

## **MEDIA ADVISORY: Drowning is no laughing matter**

**Vancouver, BC, Thursday, August 10, 2017**—Drowning is no laughing matter—that's why The Community Against Preventable Injuries (Preventable) is setting up a temporary public installation to get people to think about what they can do to stay safe in the water.

From August 11 to 13 we are giving the *A-maze-ing Laughter* statues at English Bay their own oversized personal flotation devices (PFD), reminding people that drowning can happen to anyone. In BC alone, there is an average of 53 deaths from drowning per year.

We encourage the public to come out and take selfies and share their experience on social media using the hashtag **#PreventablePFD**.

**Dates:** Friday, August 11 to Sunday, August 13, 2017

**Times:** 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM PST each day

**Location:** *A-maze-ing Laughter* art installation  
Morton Park (Davie Street and Denman Street)  
English Bay, Vancouver

### **Quick Facts:**

- On average in BC, there are 41 near-drowning cases that resulted in an acute hospitalization and 53 drowning deaths per year.
- The greatest number of drowning deaths occur among males in natural water (46%) and water transport (28%).
- In BC, 60% of drowning deaths among children and youth occur in natural waters during swimming or water transport-related activities such as boating and jet skiing.
- The total cost of drowning to British Columbians in 2010 was \$25 million.

### **Safety Tips:**

- 90% of serious injuries are predictable and preventable. By reminding ourselves that serious injuries do happen, we can take actions to prevent them. Such as:
  - Ensure everyone is wearing a personal flotation device (PFD) or lifejacket on a boat, at the beach, or at the lake.
  - Be cautious and know what to do if you get into trouble when swimming in currents.
  - Alcohol should not be consumed before or during swimming or boating activities.
  - When hiking, be mindful of staying on the trails and avoid fast-flowing rivers.
  - Make sure children are well supervised by responsible adults at all times in and around water. Be a child's lifeguard!
  - Learn something new—enroll yourself and your child in swimming lessons, or take a class on CPR and/or lifesaving techniques.

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**About Preventable:**

Preventable (also known as The Community Against Preventable Injuries) is a province-wide, multi-partner organization raising awareness, transforming attitudes, and ultimately changing behaviours. The goal of the organization and its partners is to significantly reduce the number and severity of preventable injuries in BC. Preventable's strategy is based on two years of extensive research to develop a comprehensive understanding of how and why preventable injuries occur throughout the province. Preventable's work is made possible through the financial and in-kind support of a variety of organizations that continue to sign on as partners in fighting the epidemic of preventable injuries in BC. Now in its 9<sup>th</sup> year of activity, the campaign is an evolution in Preventable's ongoing discussion with British Columbians about the epidemic proportions of preventable injuries.

[www.preventable.ca](http://www.preventable.ca)