



Fresno County Sheriff's Office

John Zanoni, Sheriff

June 16, 2026

News Release

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Life Jacket Giveaway at Fresno County Parks

On Tuesday, Sheriff John Zanoni announced plans to distribute nearly 300 life jackets. They range in sizes from infant, to child, to adult. We will give these jackets away at no cost to residents of Fresno County. As part of our effort to reduce drownings, the Sheriff's Office has put together a campaign to equip swimmers with life jackets in hopes of keeping them safer while visiting lakes and rivers this summer.

Our non-profit organization, The Sheriff's Foundation for Public Safety, donated \$5,000 to purchase 190 life jackets. The North Central Fire Protection District received community donations, which allowed them to purchase 93 life jackets. In total, that's 283 life jackets.

This is our third straight year conducting this campaign, and it is growing. In June of last year, we handed out 160 life jackets to residents. In July of 2024, we passed out close to 100.

We would like to send a special thanks to Big 5 Sporting Goods in Fresno and Clovis. Staff there worked with us to apply a discount to our order so we could stretch our money and buy as many life jackets as possible.

Our free distribution of these jackets will take place this Saturday, June 20th at 10:00 am. The giveaways will be conducted simultaneously at Skaggs Bridge Park, Lost Lake Park, Laton-Kingston Park and Avocado Lake Park. They will be handed out on a first come, first serve basis. People must be present to receive a life jacket.

Our goal is to get swimmers in the habit of wearing life jackets every time they get into a lake or river. We hope to make the thought process as routine as buckling your seat belt when you get into a vehicle.

*** Recipients assume all risks. The Fresno County Sheriff's Office and North Central Fire Protection District are not responsible for injuries or deaths caused by the improper use, fitting or failure to wear the provided life jacket.**

Safety Tips

- 1) Stay out of the water if you do not know how to swim.**
- 2) If you are going to get into the water, always wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket.**
- 3) Make sure the jacket fits you properly and it is fully fastened with the zipper and/or buckles.**
- 4) Parents should watch their children at all times.**
- 5) Understand that when it's hot outside you will get tired faster than usual.**
- 6) Respect the water. The temperature of the water remains cold and the current is often stronger than it appears. There can be debris in the water, which is difficult to see and may cause hazardous situations for swimmers.**
- 7) Be careful of mud and plants on the bottom of lakes and rivers, it's easy to sink in some spots and get your feet stuck or tangled. Also, use your feet to feel for drop off spots. River and lake bottoms can dramatically change from shallow to deep in a short distance.**