

Prevention starts with YOU!

The fastest and easiest way to prevent lake- and river-related emergencies is to be informed about the daily schedules of the river and to take the safety precautions necessary (e.g., life jackets, buddy swim, etc.). This is your opportunity to learn and put to use the safety precautions that should be taken every time you plan to be in the water.

River Safety

The Chattahoochee River just below the Buford Dam is one of the most popular trout fishing spots in Georgia. The Army Corps of Engineers advises visitors to use extreme care when fishing below the dam. The Chattahoochee can quickly change from a serene, slow-moving stream to a swift and treacherous river when water is released from Buford Dam — the river can rise to 11 feet within a matter of minutes.

Several safety precautions are in effect for the 3 miles of river between Buford Dam and the State Route 20 bridge. Visitors should always:

- **Wear a life jacket:** This is mandatory for all persons wading, boating, or tubing on this section of river.
- **Exit the river immediately when the warning horns sound:** This sound indicates that water is being released from the dam. Please be advised that if you are south of the State Route 20 bridge, you cannot hear the warning horns.
- **Listen to radio station 1610 AM:** This station provides river safety messages and water release schedules in the area.
- **Pay attention to warning signs:** These signs are posted along the riverbanks and can tell you where you are located in case of an emergency.
- **Plan trips in advance:** Call 770.945.1466 for water release schedules.
- **Be aware of the risk for hypothermia:** Water released at the dam has an average temperature of 44 – 58°F year-round. When exposed to these temperatures, exhaustion or unconsciousness can occur within 30 – 60 minutes. We recommend that fishermen wear rubber waders.

Know Where You Are At All Times

- Take note of your location.
- Pay attention to all signs and land markers.
- If you're ever in trouble, you can help first responders get to you faster by providing detailed information on your location and surroundings.

There are signs every 300 feet to advise you of your location along the river. These signs are red/white with both a letter and number (G-Gwinnett, F-Forsyth). The signs are numbered 1 – 50 and begin at Buford Dam and continue to the State Route 20 bridge. In case of an emergency, locate the nearest sign and provide that information to emergency personnel.



Signs like this one can be found along the Chattahoochee River to mark your location.

Lake Lanier Safety

Each year, approximately 6,000 people drown in the United States. Most drowning victims had no intention of being in the water, and most people drown within 10 – 30 feet of safety. It is important that you and your family learn to swim and follow these simple but crucial swimming and boating safety tips if you are going to be near water:

Swimming Safety Tips

- Learn how to swim.
- Swim in designated swim areas.
- Swim with others — never swim by yourself.
- Watch children closely at all times.
- Never dive or swim in unknown waters.

Boating Safety Tips

- Wear a life jacket.
- Check your boat for all required safety equipment.
- Take a safe boating course.
- Check the weather forecast.
- File a float plan with a friend.
- Check your electrical and fuel system for gas fumes.
- Follow manufacturer's suggested procedures before starting up your engine.
- Carry a navigation chart.
- Follow the navigation rules.