

# WISE Idea!



Water and Ice Safety Education (WISE) is the new program from the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office to promote safety during all types of water recreation. Water safety is critically important to the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office – HCSO is responsible for the safety and regulation of all lakes and, in conjunction with the US Coast Guard and adjoining county sheriffs, the rivers of the county.

In an effort to reduce drownings and near drownings, HCSO offers swimming lessons and water safety classes throughout the county, in partnership with individual cities and organizations, including the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (MPRB). Through the WISE

swimming scholarship program, low-income youth can apply to receive a package of eight 40-minute swimming lessons at MPRB aquatics facilities for only \$5.

"Offering swimming lessons to those who cannot afford them is one of the most effective ways that we can promote water safety," said Hennepin County Sheriff David P. Hutchinson. "When our Water Patrol is called to the scene of a drowning, chances are extremely high that the victim is a young person of color who never had formal swimming lessons. We aim to change that with this program. Everyone in Minnesota should learn how to swim, no matter their income level."



## LEARN MORE!

<https://www.hennepinsheriff.org/community-involvement/outreach/water-safety-campaign>

<http://www.fox9.com/news/hennepin-co-launches-new-affordable-swimming-lessons-for-low-income-kids>

