

# SCDNR Hosts Swim Safety Initiative in the City of Darlington with Key Community Leaders

*SCDNR director says initiative reflects agency's commitment to public service, education, and safety*

DARLINGTON, SC, UNITED STATES, September 12, 2025 / EINPresswire.com/ -- The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) hosted a swim safety initiative in Darlington, S.C. at the city's Gandy Pool (also known as the City Pool) on Sunday, September 7.

Spearheaded by SCDNR Director Tom Mullikin and the SCDNR Law Enforcement Division's dive team, the event provided swim instruction and interactive water safety education for 27 swimmers; primarily children accompanied by their parents. Fourteen SCDNR game wardens conducted the swim-training in a "welcoming, hands-on environment" according to SCDNR officials and other state and local leaders.



SCDNR officials gather with state and local leaders for SCDNR's swim initiative at the City of Darlington's Gandy Pool, Sunday, September 7, 2025.



City of Darlington  
*South Carolina*



SCDNR's swim initiative was held at the City of Darlington's Gandy Pool (aka City Pool), Sunday, September 7, 2025.

In addition to Mullikin and his team who served as instructors, attending participants included S.C. Senator J.D. Chaplin, S.C. Representative Robert Williams, members of the Darlington City Council and the Darlington City Manager—all of whom underscored the community's commitment to safe outdoor access and youth development.

"This event is a powerful reminder that water safety is about more than preventing accidents—it's about empowering our youth with confidence and saving lives," said Sen. Chaplin.

"I deeply appreciate SCDNR for getting out here, working hands-on with families, and showing what true community leadership looks like. Reopening this resource ensures Darlington's young people gain skills that will benefit them for life."

S.C. Representative Robert Williams agrees.

"This pool is the only public facility in Darlington where our youth can learn to be safe in the water," said Williams. "We're grateful for the city's partnership and SCDNR's leadership in bringing life back to this resource and giving young people skills that can save lives."

Tony Stephenson, Executive Director of Families Engagement Program, Inc. (FEP), said: "This program was welcomed by every part of the Darlington community, and its success reflects the importance of working together to create safe opportunities for our children."

Sentiments echoed by FEP's Program Director David Caldwell: "By teaching families to be safe and confident in the water, we're reducing risks and building generational change," Caldwell said.

SCDNR Director Tom Mullikin, a lifelong SCUBA and water safety instructor, added: "This initiative reflects our enduring commitment to public service, education, and ensuring South Carolinians—especially our youth—can enjoy water safely and confidently."

Designed with a focus on both skill-building and community engagement, the swim initiative's aims were to empower local residents—particularly young people—to gain comfort in the water while emphasizing the importance of water safety, outdoor access, and collaborative community efforts.

"This we have accomplished and we'll continue working toward these ends," said Mullikin.

– For additional information, visit <https://www.dnr.sc.gov/>.

Cheyenne Twilley

S.C. Department of Natural Resources

[email us here](#)

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