and Memorial Day weekend begins, Mayor Lenny Curry and Councilman Garrett Dennis hosted a news conference today to announce an initiative and programs that teach swimming and promote water safety practices.

“We are fortunate to have access to a variety of natural resources and waterways that make Jacksonville such an incredible place to live,” said Mayor Lenny Curry. “With public safety as one of my biggest priorities, it’s important that citizens are aware of the programs and resources we offer to enable them to safely enjoy our city.”

The City of Jacksonville’s [SPLASH Squad](#) (Formerly Waterproof Jax) is a drowning prevention initiative that provides free swim lessons to children ages 3 to 17. SPLASH Squad, an acronym for “**S**wim, **P**lay and **L**ive – **A**ctive, **S**afe, **H**ealthy lifestyles,” offers swim lessons to eligible Duval County youth at 30 JAXParks pools throughout the city. The SPLASH Squad initiative is made possible through grants provided by THE PLAYERS Center for Child Health at Wolfson Children’s Hospital, Safe Kids Northeast Florida, and Florida Swimming Pool Association Northeast Florida. The initiative will offer swim vouchers to 350 local children.

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With the recent launch of the city's Journey to ONE health initiative, citizens are encouraged to increase and maintain physical activity for a balanced and healthy lifestyle. A popular summer pastime, swimming is a great way to stay physically fit. The City of Jacksonville's summer pool season begins Saturday, May 28. During preseason hours, city pools will be open on weekends through June 12, followed by regular season hours seven days a week beginning June 13 through Aug. 5.

For more information on the JAXParks pool hours and programs, persons should visit the [JaxParks website](#), or call 904.255.7927.

About the City of Jacksonville

The City of Jacksonville is the largest city by land mass in the continental United States, serving approximately 850,000 residents. Located in Duval County, City of Jacksonville leadership includes the mayor and a 19-member City Council. To learn more about the City of Jacksonville, visit [COJ.net](#).

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