

June 2016



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Dear

I am writing to request your support with a safety campaign that aims to help reduce the number of young people who drown each year in open water such as quarry lakes, reservoirs, rivers and canals.

Tragically, there are circa 400 accidental drownings each year across the UK. Teenagers, in particular young males, through risk taking and thrill seeking behaviours, are one of the most at risk groups.

In 2016, a UK Drowning Prevention Strategy was launched which aims to achieve a 50% reduction in accidental drownings by 2026. The strategy is supported by a wide range of safety organisations and trade bodies representing industries such as the water utilities and quarrying. One of the key themes of the strategy is to raise awareness of everyday risks, in, on and around water.

During the course of the summer, there will be a number of high profile media campaigns run by a variety of organisations such as the Fire and Rescues Services (Be Water Aware), RNLI (Respect the Water) and RLSS (Drowning Prevention Week) which share common safety messages.

Members of the Mineral Products Association (MPA), the UK trade association for quarrying and related industries, have requested that I write to you because your school is located in an area where there is quarrying activity and there are active or former sites that have lakes or similar water filled voids. Quarry lakes and reservoirs may look very attractive on a hot summer's day but often conceal a range of hazards to those who swim or jump into the water.

The enclosed leaflet helps explain why activities that are all too often perceived by those involved as harmless fun can suddenly turn into a life threatening or fatal incident. In particular, we hope that a better understanding of 'Cold Water Shock' and the impact that cold water has on one's ability to swim and self-rescue will help prevent many young people putting their lives at risk.

I would be very grateful if you could share the safety messages contained in the leaflet before the start of the school summer holidays. Whilst young people are the primary target for these warnings, it would be great if they could also be shared with parents, teachers and other members of your staff. If you require further copies or someone from our membership to visit and present to your pupils, please contact elizabeth.clements@mineralproducts.org

On the reverse are details on where you can access further information and resources on water safety.

Yours sincerely

Nigel Jackson, Chief Executive

The Mineral Products Association is the trade association for the aggregates, asphalt, cement, concrete, dimension stone, lime, mortar and silica sand industries

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